

NOTICING THE WOMEN:
An Inquiry into the Evolution of Gender Equity
Among the Professoriate of
the University of California, Berkeley

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Introduction

NOTICING THE WOMEN

The University of California at Berkeley is reputed as the preeminent public university in the world, comparing highly with the best of private institutions worldwide.¹ Its first-class reputation rises from the distinction of its outstanding professoriate: scholars, innovators, founders of emerging areas of knowledge, elaborators of world-changing enterprises, recipients of the most coveted national and international academic honors, educators of generations of students who have in turn shaped the state, the nation, and the globe.

The human capital embodied in this world-class institution's faculty has garnered sustained public scrutiny and inspired volumes of institutional histories and individual narratives. Yet one of the most enduring and obvious features of Berkeley's story has received relatively little notice:² the matter of fact that, until recently, its faculty has been nearly exclusively male. Until recently, the nearly closed door to a substantial pool of well-qualified women scholars has rarely attracted comment — much less examination — in the myriad accounts of UC Berkeley as a hugely influential citadel of higher learning.

Today, of Berkeley's more than 33,000 students each year, more than half are women. The campus of today takes for granted that every program's faculty includes women, yet women's participation in the professoriate is still significantly less than is their availability. Even so, the current levels of representation are the result of hard-won progress made over decades of collective, and personal, struggle. Today's relatively improved current conditions can obscure how recent a development this is, how long and winding the road has been to the present moment.

How did UC Berkeley's policies and practices shift from universally accepted norms of male chauvinism to widely articulated commitments to equal opportunity and affirmative action? Who were the actors whose activities and activism challenged the separate-and-unequal gender tracks of Berkeley's old-guard professoriate? What significant events and episodes led to social and institutional changes? Through what avenues and mechanisms were feminist-influenced expectations for gender equity adopted or adapted in the image, policies, and practices of the institution?

When questions such as these were first posed to me, I assumed that answers were near at hand, that the history of UC Berkeley's evolution toward gender equity among its professoriate had already been well researched and written. Histories and analyses of myriad facets of American systems of education abound — surely, I thought, Berkeley's story in this respect had been amply documented by institutional historians and/or feminist scholars. I thought it improbable that such a rich and significant field of social history had gone unexamined by any number of potential researchers and writers. But I

was assured by several well-informed professors and administrators that the absence was, in fact, the case. I was challenged to “connect the dots” that have remained unconnected for the last 30 or more years.³

In beginning to survey the available literature, I soon realized that, indeed, a comprehensive account had not yet been published. Accounts of personalities, places, and events germane to such an inquiry certainly exist. Memoirs of individuals, histories of departments, reports of committees, findings from surveys, and proceedings of conferences have been published. But a synthesis that relates particular narratives and discrete events to group-level data and big-picture overviews — that “connects the dots” between past and present — seems never to have surfaced.

I became convinced that efforts to reach toward such a synthesis are sorely needed and, for many reasons, timely. From one side, an increasing wealth of historical and current data is now available to draw upon, and new developments offer new perspectives. From another side, access to — even knowledge of — older primary sources is increasingly tenuous. Old documents literally fade away in yellowed folders in all-but-forgotten storage boxes scattered among campus offices and private homes, difficult to inventory and retrieve. Key participant-observers of past episodes are advancing in age; some memories are becoming less vivid. Some notable informants have already died without having recorded their full stories.

At least an equally pressing reason for reconstructing and cohering these chapters of women’s and institutional history speaks to a different level of meaning, one that goes to fundamental reasons for historical inquiry and reflection. It is a truism that each generation coming of age tends to accept contemporary circumstances as givens, often being unaware of or unreflective about how and why developments in the past led to the present moment.

The danger of ahistoricity is not just an inability to appreciate the struggles and sacrifices of those predecessors who have been the agents of beneficial change, from which subsequent generations benefit. The greater danger is that an absence of historical perspective can enable the fallacious conclusion that “progress” is inevitable: that, despite swings of the pendulum, the march of time inexorably proceeds toward social equality in American society. It may be equally relevant to note that lack of sufficient perspective can feed a pernicious pessimism: that episodic setbacks to achieving greater social opportunity denote irredeemable failures. I believe that a holistic grasp of history (when such can be achieved) helps to avoid both dangers.

While change is ongoing and inevitable, movement in any particular direction or toward a particular end is never guaranteed. Those of the present and coming generations who approve the progress that has been made in undermining sex discrimination at UC Berkeley have a vested interest in learning the history of how these changes came to be, so as to be better prepared to preserve and extend them.

This is a modest start at chronicling the evolution toward gender equity among the

ladder-rank faculty at UC Berkeley.⁴ This limited effort surveys what has — and has not — been written on the topic, notes relevant literature identified, frames major periods of development, and suggests areas for further research.

Section One offers an overview of the status of women scholars in the first century of UC Berkeley's development, and of early published commentaries on gender discrimination. A case study of a formerly female-dominated department is reviewed, and the cultural climate of the 1950s and early 1960s is noted.

Section Two discusses the situations and roles of graduate students in the 1960s and early 1970s.

Section Three recounts the emerging activism and strategies of tenured women faculty at the beginning of the 1970s.

Section Four summarizes factors leading to and limiting changes in hiring and promoting women into the professoriate in the 1980s.

Section Five notes setbacks to progress in achieving gender equity during the 1990s, and takes stock of the present moment.

The “next” sections have not yet been written — but should be. Much remains to be filled in, filled out, and brought forward: to be noticed, recorded, and acted on.

Section One

OPENING THE DOORS

As the University of California was receiving its charter in 1868, public and private colleges and universities across the nation were increasingly adopting admission policies of coeducation.⁵ Joining the trend, in 1870 the UC Regents resolved that women would be admitted to the student body on equal terms with men.⁶ The pragmatic citizens of the young state expected that its publicly supported institutions would educate their daughters as well as their sons. Prescient civic leaders recognized the imperative to train teachers for the growing numbers of normal schools that would be needed across the state; young women needed to be educated for careers as public schoolteachers.⁷

Eight females availed themselves of the opportunity to join the 82 male members of UC's entering class of 1870.⁸ When the campus opened its doors at the present Berkeley location, 22 undergraduate “young ladies” joined 167 undergraduate men and two graduate men.⁹ The first female graduate student enrolled in 1874. At the turn of the century, women graduate student enrollment numbered 100 and women undergraduates more than 800.¹⁰

Women were drawn to the Berkeley campus not only as students but also as

benefactors, administrative staff, and aspiring researchers and educators at the university level.¹¹ In 1898, a woman received the institution's tenth doctoral degree to be awarded.¹² In 1904, a woman was hired to a teaching position, as a lecturer, for the first time.¹³ In 1919, the same individual became the first of her sex to achieve the status of full professor.¹⁴

From early in the 20th century onward, student enrollment grew steadily year by year; for most of the century, enrollment of women averaged roughly one-third of the total.¹⁵ By 1923, Berkeley's student body was the largest in the world.¹⁶ Faculty hiring grew apace. The intellectual vigor of Berkeley extended to establish research stations and branches across the state; by the 1930s, UC was becoming a multi-campus system, the first major university in the nation to do so.¹⁷ By the 1950s, UC faculty were garnering the largest numbers of the most prestigious awards anywhere. By 1965, the Berkeley campus had become the brightest star within a constellation of eight other campuses,¹⁸ wielding influence throughout the nation and, indeed, the world. But during the first century of spectacular growth for the University and its faculty, female scholars made few career gains beyond the lowest, least secure, least influential levels of appointment.

Since 1919 when Jessica Peixotto, professor of social economics, became UC's first female professor, ambitious women scholars have aspired to join the Berkeley faculty. But few of the hundreds of women who taught undergraduate or graduate students, conducted research, published scholarship, or directed scholarly projects on the Berkeley campus were allowed to rise above the lowest ranks of lecturers and research assistants; few ever attained the full-fledged status, rank, and privileges of regular faculty. Given the growing numbers of doctorates awarded to women from first-tier institutions across the nation — between 1920 and 1968, Berkeley awarded 1,020 doctorates to women;¹⁹ between 1964 and 1968 alone, the ten most highly ranked American universities awarded 960 doctorates to women²⁰ — the number of women making their way into Berkeley's tenured faculty has been miniscule.

UC Berkeley's practice of gender stratification and sex discrimination was not, of course, exceptional.²¹ Gross disparities between the representation of men and women within ladder-rank faculties have persisted at every public and private university, and at most colleges, everywhere.²² Such persistent inequities may seem more ironic at Berkeley in light of its long-held repute and self-conception as a progressive beacon of the modern American public university, serving the sons and daughters of the world on the basis of a democratic meritocracy.

The rare women who were hired into UC's professoriate were extraordinarily talented and persevering. Some succeeded in achieving significant acclaim during their careers; others were contained and marginalized by faculty peers and administrative structures; some encountered both experiences.²³ The successes of the exceptional few did not, however, contradict the ruling practice of exclusion of the many.

Despite its many forward-looking innovations, the leadership of the University of California — its overwhelmingly male faculty and chief administrators — did not

perceive the gender imbalance in the composition of its ranks to be a matter for concern. The paradigm of academic excellence and scholarly achievement was embodied in male form; thus, the pursuit of excellence meant recruiting and retaining the ‘very best men’ in the academy. If an exceptional woman managed to take a place among the regular faculty, it was a curiosity — not an objective.

COUNTING THE FIGURES

From 1924 to 1970, the headcount of Berkeley’s ladder-rank professoriate burgeoned nearly five-fold, but women’s representation did not increase or even keep pace proportionately. To the contrary, time seemed to have stood virtually still in respect to women’s membership among the regular faculty.²⁴ Data show that in 1924, there were three female full professors alongside 113 male peers; in 1970, there were 15 alongside 651. In proportional terms, in 1924 female full professors were 2.7 percent of all professors; in 1970 they were 2.3 percent.

The numbers were not static over that almost half-century. Women made gains that were subsequently lost. The high-water mark for women at the full professor level came in 1953-54, at 4.3 percent of total faculty. For women at the associate professor level, the high point was earlier, in 1938-39, with 10.9 percent of the total. The high point for women at the assistant professor level was likewise in 1938-39, with women comprising a remarkable 19.1 percent of the total. Averaged across the three ladder ranks, 1938-39 was far and away the best year on record for women faculty at Berkeley, then comprising 10.4 percent of all ladder-rank faculty — a proportion not approximated again for almost 40 years.²⁵

By the mid-1950s, women’s representation in all three ladder ranks had markedly declined. In 1960, a professor at the University of Illinois made inquiries into “the participation of women on the faculties of leading universities” — an unusual early expression of interest in this topic. UC Berkeley’s response indicated that, by then, the proportion of women had sunk to only 5 percent of the ladder-rank faculty: 49 women among 993 men.²⁶

Ten years later — after the decade that saw the surge of national civil rights movements and legislation, the emergence of the free speech movement on the Berkeley campus, the swelling of student activism and the rise of the women’s liberation movement nationwide — the representation of women within Berkeley’s ladder-rank faculty not only had not increased but in fact had decreased still further, to 4.2 percent:²⁷ 45 women among 1,204 men.²⁸

What lay behind these figures — and who found them of sufficient interest to remark on their implications, and when? That statistical data can now be cited for many points in time over the past century should not eclipse that much of these data was recovered, compiled, and analyzed — that is, rescued from obscurity and rendered meaningful — long after their origins. I have found no evidence that, in the first century of UC Berkeley’s institutional development, such issues were examined

contemporaneously.

As UCLA professor of history Joyce Appleby has commented, “curiosity drives research, but we are less certain what drives curiosity. There is much about the past that we do not know and will not know until someone asks a question that leads to that particular patch of material remains.”²⁹ For most of the 20th century, the question of faculty gender inequities seems rarely to have risen to the threshold of conscious notice or recorded comment — especially by voices with social power.³⁰

RECOVERING THE PAST

Only recently have early stories and hidden storylines begun to be imparted to Berkeley’s own academic audiences. A commendable effort, directed to a broad University-affiliated audience, appeared in 1998: the second volume of the *Chronicle of the University of California: A Journal of University History* took as its theme “Ladies Blue and Gold.”³¹ Among its score of biographical vignettes and couple of dozen essays is an especially illuminating article titled “Few Concerns, Fewer Women” by Ray Colvig, public information officer for the Berkeley campus from 1964 to 1991.³²

Colvig’s essay offers the earliest mentions I have found of high-level notice to sex discrimination at Berkeley, by then-Chancellor Glenn Seaborg writing in 1958-59. A leading nuclear scientist who was, for his time, unusually concerned for advancing “lost talent, among women and among minority groups,”³³ Seaborg was disappointed by the responses of several important department heads to a questionnaire about faculty recruitment and their “willingness to consider qualified women for open positions”:

... The Biochemistry Department bluntly stated, “Qualified women candidates will not be considered for appointment.” Other departments, such as Physics and Mathematics, commented on the lack of qualified women in the fields. Mathematics remarked that there are so few women who enter their field that “one might infer that women have a prejudice against mathematics.” Considering the critical shortage of higher education teachers anticipated in the next ten years (which has been so much talked about recently), it seems a real pity that women are not given more serious consideration.”³⁴

By examining faculty rosters in the campus’s annual *Announcement of Courses* for 1958-59 and 1959-60, Colvig identified what he calls a “dishonor roll” of 22 large departments that did not list any woman on their regular faculty (defined as tenured or tenure-track, active or retired). Colvig places on an “honor roll” for that period 12 departments that listed one active, regular woman, and seven departments that listed three or more regular women, some active, others retired.

The latter category of seven departments would soon become five. One department (decorative art) was soon to be radically downsized,³⁵ another (nutrition and home economics) — with the largest number of regular women faculty on all of the campus — was soon to be split and reorganized to such an extent that, between 1954 and

1968, its faculty composition swung from 91 percent female to 31 percent female.³⁶

With commentary on gender inequities published in the 1950s and early 1960s so rare, Seaborg's comments were exceptional. Also rare are published explanations for the significant loss of ladder-rank women in the 1950s. According to former Chancellor Clark Kerr, "from 1952-53 to 1962-63, there were over 1,000 new faculty appointments to tenure at Berkeley. By 1962, two-thirds of the faculty was new. The future of Berkeley — for at least the next generation...depended on how well those 1,000-plus decisions were made."³⁷

Those 1,000-plus decisions resulted in even greater gender disparities: between 1953-54 and 1963-64,³⁸ female full professors declined from 4.3 to 3.1 percent; female associate professors from 6.8 to 4.3 percent; female assistant professors from 7.2 to 6.2 percent. During a time when faculty hiring was skyrocketing, why was women's representation among the ladder ranks declining?

A CASE STUDY: ACADEMIC ECONOMICS

Some answers are suggested by the sole in-depth historical analysis yet to be undertaken of women faculty in a Berkeley department, published in 1999. In *The Academic Kitchen: A Social History of Gender Stratification at The University of California, Berkeley*, scholar Maresi Nerad posits several dynamics as explanatory of the dismantling of the department of home economics during the 1950s.³⁹ Three of these dynamics might usefully be extended to the situation of women faculty as a whole at Berkeley in that period. Two of the three reflected large-scale historical developments in academia and society that combined in specific ways to the disadvantage of women scholars at Berkeley.

Nerad notes that the controversy over UC's Cold War-inspired loyalty oath had induced some of the "best men on the faculty" to depart in 1950.⁴⁰ (At least one of those "best men" was in fact a woman, professor of sociology and social institutions Margaret Hodgen, then with 25 years of service at Berkeley.)⁴¹ Berkeley's reputation was tarnished in the eyes of some of the top-ranking academics and scientists across the nation. Two years later, Berkeley's newly appointed Chancellor Clark Kerr "made restoration of faculty confidence and the reestablishment of Berkeley's place among the top-ranking universities the major objectives of his administration."⁴²

As Kerr later stated in reference to the female-dominated department of home economics, "[this] was not an area where we could ever distinguish ourselves, and we were looking for ways to distinguish ourselves."⁴³ In the first volume of his memoirs published in 2001, Kerr makes passing note of the controversy over this department's dismantling, asserting that "Actually, the problem with home economics at Berkeley was that it was a miscellany. We took its best part, that of nutrition, and made that into a high-quality specialty."⁴⁴ That this reorganization decimated the women faculty affiliated with the earlier department — indeed, eradicated the department with the largest numbers of female faculty — passed without (published) comment.

Nerad argues that the female-dominated department became a casualty in a period of overall growth not because of a curriculum characterized by “miscellany” or the faculty’s inferior quality of scholarship or lack of productivity in important research but because of a widespread re-ordering of disciplinary hierarchies that was underway nationwide.⁴⁵ The outcome of this re-ranking away from humanities and the social sciences and toward ‘hard’ science, she concludes, was that Berkeley’s female faculty became “irrevocably associated with low-status, low-prestige departments.”⁴⁶

Even in higher-status departments (such as the new department of nutrition, reconfigured by Kerr under male leadership), women did not command the stature of men. The Chancellor’s keenness to shore up Berkeley’s blemished reputation by recruiting new high-status faculty no doubt both reflected and reinforced a campus-wide chilly climate in respect to the hiring and promotion of women into its coveted ladder-rank membership.⁴⁷ In his memoirs, Kerr discusses the process of approving recommendations for hiring and promotion “on their individual merits” which, he stresses, “set our definition of ‘merit’ at a somewhat higher level so that we were always raising the standard for future cases; and the word got around.”⁴⁸ As will be discussed later, “higher level” standards always put women at a relative disadvantage to men.

PLACING WOMEN

This chapter of academic politics occurred in the national postwar context of reassertion of the ideology that the place of women — even educated women — should be in the home (in the suburbs). In an oral history taken in 1962,⁴⁹ former long-time Berkeley dean Claude Hutchison articulated the prevalent view that “ninety percent of college girls were going to be mothers in due time” and therefore would never rise to, much less retain, a responsible academic position.

Reflecting this viewpoint, sociologist Barbara Ehrenreich, in her appraisal of the evolution of the American middle class, noted pioneering feminist Betty Friedan’s ironic 1963 critique of the uniquely American, “supremely wasteful” situation where

“...from a social perspective, to have nearly 60 percent of the nation’s college-educated young women tossing aside their French lit and organic chemistry for a life of diaper-changing and counter-wiping was dangerously extravagant. ...One possibility, discussed until well into the sixties, was to stop wasting higher education on girls.”⁵⁰

Whether it was the practice or merely the perception that 90 percent (per Hutchison) or 60 percent (per Friedan) of college-educated women ditched their intellectual aspirations for domestic duties, in the 1950s those women who sought ‘serious’ faculty positions faced as much — if not more — social resistance than had the women of one or two generations past.

A third factor particular to the Berkeley campus was that, in the 1950s and early 1960s, several leading women faculty left through retirement or death.⁵¹ Seldom were

the lacunae filled by other women coming up through the faculty ranks; whatever influence the pioneers had accumulated in their lifetimes typically departed with them.⁵² A prime example was Professor Agnes Fay Morgan, by many measures a prestigious scientist of national renown. The Academic Senate's biographical vignette of her later noted, "her prestige had no coattails."⁵³

Taking these several factors together, it should not be surprising that the setbacks to women's standing in the professoriate during the 1950s held sway into the 1960s and beyond. As former Chancellor Seaborg observed in retrospect: "[By] 1970, women had actually lost ground in the regular (i.e. tenure and tenure-track) faculty ranks at Berkeley... Clearly, there was work to do."⁵⁴

Section Two

RAISING CONSCIOUSNESS

While few male professors and university administrators were yet paying much notice to sex discrimination, women began to awaken to consciousness of a shared status in academia, as in the rest of society.

In the early 1960s, the establishment of President Kennedy's Commission on the Status of Women, soon followed by 50 state commissions and countless county commissions, trained attention to the unequal legal and economic status of women in America. In 1963 Betty Friedan, in *Feminist Mystique*, famously put a name to "the problem that has no name." In 1964 the inclusion of sex in Title VII of the Civil Rights Act led to demands that the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC) enforce non-discrimination with respect to women. In 1966 the National Organization for Women (NOW) was launched to agitate for an expanded agenda of women's rights. The first feminist periodical with a national circulation, *Ms. Magazine*, began publishing in 1972. Also in 1972, Title IX of the Education Amendments prohibited sex discrimination at educational institutions accepting federal funds.

This "second wave" of feminism was launched by professional organizers and grassroots activists from the civil rights, labor union, student, and New Left movements, and by working journalists and independent writers. Relatively few academic women were among the initial vanguard. Nonetheless, by the late 1960s feminism was a visible phenomenon on the Berkeley campus, as in the community.⁵⁵ The year 1968 seemed to mark the watershed. Along with undergraduate student activists, a few handfuls of graduate students and a few freshly minted Ph.D.s at UC Berkeley emerged along the leading edges of younger thinkers and writers and activists who would contribute significantly to the slow, painstaking transformation of gender stratification in academia.

In 1969, the first course at Berkeley to focus on women was taught by a visiting lecturer in sociology.⁵⁶ In 1971, a Berkeley doctoral student published in a scholarly journal one of the first articles to analyze emerging scholarship in women's history.⁵⁷ In 1973, another scholarly journal published a new Berkeley assistant professor's seminal

review of sex role research.⁵⁸ The same year, a graduate student in comparative literature taught the first non-sociology course at Berkeley to focus on women. In 1975, after two years of concerted efforts by core groups of budding feminists, the campus approved an undergraduate group major in the emerging field of women's studies.

These groundbreaking developments were gathering a momentum that was still partly 'underground' – anomalies in the gender-stratified academic culture still generally accepted by men and women alike. How did the women who pursued graduate degrees and the women who pursued academic careers at Berkeley in this period view their positions and prospects?

No single archival resource at UC Berkeley catalogs how the women's movement of this era impacted the campus. For example, Number 5 of the *Chronicle of the University of California: A Journal of University History* reviews "Oral History Sources on Conflict and Controversy at the University of California" (housed at Berkeley's Regional Oral History Office). Among the topics covered from the 1910s to the 1990s are power struggles among the faculty, chancellors, and presidents, controversies about communism and the loyalty oath, race relations, anti-apartheid demonstrations, and affirmative action (in the sense of race/ethnicity, not gender). The second-wave women's movement is not mentioned.⁵⁹

Former Berkeley chancellor and UC president Clark Kerr's acclaimed two-volume memoir-history, *The Gold and The Blue: A Personal Memoir of the University of California, 1949-1967*, includes commentary up to 1990 or so. In more than 1,000 pages, Kerr's discussion of gender issues at Berkeley is limited to half-a-dozen references to the successful push for women's studies, among the other "liberation movements" of the 1960s. The memoirs of other prominent Berkeley academic administrators similarly contain only scattered, and for the most part, superficial references to noticing the women at Berkeley or women's issues in general, much less thoughtful considerations of gender equity.⁶⁰

In the last three decades, only two publications have appeared — both in just the last five years — that assemble recollections of women participants in the early period of the women's movement at Berkeley: one by sociology graduate students and the other by comparative literature graduate students. Both are collections of individual accounts rather than integrated chronicles. (A third book, focusing on the students and faculty of women's studies, has been submitted for publication.)⁶¹

SOCIOLOGY

Between 1952 and 1972, Berkeley's department of sociology — which became nationally renowned midway through this period — awarded 126 doctoral degrees, of which 32 (one-quarter) were to women.⁶² The reflections of sixteen of these women (most of whom received their Ph.D.s in the late 1960s) were collected and published in 1999 under the title *Gender and the Academic Experience*, edited by two of the cohort, Kathryn P. Meadow Orland and Ruth Wallace. Also among the cohort are others whose

works have become widely known to both academic and popular readerships: Lillian B. Rubin and Arlie Russell Hochschild.

Despite differences in focus and style of these retrospective essays — and the diversity of life-paths these women followed subsequent to their Berkeley educations — some themes appear among the remembrances that I suspect were shared at some point by nearly every woman in every department of those times. For example, circa 1960:

I don't remember [at that time] distinct experiences of sex discrimination. I can understand why women in academia might not have experienced it consciously. The gendered relations of the academy masqueraded as neutrality. But of course, sex discrimination was there. Sometimes I see it only as a generalized feeling of being out of place.⁶³

That “generalized feeling of being out of place” became incrementally more specific as the decade progressed. For example, circa 1964:

Along with the other women, I complained that professors did not take us seriously. Though there were many women sociology students, no woman held a tenure-track appointment in the department. If women were good enough for graduate school, we said, at least one must be good enough for a faculty position.⁶⁴

By 1968, consciousness of discrimination in the treatment of women students and scholars was still emerging toward collective realization:

...I invited women graduate students to my apartment. ...I remember asking whether there was some problem we shared as women that is causing us to become discouraged. One by one we went around the circle: “No.” “No.” “No.”... No one hinted that there might be a link between these hesitations [about ourselves as graduate students], dropping out, and being a woman. ...But... no one left. Two hours later, graduate students were huddled in animated groups, buzzing about professors, courses...

Apart from [one instructor], no professors in our department were women. Yet a fifth of the graduate students were women, hoping one day to become professors. How was this to happen? That was the question our meeting allowed us to unbury. After that first meeting, we met periodically for several years.⁶⁵

The activism of these students combined with other forces that began to shift the overwhelming male composition of the department's faculty. From 1969 to 1974, one-third of new appointments to the ladder rank in sociology went to women, “bringing the proportion of women faculty to 11 percent of the twenty-eight member department.”⁶⁶ While far less than the availability of female sociologists in the labor market at the time, nonetheless the impact of women's — and men's — raised consciousness was beginning to be felt.

COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

In another part of the campus in 1969, a group of women graduate students in the department of comparative literature began meeting informally to improvise a “feminist literary salon” known as Marsha’s Salon, for its initiator Marsha Hudson. Over time the studies, careers, and lives of several scores of graduate students were changed in ways at first unimaginable by the earliest participants. Just this month (December 2004), the reflections of 17 of these participants were published. These accounts illuminate in rich detail how the comparative literature department, as well as its allied departments of various languages and literatures, were transformed by the activism of what became the Comparative Literature Women’s Caucus.⁶⁷

In the early 1970s, the students of the salon and then caucus noticed that women’s voices were absent from their curricula — despite a vast breadth and depth of readings assigned in many languages. They connected this absence to the gender disparities that increased with each step up the academic ladder. Although the numbers of male and female students pursuing graduate degrees were roughly equal, fewer women than men completed their Ph.D.s, and women faculty were greatly underrepresented. The women students complained of the paucity of role models. Soon, as the founder of Marsha’s Salon relates,

... the personal nature of our focus began to mingle with a political focus: what could we do to better the condition of women in academe and specifically in the Comparative Literature Department? Out of these discussions emerged the conviction that the department must have a course on women and literature and that it must be taught by graduate women, so that women could control its design.⁶⁸

With the support and political acumen of the male vice chair of the department, professor Joseph Duggan, the students were granted approval to teach such a course, titled Comparative Literature 40, beginning in the spring of 1972. Within a few years, it received the institutional blessing of funding.⁶⁹ Students of this course went on to collect, translate, and publish two editions of women’s poetry from around the globe, thereby making their own significant contribution to adding women’s voices to the curriculum.

In 1976, then Vice Chancellor Ira Michael Heyman solicited a “campus self-evaluation regarding possible sex discrimination in the areas of student admissions, courses, advising and treatment. ...Particular emphasis was placed on student participation.”⁷⁰ In response, the Comparative Literature Women’s Caucus wrote a highly critical, four-page response. Among its points was:

... sex discrimination does exist in our department as long as an equal number of men and women do not hold faculty positions. Men hold positions in the department in the ratio of 3:1, but the department continues to hire more men than women. ...If the department committed itself to affirmative action, female graduate students would eventually see women moving up the academic ladder

and receiving tenure. At present only two women hold tenure in a faculty of twenty-four persons. This imbalance is discouraging to women students, who feel that even though they are allowed to study literature and get degrees, they will be thoroughly discriminated against once they enter the job market.⁷¹

One of the students of the caucus, Bridget Connelly, went on to be hired to a tenure-track position in the department of Rhetoric in fall 1978. Her reflections on her battle for tenure in 1984-85 illustrate that “achieving tenure at Berkeley, as everyone had assured me, was never easy.”⁷² After winning tenure, professor Connelly for the first time became “overtly political,” joining the Association of Academic Women (discussed in Section Three), actively supporting the university’s Title IX assistant on affirmative action, and helping other women win tenure battles in the departments of mathematics and the school of law (discussed in Section Four).⁷³

WOMEN’S STUDIES

Another participant in the graduate student women’s caucus, Gloria Bowles, went on to form a Women’s Studies Committee in 1973 and, by fall 1975, a group major in Women’s Studies. Like the comparative literature course on women writers, “students started Women’s Studies at Berkeley.”⁷⁴ An expanded history of this program and major is expected to be published in the near future.⁷⁵

Section Three

WORKING THE SYSTEMS

In the late 1960s, there were few women among the ladder-rank professoriate who were inclined to take up the banner of feminism openly. “Successful women professionals like [professor of demography] Judith Blake were still insisting that ‘I am not a feminist but...’”⁷⁶ Reflecting on her career at Berkeley that spanned the late 1950s to the early 1970s, she later said, “[The university] was very chauvinist; there were practically no women on the faculty and one had the feeling that they didn’t want any either.”⁷⁷ (Blake later achieved the distinction of being “among the first, if not the first, woman to hold an endowed chair in the University of California system.”)

Despite their few numbers, late in the decade tenured women — such as Judith Blake, Doris Calloway, Marian Diamond, Elizabeth Scott, Susan Ervin-Tripp, Elizabeth Colson, Laura Nader, Herma Hill Kay, Hanna Pitkin, and others — began to test the efficacy of collective action. While graduate students and new Ph.D.s were organizing study groups and pushing for expanded reading lists and new curricula, at the cusp of the 1970s tenured women began to use administrative and faculty governance structures, as well as legal channels, to press for systemic change.

Ironically, it was a visiting academic from outside UC, professor of history Natalie Zemon Davis,⁷⁸ who has been credited with drawing the attention of her Berkeley colleagues to the paucity of their numbers in the ladder ranks. Elizabeth Scott, a full

professor of statistics since 1962, gathered data that demonstrated the decline of ladder-rank women from 9 percent in 1938 to 3 percent in 1969. According to Susan Ervin-Tripp, then a professor of rhetoric, “Scott’s statistics sounded the alarm.”⁷⁹ Some of the ladder-rank women joined with a larger number of lecturers, research associates, and staff to form the Women’s Faculty Group, the first such association at Berkeley.

One of these participants, professor of law Herma Hill Kay, was then serving (as the first woman ever to do so) on the Academic Senate’s Committee on Senate Policy. Professor Kay set in motion what would become a breakthrough series of events. A report issued in May 1970 announced:

In its May 6, 1969, State of the Campus Message the Committee on Senate Policy of the Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate of the University of California drew attention to the differential treatment of women by the academic community. It observed, “It is surprising that so few women — only 15 at the present time — achieve the rank of full professor at Berkeley [compared to 651 male full professors] ...”

In view of these concerns, the Committee on Senate Policy appointed a subcommittee of members of the Division to prepare a factual investigation of the status of women on the Berkeley campus as a prelude to consideration of remedial changes. This subcommittee... has now made its report, which is hereby being made available to the members of the Division.

The Committee on Senate Policy is not prepared at the present time either to endorse or to take exception with any of the substantive recommendations made in the subcommittee’s report. We offer the report now as the most detailed and thoughtful study of the status of women on the Berkeley campus that has ever been prepared in the hope that it will serve as the basis for sustained discussions next year by the Berkeley Division and in the hope that it may serve to stimulate similar studies on other campuses.⁸⁰

The Report of the Subcommittee on the Status of Academic Women on the Berkeley Campus was indeed detailed and thoughtful — running to 77 densely typed pages replete with 15 sub-reports, dozens of data tables, and 14 major categories of recommendations. It was impressively broad and comprehensive, discussing graduate student admissions and financial support; student time-to-degree, attrition and completion rates for the doctoral degree; a survey of graduate students; employment, promotion and attrition rates of different academic levels and departments; faculty nepotism rules and insurance benefit systems; faculty committee representation; and the status of women in research units. National data were shown for comparison with campus data. Every stage of career formation — what we now call ‘the pipeline’ — was examined, including (to name just a few): the encouragement or discouragement of students to apply to graduate programs, the tracking of most women Ph.D.s into the second-tier of academic jobs (lecturers and research associates), the inadequacies of childcare programs for women students and faculty.

The report found unexpected audiences and unleashed a torrent of actions. In July 1970, it was entered into the Congressional Record under the title of “Discrimination Against Women,” as one of 60 statements submitted to the Hearings Before the Special Subcommittee on Education, of the Committee on Education and Labor, of the House of Representatives, Ninety-First Congress.⁸¹ The Berkeley report attracted the notice of universities and organizations across the country as a model for study of possible discriminatory patterns based on sex. (Today, few at UC Berkeley know more than a rumor of its existence and import; the UC library catalog does not list it among its holdings.)⁸²

The subsequent waves of activities and events — and the various strategies for activism they reflected — have been characterized by one participant as the “government route,” the “inside route,” and the “legal route.”⁸³ These categories offer a useful interpretative framework for the different arenas, bearing in mind that all were employed concurrently, and each interacted with and influenced the other. Working each “route” were both individuals who were considered moderate or accommodating, as well as individuals who were considered radical or uncompromising.

THE GOVERNMENT ROUTE

Almost immediately after the Academic Senate’s release of the subcommittee’s Report, campus groups and national organizations alike seized on the new federal-level attention to sex discrimination to bring pressure to bear on the University of California.

Less than two weeks after the academic senate published its report on the status of women, a national organization, the Women's Equity Action League, filed a complaint against the university for violating federal law, specifically Executive Orders 11246 and 1375, which forbid discrimination on the basis of sex. In December 1970, the Political Science Department's women's caucus filed a complaint with the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) for violating these orders. In April 1971, the university's League of Academic Women and the National Organization of Women filed a class action complaint against the university for the same reason. In June 1971, the federal Office of Civil Rights initiated a review of university practice and policies, and the following month, HEW began a "contract compliance" review.

This latter review led to considerable tension between the university and HEW; a few weeks after beginning its work, HEW cut off new funding to the university for twenty-four hours for denying them access to personnel records. Throughout the investigation, the university used delaying tactics, and HEW repeatedly threatened to suspend funding of new federal contracts and grants.⁸⁴

One of the self-described radicals among the tenured faculty, professor of rhetoric Susan Ervin-Tripp, reflected two decades later, “It is my belief that the pressures from the radical tactics contributed significantly to changes which occurred in the Senate and administrative channels. The evidence for this belief is that discussions regularly

occurred in the Senate about what was happening on the other fronts [governmental and legal].”⁸⁵

THE INSIDE ROUTE

On campus, the Report’s immediate impact was the Academic Senate’s establishment in 1971 of the Committee on the Status of Women.⁸⁶ Its charge was to encourage departments to practice equal opportunity, to continuously monitor conditions, and to report annually to the Academic Senate on the progress of the campus. For the first time, a mechanism to keep the issue of gender equity on the University’s agenda was institutionalized.

Participants in the Women’s Faculty Group were among the early chairs and members of the new Committee on the Status of Women. It set to work to address the recommendations of the first Report and to leverage the scrutiny of the federal agencies. The systemwide University President Charles Hitch affirmed support for initiating affirmative action programs in 1970.⁸⁷ At Berkeley, new faculty administrative posts were created: an Assistant for Affirmative Action, an Assistant for the Status of Women, and an Ombudsperson. Although reporting to the Vice Chancellor and enjoying relatively high visibility, the positions were part-time appointments drawn from the faculty and thus by their nature understaffed and fragmented

In fall 1971, the appointment of the first woman — Elizabeth Colson, a professor of anthropology — to chair the Budget Committee of the Academic Senate heralded important developments. This key committee reviews all academic cases put forward for appointment, promotion, and tenure decisions. Colson later recalled:

One of the things we did my first year on the committee — this was backed by the men on the committee — we tried to go across departments and see who [women] looked to us as not being advanced in comparison with other people [men] in that department, and other people in comparable situations across the campus. ...And then we could say in our letters that we thought that perhaps somebody who was in the lectureship position perhaps should be considered for a regular faculty position. ... [we] were able to look right across the campus, and to look right across the record from the beginning of that [female] person’s arrival on campus, and look at it in comparison with what was happening to other [male] people in that department.⁸⁸

With a reputation for being polite but firm, Colson began proposing changes to the Budget Committee’s longstanding procedures and policies in recruitment and promotion. Data prepared by the Committee on the Status of Women documented disparities between availability pools of women faculty and their rates of hire, as well as disparities between male and female faculty in how academic achievements (such as publications, awards, etc.) correlated with rank and salary. Colson drew attention to the differential evaluation that equivalent qualifications received, depending on whether they were held by women or by men.

Such work had significant impact, both on the campus and beyond. Elizabeth Scott, professor of statistics, continued to produce the influential studies. Partly on the basis of repute earned by the publication of her statistics in the Congressional Record, Scott was tapped by the Carnegie Commission for a national multi-university study examining the relative salaries of male and female faculty. Published in 1973, her reports and methodologies influenced Berkeley, and other universities, in making salary adjustments to remedy inequities.⁸⁹

Scott's analyses suggested that "an aggregate campus hiring rate of at least 30 percent women had to be maintained consistently even to reach current availability ratios in 20 years."⁹⁰ As hiring was still far below this rate, some women faculty and graduate students grew impatient with the slowness of incremental change through the channels of faculty governance.

THE LEGAL ROUTE

In early 1972, a subset of the Women's Faculty Group called the League of Academic Women joined with 12 women, including graduate students and a staff member, to bring a class action suit in the U.S. District Court, Northern District of California, charging UC Berkeley with widespread discrimination in appointment and promotion. Although the judge instructed the university to propose plans to remedy discrimination,⁹¹ ultimately the lawsuit was dismissed. Male bias on the bench, the loyalty of California judges to their UC alma mater, and the formidable stature of the University all have been postulated as playing a role in this defeat.

Nonetheless a precedent of challenge was set and, in subsequent decades, lawsuits would continue to be an important tool in winning individual cases for promotion and tenure.

Section Four

RAISING CEILINGS

OPEN RECRUITMENT

One of the most important changes instituted by the campus's new affirmative action policies was the establishment of an open hiring process for all faculty positions. While faculty hiring was said to be based on objective standards of merit (as discussed by Clark Kerr, for instance),⁹² in fact academic hiring traditionally relied nearly exclusively on 'the old boys' network' for recruitments to ladder rank positions. Vacancies were not advertised on an open marketplace; word of mouth among professors served to identify and recommend promising candidates for available jobs.

In 1970, there was no public advertising of positions, and it was considered inappropriate to apply for a job. A job was like an arranged marriage. The chair

might call a department in a leading institution and ask if they had some good young men in a particular field coming along. One of my colleagues told me he was hired that way even before he had begun his dissertation. Because of this practice, it was unlikely to hire from another department or from a lecturer position.⁹³

Male professors naturally recommended graduate students who reminded them of their younger selves: ‘bright young men.’ Women graduate students who asked their dissertation advisers for job referrals were typically steered toward lectureships, second-tier universities, or women’s colleges — rarely to ladder-rank opportunities at top-tier institutions.

Open advertising in the context of a fledgling affirmation action program dramatically shifted the rules for the conduct of business, leading to increased hiring of women. In 1972, women made up 5 percent of the ladder ranks. By 1978, after many departments had hired one or more new women to their ladder ranks, women’s representation overall rose to almost 9 percent. Still, of Berkeley’s 79 academic units (departments, schools, and divisions) at that time, fully one-third remained all-male.⁹⁴

While pressure was bearing on departments to bring forward female nominations for ladder rank openings, recommendations did not always lead to appointments. In SWEM’s 1978-79 annual report, its synopsis noted:

...We obtained data on the appointment of new faculty [120 in the previous two years] by rank and sex. Analysis of the data by Professor E. Scott show that the probability that a woman proposed by her department will be denied appointment is [statistically significantly] larger than the estimated probability for men.⁹⁵

As possible explanations, one can conjecture that the hiring committees prepared their recommendations less persuasively for women nominees than for men nominees, or that the Budget Committee, or the Chancellor as final arbiter, assessed the qualifications of the nominated women more critically than those of nominated men.

Nonetheless, progress in hiring was made. The proportion of women hired to the ladder ranks each year increased from 10.6 percent in 1979 to a high of 38.5 percent in 1984. The three summary charts in the Appendix show the trend lines from year to year.⁹⁶ Over the 15 years from 1979 to 1993, hiring of women averaged about 26 percent. The subsequent decade, 1994 to 2003, will be discussed later.

RETENTION AND PROMOTION

As more women stepped on to the ladder rank, the questions of retaining and promoting them came to the forefront. The ‘glass ceiling’ that formerly existed at the instructor or lecturer or research associate level was now felt, in many cases, at the assistant professor level. Women coming up for promotion to tenure were unsuccessful

at higher rates than their male colleagues. The 1978-79 SWEM report noted: “Although the university has been partially successful in bringing minorities and women into the beginning levels of academic ranks, the problems of retention and promotion remain acute.”⁹⁷ A decade later, SWEM’s 1989 study continued to report a significant differential between the tenuring of women and men. Of new hires to the tenure-track between 1980 and 1984, by 1988 the rate of promotion to tenure was 46.1 percent for men and 31.7 percent for women.

From the mid-1980s continuing into the 1990s, the cases of half-a-dozen women who received tenure denials brought to public notice — outside the closed doors of departments and review committees — charges that the university, or key bodies in its decision-making process, continued to engage in biased practices that undermined its formal equal opportunity and affirmative action policies.

These publicized cases (with dates of initial tenure denial and final settlement) were: in the law school, Marjorie Schultz (1985-1988) and Eleanor Swift (1986-1988); in the department of architecture, Marcy Li Wong (1985–1996); in the department of history of art, Margaretta Lovell (1987-1992) and Maribeth Graybill (1989-1997); and in the department of mathematics, Jenny Harrison (1986-1993). Schultz, Swift, Lovell, and Harrison eventually received tenure and full professorships at Berkeley. Wong and Graybill both left UC for careers elsewhere and eventually received monetary awards in settlement.

Each of these cases differs, of course, in the particularities of the individual under review, the route of appeals taken, and the stance of the departments, administration, and various review bodies. But common to all are claims of differential standards of merit and procedural irregularities, whether adjudged internally by the department itself in some cases, or by the Academic Senate’s Committee on Privilege and Tenure, or by the campus’s Title IX Officer — or externally, by the federal Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC) or by a district court ruling.

A summary of Lovell’s case by the American Association of University Women (AAUW) illustrates themes reiterated in comparable form by all complainants:

She subsequently filed an internal grievance with the university’s privilege and tenure committee, which unanimously recommended that Lovell be granted tenure without further review. However, the university affirmed the department’s [negative] recommendation. Lovell alleged that the university applied higher standards to her during her tenure review—specifically in the area of research productivity— than it did to successful, predominantly male, tenure candidates. The university’s Title IX officer at the time came to a similar conclusion upon her review of Lovell’s record. Lovell also maintained that the university committed procedural irregularities, withheld information from her, and ultimately denied her tenure after her second review in retaliation...⁹⁸

Midway through Jenny Harrison’s nine-year fight for tenure in the department of

mathematics, her case received a higher level of publicity than usually accompanies tenure battles. An investigative report published in 1991 in *The East Bay Express* detailed her case to date (and took note of the Swift and Wong cases, also well publicized at the time). Harrison is quoted there as saying:

All of the eight men who came up for tenure in the decade before my tenure review were promoted. I would have been promoted had my case been handled the same as theirs. If the university had enforced its own regulations, designed as safeguards against bias, I still would have been promoted. Instead, they changed the promotion rules especially for me.⁹⁹

Other tenure-denial or other kinds of employment-discrimination cases — especially those not in the public record of court filings — have remained undisclosed beyond campus insiders. Several well-placed women academics on the Berkeley campus affirmed that more women faculty are pursuing employment-equity related grievances at any given time than is ever known to the general campus or the public, due to the university's insistence on confidentiality provisions (both while a grievance is pending and, almost always, as part of any settlement reached) and the complainant's reluctance to be cast as a 'troublemaker' by attracting publicity adverse to UC Berkeley.¹⁰⁰

Much of my potential research into issues of 'raising the glass ceiling' at Berkeley in the 1980s and 1990s proved to be hampered by issues of confidentiality: on the one hand, lack of access to official campus records that are under seal of secrecy; on the other hand, reluctance of participant-witnesses to speak too freely or with specificity about their recollections — or the opposite side of the coin: views expressed by participant-witnesses that cannot be readily corroborated without exposing them or others to situations of potential awkwardness, or worse.

Future histories would benefit from sustained efforts to collect from participant-witnesses both comprehensive oral accounts and documentary evidence of key events. Statistical data can tell one dimension of a story, official documents another, personal accounts yet another — all dimensions are needed to reconstruct episodes and periods of history with both accuracy and insight.

As shown by Chart 2, the proportion of women among all ladder rank faculty rose nearly continuously year by year. In the 1980s and early 1990s, despite individual setbacks and struggles, faculty women continued organizational networking. Women faculty serving part-time as Title IX officers monitored allegations of sexual harassment and sex discrimination; affirmative action (now called faculty equity) officers organized informational workshops to make faculty and administrative governance processes more transparent to incoming women faculty. The Association of Academic Women (heir to the 1970s Women's Faculty Group) provided a venue for networking and advocacy on campus, complementing the activities of national women's caucuses in various disciplines and professions. Many more women faculty sat on and chaired Berkeley's Academic Senate committees. Some were appointed department chairs; fewer rose to the level of dean of a school or division; still fewer received high administrative

appointments.

Former Title IX officer and professor of forestry, Sally K. Fairfax, described the 1980s-1990s cohort of faculty women this way:

Think of a Volkswagen going through a python. The front bumper was the generation of Doris Calloway, Marian Diamond, and the like, a small group, the veterans of the '60s and early '70s. In the mid- to late '70s, departments all hired a woman or two or three, so we became the hump of the VW. Being larger and harder to digest, we took a lot of hits. Sure, we were better off than the first wave of women; by now SWEM and so on had been established. But a lot of women still took a lot of abuse to hang on.¹⁰¹

It may be premature to collect the stories of this “hump” cohort in detail; most are still active in their careers, some years away from retirement, and many are understandably circumspect in relating personal accounts in great detail.

Of the faculty I have spoken with, outlooks about the prospects of achieving gender equity at UC Berkeley in the foreseeable future run from cautious optimism to deep pessimism. All, however, have expressed one sentiment in common: a concern that younger academic women may conclude that the struggle for gender equity has largely been won, that the major battles are in the past, that less vigilance to combating gender discrimination is needed. Although the glass ceiling has risen, younger women may be surprised by colliding with its limits and — without a sense of history and its lessons — under-prepared to respond.

Section Five

PUSHING BACK THE SETBACKS

In the 1990s, the solidity or fragility of progress made toward gender equity was tested by several developments. In 1995 the Regents of the University of California passed a resolution, known as SP-2, that prohibited the use of race, sex, color, ethnicity or national origin as criteria in employment and contracting. In 1996 the California electorate passed an amendment to the State Constitution, known as Proposition 209 or the California Civil Rights Initiative, that prohibited the state from “discriminat[ing] against, or grant[ing] preferential treatment to, any individual or group on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin in the operation of public employment, public education, or public contracting.”

By 1997, SP-2 and Proposition 209 were fully in effect. At UC Berkeley, both Chancellor Chang-Lin Tien and his successor Chancellor Robert Berdahl affirmed the campus's commitment to diversity and reiterated the university's adherence to federal affirmative action regulations. Nonetheless, according to the current associate vice provost for faculty equity, professor of chemistry Angelica Stacy, the impact of the measures was “a nosedive” for affirmative action.¹⁰²

By 1999 employment trend lines for women at all ladder ranks of Berkeley's professoriate had flattened or fallen. The effects were most apparent in hiring rates: "In the early 1990s, about 37 percent of the faculty hired at Berkeley were women. With the passage of Prop. 209, that dropped to 21 percent in 2000."¹⁰³

An additional factor exacerbated the decline in women's representation in the professoriate. Between 1991 and 1993, UC responded to budget shortfalls by instituting the Voluntary Early Retirement Incentive Program (VERIP), resulting in the early retirement of an estimated 10 percent of senior faculty. However, replacement hiring tended to be at the senior levels as well.

The percentage of junior to senior faculty hires was skewed in the late 1990s as well, [faculty equity officer, professor Charles] Henry said.... "Because the pool of minorities and women is greater at the junior level than at the senior level, they weren't in the pipeline, so our hiring of minorities and women dropped off."¹⁰⁴

The reversal of progress toward faculty equity was particularly striking when considered in the context of a projected overall boom in faculty hiring. By 2010 or so, new hires anticipated to accommodate expanding student enrollment and to compensate for normal rates of attrition will number about 800 new ladder-rank faculty¹⁰⁵ — the largest hiring wave since the 1,000-plus new ladder appointments at Berkeley in the 1950s. Some Berkeley faculty women — in concert with their colleagues at other UC campuses — again "sounded the alarm," as had been done 30 years earlier.

REVISITING THE GOVERNMENT ROUTE

In 2000, at the request of UC faculty, California Senator Jackie Speier, chair of the Senate Select Committee on Government Oversight, exercised the powers of her office to request audits of UC's progress in reducing gender disparity in faculty hiring. The Joint Legislative Audit Committee approved the request and the Select Committee convened a series of public hearings in 2001, 2002, and 2003.

Addressing the hearings, Senator Speier emphasized that "The stakes are very high for California's future" — reiterating that, in the next ten years, UC "will see new hires that will exceed the actual number of faculty members within the university today."¹⁰⁶

In addition to reports of the State Auditor, each hearing took statements from UC systemwide administrators and from faculty members from the various campuses, including Berkeley. Testimony examined in detail the status of faculty on the various campuses and departments. While the University's official spokeswomen emphasized progress made and institutional commitment to further progress, faculty members directed attention to the deficiencies of 30 years of hiring patterns and the recent reversals in progress.

In a February 2003 briefing, the Senate Committee concluded: “The University of California (UC) has failed to increase the percentage of women faculty hired despite a stated plan for reducing gender disparity among its faculty.” It continued:

UC professors are discouraged by the latest figures [hiring data for FY 2001-2002] because UC is halfway done with its unprecedented hiring of new faculty, so the opportunity to shape the composition of who teaches at UC campuses during the next 30 to 40 years is fading without an appreciable gain among women. Since UC's enrollment is expected to increase 50 percent over the next decade, UC has been on a track for the last four years to double its current teaching corps.¹⁰⁷

REVISITING THE INSIDE ROUTE

The last several years' externally imposed obligation on the University of California to report annually to the Legislature has underlined the need for accountability, to link rhetoric and intentions with actions and results. In November 2002, then-President Richard Atkinson convened a President's Summit on Faculty Gender Equity, attended by some three dozen leading women faculty and administrators from all campuses.

Among the Summit's series of recommendations and initiatives were several addressing “the importance of policies and practices to accommodate childbearing, child rearing, and other family needs within the faculty career path.”¹⁰⁸ President Atkinson subsequently explicitly endorsed a recent systemwide work/family research and advocacy project spearheaded by Berkeley's dean of the graduate division and professor of social welfare Mary Ann Mason and associate vice provost for faculty equity and professor of chemistry Angelica Stacy. Linking declarations to actions, Atkinson proposed measures to strengthen aspects of existing family accommodation policies. The “UC Faculty Family Friendly Edge” has emerged as a major initiative attracting national attention to systemic social and institutional care taking arrangements that continue to underlie and drive gender inequities.¹⁰⁹

On another front — as this account is being written — the UC faculty as a governance body is in the midst of revising the criteria for evaluating ladder-rank faculty, as well as academic deans, to place an individual's record of affirmative actions (or lack thereof) on behalf of women and other underrepresented groups on the same par as traditional considerations of teaching, scholarship, and service. For the first time in UC's history, the 2,200 Academic Senate members of the Berkeley campus — roughly three-quarters of whom are male — are codifying standards of evaluation for hiring and promotion that will hold themselves, and their successors, accountable for dismantling disparities still prevalent within their midst.

TAKING STOCK

Feminist advocates are keeping the issue of gender equity on the institutional

agenda and in the media eye. A notable case in point appeared just last week. In its issue dated December 3, 2004, academia's weekly journal of record *The Chronicle of Higher Education* carries a Special Report on the status of women faculty in the academy.¹¹⁰

Among other articles, Robin Wilson's centerpiece titled "Where the Elite Teach, It's Still a Man's World" paints a discouraging picture of the progress of women faculty in top-tier research institutions. Quoting several faculty members and researchers at Berkeley as well as at other UC campuses and universities across the nation, in cogent and urgent language it summarizes and expands on the themes discussed above. This reportage sounds yet the latest alarm, coast to coast.

It seems to me that growing momentum is again being brought to bear on spotlighting the status of women in the academy, on taking stock of gains and losses, of weighing the steps toward equity and the persisting disparities. Likewise, it seems that various university-trained women are, more so in the last handful of years, publishing reflections on their activism over the last 40 years. The times seem ripe for collecting not only the burgeoning bodies of quantitative data but, more importantly, the qualitative records — narrative and documentary stories, individually anecdotal, institutionally sanctioned, all of them together — that are essential to offering background, details, and context to the dry numbers, trend lines, and charts. While statistical data are vital to capture and transmit, their underlying meanings must be informed by participant-witnesses and interpreted by historians, sociologists, and interested scholars of every disciplinary stripe.

An always-present task and never-ending challenge of historians is to convey to new generations a sense of why history matters. Fortunately, this challenge has been taken up by those who appreciate how the second-wave women's movement has informed not only views of the past but also their own personal development and the evolution of the academy. Very recently one such contributor framed the stakes this way:

The story of women within the university is not the story that academic men have told. Nor is our university theirs. ...Without women's voices, the university is necessarily incomplete. Women do not experience the university as men do, and the university we would create is not the one that was created without our presence. ...Women have changed the university, making its name more truthful: a place of *universality*, a place where all of us belong.¹¹¹

A comprehensive social history of women academics at UC Berkeley remains to be done. The need is real, the goodwill is present, opportunities are ripe. Current and future generations of students, faculty, and administrators would — should — benefit from a greater comprehension of the gender dynamics that have been part and parcel of the institutional evolution of the spectacularly influential University of California.

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The faculty and librarians of Mills College, from whom I was privileged to learn for a very long time (1990-2004), have my gratitude for their talented teaching, commitment to the liberal education of women, and sustained encouragement of my academic pursuits. I wish I had had the opportunity to spend more concentrated time as a full-time student and to do more and better work under their direction. My adviser, May T. Morrison Professor of History Marianne Sheldon, deserves special recognition for steady guidance during my prolonged journey.

Many mentors, friends, and family members throughout my life believed in my abilities and (for some, beyond their own lifetimes) motivated me to persevere; I thank them, each and all. My deepest appreciation goes to my partner Elliott Medrich.

Not least, I acknowledge in solidarity the feminists of all generations and genders who have struggled, and who persevere, to make this a better world for everyone.

ENDNOTES

¹ Recently, the November 8, 2004, special edition of the *Times of London* ranked UC Berkeley second in the world (behind Harvard). In 1934, Berkeley's graduate programs were ranked as highly as those of any Ivy institution, on the basis of evaluations by 2,000 scholars surveyed by the American Council of Education. As early as 1910, Berkeley was cited among the ten outstanding American universities. Patricia A. Pelfrey. *A Brief History of the University of California*. Berkeley: University of California Press. 2004. 22, 29-30.

² Some historians have observed that which is most self-evident is often least examined and, yet, can be vital to understanding human affairs — for example, see A. Roger Ekirch, “Sleep We Have Lost: Pre-industrial Slumber in the British Isles,” *American Historical Review* (April 2001). The field of Women's Studies is founded on noticing the obvious but previously unspoken: that women constitute half the actors in human history and thus are subjects of equal importance as men.

³ Author conversations with Alice Agogino, professor of mechanical engineering and vice chair of the Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate, August 2004.

⁴ The terms “ladder-rank” and “regular” faculty denote full and associate professors (tenured) and assistant professors (on tenure track), not lecturers, adjuncts, postdoctoral research assistants, and so on. The term “gender equity” as used here indicates the employment of women and men proportionally to their availability in the relevant labor market and at ranks and with salaries commensurate with their qualifications.

⁵ Rosalind Rosenberg. “The Limits of Access: The History of Coeducation in America.” *Women and Higher Education in American History: Essays from the Mount Holyoke College Sesquicentennial Symposia*. New York: Norton. 1988. 2.

⁶ Pelfrey. 10.

⁷ Rosenberg. 3-4.

⁸ Janet Ruyle, ed. “Introduction.” *Chronicle of the University of California: A Journal of University History*. Volume 1, No.2, Fall 1998. i.

⁹ Verne Stadtman, Ed. *The Centennial Record of the University of California*. Berkeley: University of California Printing Department. 1967.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ In 1897, an influential San Francisco Bay Area female philanthropist, Phoebe Hearst, was appointed by the University Regents to their own ranks. Ruyle, i.

¹² http://www.grad.berkeley.edu/alumni_friends/decades_excellence.shtml

¹³ Ruyle, i.

¹⁴ <http://www.berkeley.edu/news/berkeleyan/1995/0510/women.html>

¹⁵ Stadtman.

¹⁶ Pelfrey, 28.

¹⁷ Pelfrey, 31.

¹⁸ Pelfrey, 119-123.

¹⁹ “Discrimination Against Women.” Hearings Before the Special Subcommittee on Education, of the Committee on Education and Labor, of the House of Representatives, Ninety-First Congress. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office. 1971. Table X.

²⁰ Ibid. Table XII.

²¹ For example: “The position of women in higher education has been worsening; women are slowly being pushed out of the university world. For example, in 1870, women were one-third of the faculty in our nation’s institutions of higher learning. A hundred years later, women hold less than one-fourth of the positions. In the prestigious Big Ten universities, they hold 10% or less of the faculty positions. The proportion of women graduate students *is less now* than it was in 1930. The University of Chicago, for example, has a *lower* proportion of women on its faculty *now* than it did *in 1899*.” Dr. Bernice Sandler, Women’s Equity Action League. “Discrimination Against Women.” <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/6462>

²² The exceptions are the extant women’s colleges and some formerly women-only institutions, where the faculty’s gender composition tends toward parity.

²³ Maresi Nerad. *The Academic Kitchen: A Social History of Gender Stratification at The University of California, Berkeley*. Albany: State University of New York Press. 1999. See later discussion of this work for more detail.

²⁴ “Discrimination Against Women.” Table IV-1. All figures on the next page are from this table.

²⁵ What accounted for this high-water mark, as the Great Depression was ameliorating but before the U.S. entry into World War II? The question begs investigating. One must

bear in mind, however, that due to the small N for women faculty participation prior to the 1970s, small changes in numbers translate into much larger changes in percentages. When N's are too small (less than 35 in any given cell, according to standards of the National Center for Educational Statistics), statistical studies illuminate trends far less meaningfully than social histories can.

²⁶ Ray Colvig, "Few Concerns, Fewer Women." *Chronicle of the University of California: A Journal of University History*. Volume 1, No.2, Fall 1998. 116-118.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Author conversation with, and unpublished notes shared by, Susan Ervin-Tripp.

²⁹ Joyce Appleby, "The Power of History," *American Historical Review*. February 1998. 10.

³⁰ My research did not extend to voluminous primary sources such as reports of the Chancellors and Presidents, available back to at least 1890; *The Regents' Minutes*, available back to at least 1905; the minutes and reports of the Academic Senate from its establishment in 1920, etc. A rigorous review ought to be conducted by future students and scholars. I predict that recorded comment on women as scholars is rare in any official documents before the 1970s. Memoirs, oral histories, and interviews of faculty, administrators, and alumni (often unpublished or not readily available) likely will offer the bulk of evidence in recollecting how 'the woman question' was considered and discussed (when it was at all) through the decades.

³¹ Ruyle, op cit.

³² Colvig, op cit.

³³ "Learning in the World of Change," *California Monthly* (May 1959), quoted by Colvig at 110; citation at footnote 13 at 117.

³⁴ Quoted by Colvig at 109; citation at footnote 7 at 117.

³⁵ Colvig, 108.

³⁶ Nerad, 135.

³⁷ Clark Kerr. *The Gold and The Blue: A Personal Memoir of the University of California, 1949-1967*. Two volumes. Berkeley: University of California Press. 2003. 63.

³⁸ I've chosen these precise bounds for a ten-year period somewhat arbitrarily, for convenience based on statistics on hand. The downward trend continued, with

anomalous variations in the associate professor level, throughout the 1960s. "Discrimination Against Women," op cit. Table IV-1.

³⁹ Nerad, op cit.

⁴⁰ "In 1949, during the Cold War, the Board of Regents of the University of California imposed a requirement that all University employees sign an oath affirming not only loyalty to the state constitution, but a denial of membership or belief in organizations (including Communist organizations) advocating overthrow of the United States government. Many faculty, students, and employees resisted the oath for violating principles of shared governance, academic freedom, and tenure. In the summer of 1950, thirty-one "non-signer" professors--including internationally distinguished scholars, not one of whom had been charged of professional unfitness or personal disloyalty--and many other UC employees were dismissed. The controversy raised critical questions for American higher education." http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/uchistory/archives_exhibits/loyaltyoath/

⁴¹ http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/uchistory/archives_exhibits/loyaltyoath/nonsigners.html

⁴² Nerad, 132.

⁴³ Nerad, 132.

⁴⁴ Kerr, 87.

⁴⁵ Nerad, 135-138

⁴⁶ Nerad, 138.

⁴⁷ Clark Kerr, President Emeritus at the time of the publication of Nerad's *Academic Kitchen*, provided this review comment, published on the book's back jacket: "The *Academic Kitchen* can be read as a speculation about motives. What was the role of prejudice against women and women's interests by male faculty members and what was the role of the great drive for academic distinction among research universities of that time in history? *The Academic Kitchen* is both a well-prepared factual history and a Who done it and why?" Kerr seems willing to indulge criticisms of his role in the department's demise 40 years earlier.

⁴⁸ Kerr, 63.

⁴⁹ Nerad, 182.

⁵⁰ Barbara Ehrenreich. *Fear of Falling: The Inner Life of the Middle Class*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers. 1989. 40.

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- ⁵¹ Including Barbara Nachtrieb Armstrong, Emily H. Huntington, Dorothy Bird Nyswander, Catherine Bauer Wurster. Lucy Sells, ed. *Honoring Women at Cal*. Berkeley: University of California Printing Services. 1995.
- ⁵² Nerad, 140.
- ⁵³ Sells, op cit. Pages unnumbered, no further attribution of “Academic Senate.”
- ⁵⁴ Colvig, 116, footnote 24 at 117.
- ⁵⁵ Ruth Rosen. *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women’s Movement Changed the World*. New York: Viking, 2000. 190-200.
- ⁵⁶ Pauline Bart, who returned to the University of Illinois at Chicago Circle. Ibid, 198.
- ⁵⁷ Ruth Rosen. “Sexism in History or, Writing Women’s History is a Tricky Business.” *Journal of Marriage and the Family*. Volume 33, No. 3, Sexism in Family Studies. August 1971. 541-544. Stable URL:
<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=00222445%28197108%2933%3A3%3C541%3ASIHOW%3E2.0.CO%3B2-7>
- ⁵⁸ Arlie Russell Hochschild. “A Review of Sex Role Research.” *The American Journal of Sociology*. Volume 78, No. 4, Changing Women in a Changing Society. January 1973. 1011-1029. Stable URL:
<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=00029602%28197301%2978%3A4%3C1011%3AAROSR%3E2.0.CO%3B2-5>
- ⁵⁹ Carroll Brentano, ed. *Chronicle of the University of California: A Journal of University History*. Volume 1, No.5, Spring 2002.
- ⁶⁰ See Bibliography for Regional Oral History Office references.
- ⁶¹ Gloria Bowles, “A Quiet Struggle: Women’s Studies at Berkeley.” Carroll Brentano, ed. *Chronicle of the University of California: A Journal of University History*. Volume 1, No.5, Spring 2002. 81, footnote 12.
- ⁶² Kathryn P. Meadow Orland and Ruth A. Wallace, ed. *Gender and the Academic Experience: Berkeley Women Sociologists*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press. 1994. 1-2.
- ⁶³ Dorothy E. Smith, “A Berkeley Education.” Op cit. 47.
- ⁶⁴ Kathryn P. Meadow Orland, “Gold and Blue in California.” Op cit. 76.
- ⁶⁵ Arlie Russell Hochschild, “Inside the Clockwork of Male Careers.” Op cit. 135-136.

⁶⁶ Kathryn P. Meadow Orlans and Ruth A. Wallace, “Epilogue.” Op cit, 249.

⁶⁷ Marsha Hudson, Bridget Connolly, Doris Earnshaw, Olivia Eielson, July Wells, ed. *The Berkeley Literary Women’s Revolution: Essays from Marsha’s Salon*. Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc. 2005.

⁶⁸ Marsha Hudson, “Dancing in a Cage.” Op cit. 15.

⁶⁹ Remarkably, Comp Lit 40 continues to this day in the same revolutionary form of being taught and administered by the graduate Women’s Caucus.

⁷⁰ “Women Students at Berkeley: Views and Data on Possible Sex Discrimination in Academic Programs.” Office of the Chancellor. University of California, Berkeley. June 1977. i.

⁷¹ Appendix VI: Women’s Caucus letter to Vice Chancellor Ira Michael Heyman, May 18, 1976. Op cit. 219.

⁷² Bridget Connelly, “Stealth Feminism.” Op cit. 90-91.

⁷³ Ibid. 92.

⁷⁴ Gloria Bowles, “The Legacy.” Op cit. 115-117.

⁷⁵ See footnote 61.

⁷⁶ Ruth Dixon Mueller, “Accidental Tourist.” *Gender and the Academic Experience*. Op cit, 207.

⁷⁷ <http://dynaweb.oac.cdlib.org:8088/dynaweb/uchist/public/inmemoriam/inmemoriam1994/659#X> - the quote was attributed to 1989.

⁷⁸ Then on sabbatical from the University of Toronto.

⁷⁹ Author conversation with, and unpublished notes shared by, Susan Ervin-Tripp. Also see Elizabeth Colson, "Anthropology and a Lifetime of Observation," an oral history conducted in 2000-2001 by Suzanne Riess, Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 2002.

⁸⁰ Sanford H. Kadish, For the Committee on Senate Policy, May 19, 1970, as appeared in “Discrimination Against Women,” op cit.

⁸¹ These hearings would lead to adding sex discrimination to the 1972 Amendments to the Higher Education Act.

⁸² This situation is being remedied by my provision of a copy, the original of which was lent to me by Susan Ervin-Tripp, to UC Berkeley's Office for Faculty Equity Assistance which in turn plans to compile and disseminate such source materials via its website.

⁸³ Author conversation with, and unpublished notes shared by, Susan Ervin-Tripp.

⁸⁴ Lisa Gerrard, "Yours, In Sisterhood." *The Berkeley Literary Women's Revolution*, op cit. 126-127.

⁸⁵ Author conversation with, and unpublished notes shared by, Susan Ervin-Tripp.

⁸⁶ Later, the Committee on the Status of Women and Minorities (SWEM). See <http://academic-senate.berkeley.edu/committees/coms/SWEM.html>

⁸⁷ Gerrard, op cit. 127

⁸⁸ Elizabeth Colson, "Anthropology and a Lifetime of Observation," an oral history conducted in 2000-2001 by Suzanne Riess, Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 2002.

⁸⁹ Elizabeth Leonard Scott. "University of California: In Memoriam." 1991. Online: http://dynaweb.oac.cdlib.org:8088/dynaweb/uchist/public/inmemoriam/inmemoriam1991/@Generic_BookTextView/3137

⁹⁰ Author conversation with, and unpublished notes shared by, Susan Ervin-Tripp.

⁹¹ Gerrard, op cit. 126.

⁹² See discussion at 16, above.

⁹³ Author conversation with, and unpublished notes shared by, Susan Ervin-Tripp.

⁹⁴ "Synopsis of the Annual Report of the Committee on the Status of Women and Ethnic Minorities for 1978-79," Appendix 1.E, Berkeley Division, October 22, 1979.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Marc Goulden. UC Berkeley Faculty Personnel Records. December 2004.

⁹⁷ SWEM, op cit.

⁹⁸ <http://www.aauw.org/laf/cases/lovell.cfm>

⁹⁹ Brady Kahn. "The Gender Factor." *East Bay Express*. March 8, 1991.

¹⁰⁰ Sources not for attribution; author interviews.

¹⁰¹ Author interview, November 30, 2004.

¹⁰² Author interview, November 30, 2004.

¹⁰³ “The past decade at a glance.”

http://www.berkeley.edu/news/berkeleyan/2003/02/05_decade.html

¹⁰⁴ http://www.berkeley.edu/news/berkeleyan/2001/05/02_henry.html

¹⁰⁵ “Faculty diversity: the road ahead.”

http://www.berkeley.edu/news/berkeleyan/2003/02/05_facdv.html

¹⁰⁶ “A Hearing to Assess Progress Made by the University of California to Reduce Gender Disparity in Faculty Hiring,” Senate State Committee on Government Oversight, March 11, 2002, 2.

¹⁰⁷

http://www.sen.ca.gov/htbin/testbin/seninfo_dated?sen.committee.select.goover.reports

¹⁰⁸ Letter to Chancellors from Richard C. Atkinson, President, February 6, 2003.

¹⁰⁹ See <http://gradresearch.berkeley.edu>.

¹¹⁰ Robin Wilson. “Where the Elite Teach, It’s Still a Man’s World.” *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. December 3, 2004.

¹¹¹ Robin Tolmach Lakoff, “Foreword.” *The Berkeley Literary Women’s Revolution*, op cit. 4.

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All of the following are affiliated with the University of California, Berkeley, and were interviewed by the author in Berkeley between August and November 2004:

Alice M. Agogino, Professor of Mechanical Engineering.

Susan Ervin-Tripp, Professor Emerita of Psychology.

Sally K. Fairfax, Professor of Forest Policy.

Anne J. Maclachlan, Senior Researcher, Center for Studies in Higher Education.

Mary Ann Mason, Professor of Social Welfare, Dean of the Graduate Division.

Angelica Stacy, Professor of Chemistry, Associate Vice Provost for Faculty Equity.

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APPENDIX

Chart I

"Percent of Women among All UC Berkeley Ladder-Rank Faculty, By Major Disciplinary Groups, 1979-2003."

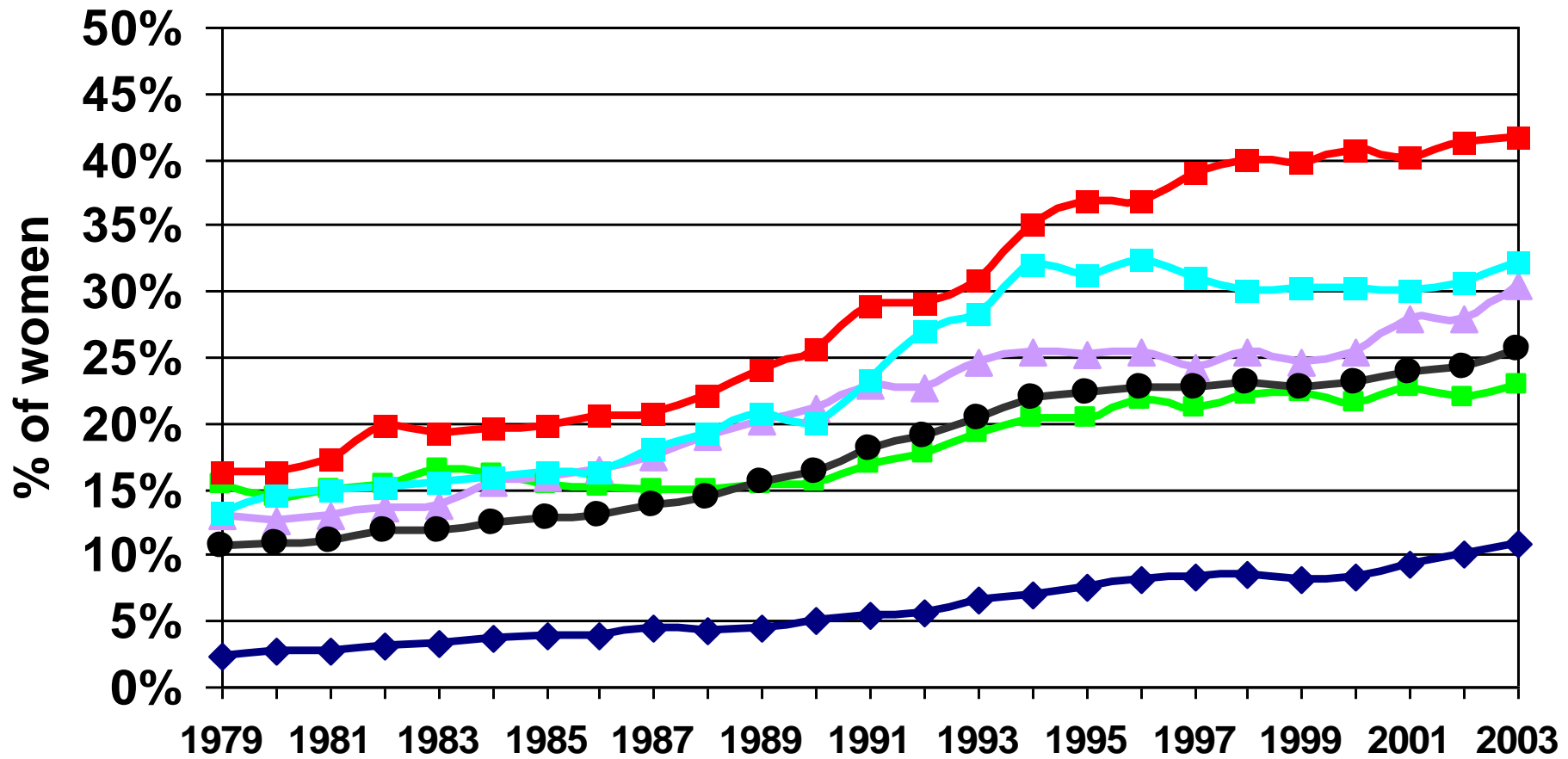
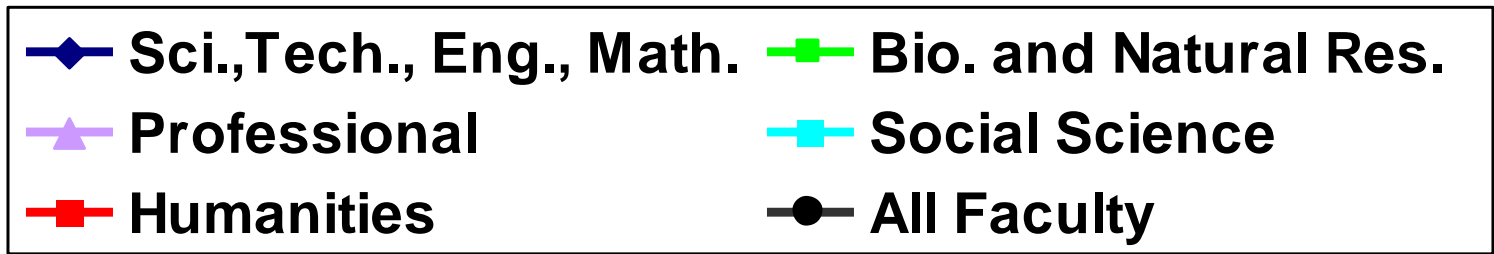
Chart II

"Percent of Women among All UC Berkeley Ladder-Rank Faculty, By Faculty Rank, 1979-2003."

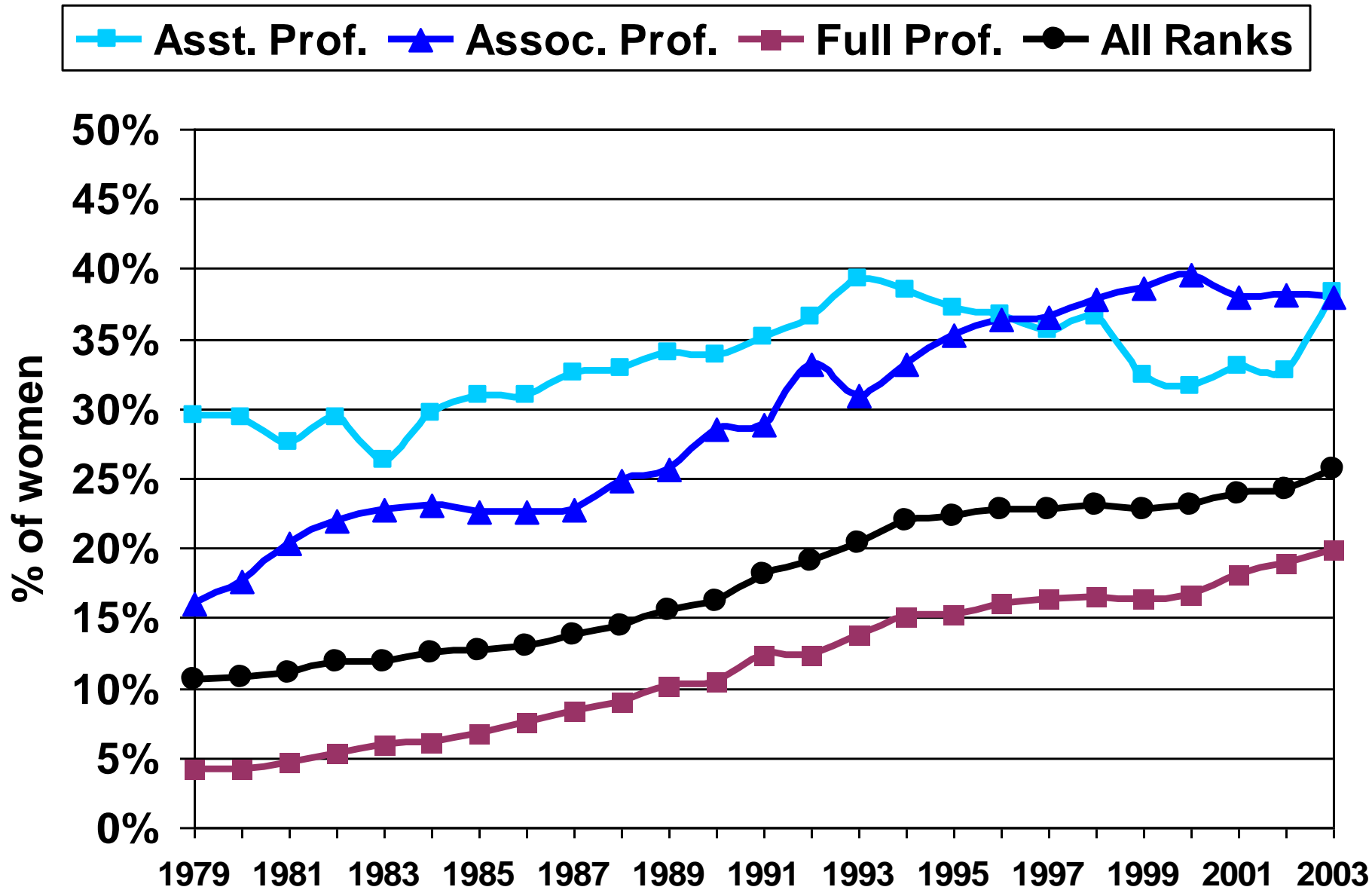
Chart III

"Percent of Women among New UC Berkeley Ladder-Rank Faculty Hires, 1979-2003."

Percent of Women among All UC Berkeley Ladder-Rank Faculty, By Major Disciplinary Groups, 1979-2003

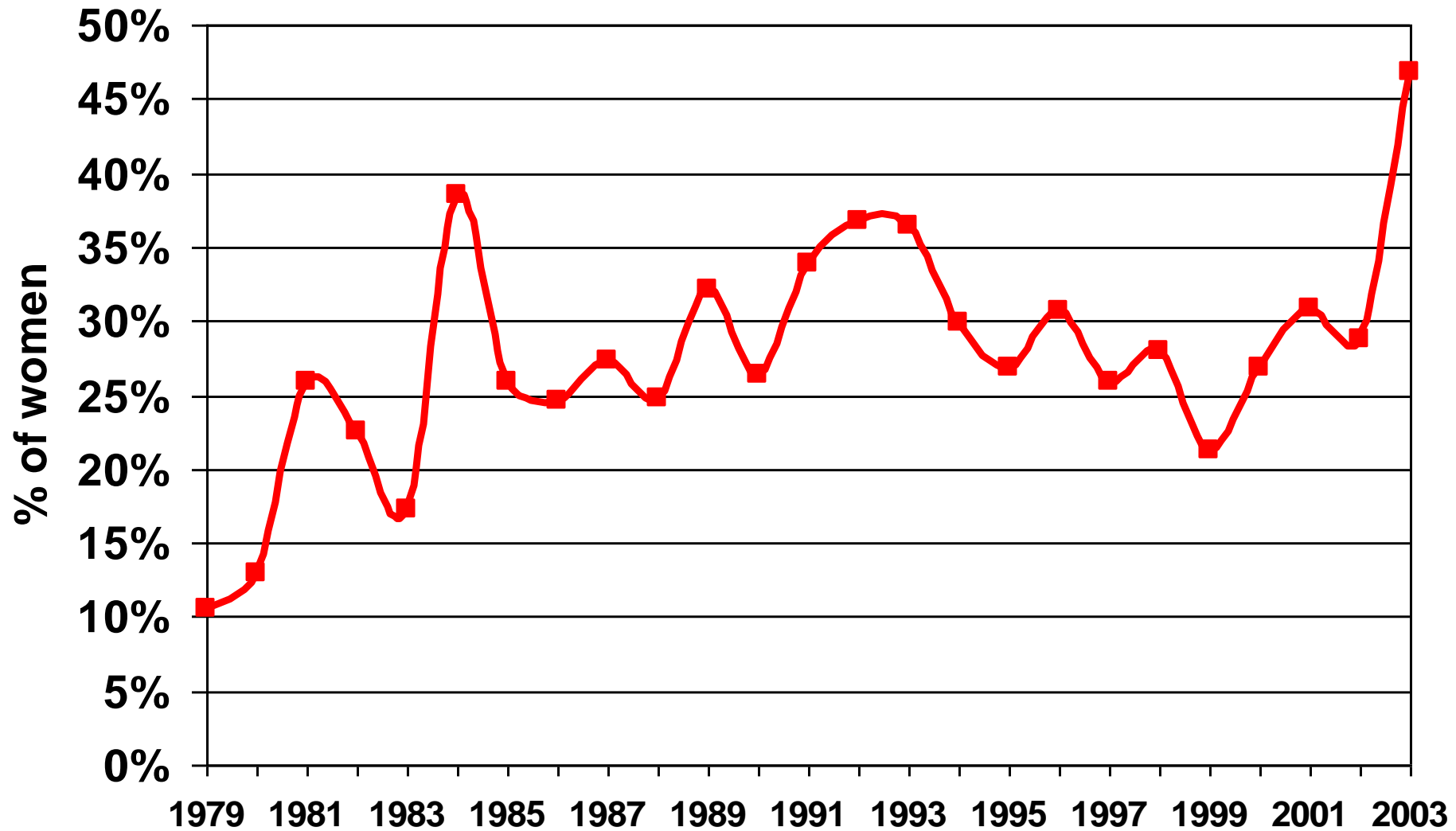


Percent of Women among All UC Berkeley Ladder-Rank Faculty, By Faculty Rank, 1979-2003



Source: UC Berkeley Faculty Personnel Records

Percent of Women among New UC Berkeley Ladder-Rank Faculty Hires, 1979-2003



Source: UC Berkeley Faculty Personnel Records