RHONA WEINSTEIN

Rhona Weinstein:

I had been discouraged along the way, with a few bright exceptions, and I think the story is worth noting. I became engaged in September of my first semester of graduate school in clinical psychology at McGill University. I was asked by the chair of the department to step down when the engagement was announced and to give up my fellowship because I was taking a precious slot and it was clear that I wasn't serious about my graduate education. And then, my wonderful professor, M. Sam Rabinovitch, went to bat for me and called a department meeting, where he said that this was outrageous. It was very helpful to say, “Stop, this can't be.” Thanks to his efforts, I did not lose my fellowship and I continued. But by marrying in December of that first year, I faced the dual career issue head on because my husband very much wanted to take his residency in psychiatry, away from McGill. And, I had applied broadly with him, but did not get into the American universities nor at Yale, where he was accepted and wanted to go. And, that spoke to, you know, another turning point.

Rhona Weinstein:

I have a learning disability and I don't perform well on standardized tests. Earlier in my senior year, I had been told by the two psychology professors at McGill in charge of graduate school applications, that I was not PhD material. And that I shouldn't bother to apply. The test scores were evidence, in their minds, that I did not have the ability, despite having published original research. And these low scores continued to haunt me when I applied to US universities again, in order to follow my husband. And I remember at the time, my professor (Rabinovitch), who was a feminist before men were known to be feminists, called Yale. And the chair of Psychology at Yale said, "We've got so many wives here." Rabinovitch countered: "She's tops in our program. Why can't she transfer, she will have completed a year?” But he replied “We can't handle these Yale wives. We're sorry." I won't name the person who said it, but I have long remembered it. Then this wonderful professor of mine suggested that I commute back to McGill from New Haven, until I could make the transfer or work it out." Which is what I did...This was unheard of at that time.

Rhona Weinstein:

...and so, I took the comprehensive exams and finished my master's thesis at McGill. Rabinovitch steered me toward a new book on community psychology by Seymour Sarason at the Yale Psycho-Ed Clinic, one of the founders of the field, and I became smitten with the approach. Through connections, I was able to get an appointment with Professor Sarason, told him my story, and asked to work at the Psycho-Ed Clinic. He first turned me down and then in the face of my tears, he agreed to accept me as an intern. But I said, “Well, I haven't completed all of the courses.” He did not much believe in coursework and said, “I'll throw you directly into an internship.” And, so my training was out of order, by faculty standards (one professor objected) but it was a wonderful experience. And then when I reapplied to the program, the faculty knew my work and I was able to complete my PhD at Yale, combining clinical and community psychology—a serendipitous path but intellectually satisfying. My next hurdle occurred around the job search. The faculty in the department knew I was married and likely planning a family so I wasn't put on the list for applying for jobs. And I wasn't aware that I wasn't on the list either. I had no knowledge of the implicit curriculum about obtaining a position. So, without job notices, I proceeded to look on my own.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah.

Rhona Weinstein:

My husband and I had a dual career pact—turn-taking in making choices. When his residency was completed, he took a job at University of Connecticut, so I could stay at Yale longer. Then he made the next choice, which was a position in San Francisco and it had many universities around it, making it a promising location. And our pact was that if there were no jobs for me, we would move again. So, I had already relocated to San Francisco, but was commuting back to Yale for one more year to complete my dissertation.

Christina Maslach:

Oh my gosh.

Rhona Weinstein:

But I didn't know there was a position available at Berkeley. A psychologist friend of my husband called me and said, "Hey, there's a position available at Berkeley and it's just in your field, community psychology. They want a community psychologist in the clinical program." The day I found out was the day after the cut-off date of application. So, of course, this would not be possible today under strict rules of application. And they had already reviewed the applicants.

Rhona Weinstein:

I was told there were 250 applicants. And somehow, whether it was the effect of coming in after all of them or after some had visited and none appeared right for the position, I was immediately called. But the message went to Yale first, then Yale had to call me in California, and I had to scurry to get the letters in. And some of my professors said "But you have followed your husband and you're planning on having a family." And I said, "But I am continuing my career here in the Bay Area." I did the job interview. It went well and I was offered the position. Later, I learned I was hired on affirmative action, first year it was in place at Berkeley. And at the party, during the interview process, the same thing happened that we talked about in the faculty panel, that my husband was on the side with the wives and I was there with the men. Everybody asked him what he was going to do, if I got the job, and he said "Not to worry, I'm sure I will find something."

Rhona Weinstein:

I was uncomfortable with our little white lie, as he already had a position. But from everything I had read at that point about how women were perceived, I knew if the faculty became aware that I had already moved here, I would be a less attractive candidate. I've always felt a little sad that I had to do that, but I did it in order to save my professional life. So, I was appointed at step one, as I had not done a postdoc.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah.

Rhona Weinstein:

But I had publications and I had done exceptionally well. I thought I should be hired at step two. As I understood, some other people were appointed at higher levels and when I pressed for it, the answer was no. It was to be step one. I also pressed for other terms, summer money and research funds and everything.

Rhona Weinstein:

Well, with regard to summer money, the chair told me that I had a husband so I didn't need to have summer money. It needed to be saved for male faculty who supported families.

Christina Maslach:

Oh my God.

Rhona Weinstein:

So I, it was very clear to me that this negotiation process was take it or leave it. You're starting right at the beginning. And I didn't understand fully what the implications of being appointed at step one were until much later.

Christina Maslach:

Join the club.

Rhona Weinstein:

Yes, join the club. And none of us were aware. I also received some very bad advice, likely sexist, when I was hired. There was a time, perhaps when I was hired, when we were allowed to opt out of social security. I was advised by everybody (the department chair, the Dean and two accountants) that this opt-out option was a good deal because we're covered by the university pension.

Rhona Weinstein:

So there's no need to pay into a federal type of pension, like social security. And besides as everybody told me, “You have a husband, so you're going to get half of your husband's social security and upon his death you're going to get the whole amount...”

Christina Maslach:

Yeah.

Rhona Weinstein:

...even though you don't pay in. Well, sadly it came to pass that that rule was changed.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah.

Rhona Weinstein:

That if you had a state pension of any sort, you were no longer eligible for your husband's social security.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah.

Rhona Weinstein:

So, it was one decision that affected ultimately the salary you got when you retired, and most importantly, it affected your access to Medicare. And that link to Medicare was not made clear. So if you were not married and you did not pay in, you do not have Medicare. So it disadvantaged unmarried people.

Christina Maslach:

Right.

Rhona Weinstein:

So, it was another form of sexism. It would be an interesting study whether men were advised differently.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah.

Rhona Weinstein:

But there is a class of people in the UC system who are facing this problem.

Christina Maslach:

Wow. You know how expensive it is?

Rhona Weinstein:

I had heard something like 1200 or 1800 people were impacted. I had written letters and talked to folks at UCOP, trying to protect their rights over the years and now as they're increasing the amount people have to pay for their healthcare, those people are being disadvantaged further because they don't have access to Medicare.

Christina Maslach:

Wow.

Rhona Weinstein:

So, it was a problem, but I can't say for sure whether it was sexism, except for the part that says if you have a husband, don't worry.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah. Yeah. Wow. I had not known about that. Interesting. Okay. Oh, all right. Anything else about the hiring process at this point that you want to think of or said?

Rhona Weinstein:

Just that I was timid. I recognized how hard it was to be a woman in academe and I was thankful that you and Eleanor were there ready. And Mary had been hired as well. But that first meeting where they gathered the female faculty, I think there were 47 women in the room, the 3%. And I realized this is not going to be a picnic. This was going to be extremely difficult. The wonderful thing is that my parents in a way had prepared me for this and believed in the career. And my father had bought the Encyclopedia Britannica and read it every night to me since I was a young child. I'd pick a book out and I could pick any book. I could open it anywhere and he would read aloud. And my mother would excuse me from the dishes and from learning how to cook so I could read the encyclopedia with my father.

Rhona Weinstein:

So, when I showed my parents the Berkeley campus and we went into the library and walked around, my father said, “I can't believe you have a job where they pay you to read whatever you want.” So it was just, was very special, very special to have the job. I was very happy and, of course, we had already moved here. It solved our dual-career problem.

Christina Maslach:

Talk about that. Oh gosh. Yeah. So how, I mean, you sort of hinted that, you know, what it might be like in terms of interacting with colleagues. So how, how did that go in the early years? I mean...

Rhona Weinstein:

Well, I had some very friendly colleagues, and particularly in the office next to mine, Shelly Zedeck. As I came in to see my new office, the former occupant was packing up because this person did not get tenure. He said to me, “I hope you'll have better luck here, Rhona.” And, Shelly must have overheard or realized the import of that situation. He came over and said, “Don't worry, Rhona, you have a friend here next door. I'll help you learn what's involved, with the tenure process.”

Christina Maslach:

So he already had tenure?

Rhona Weinstein:

He already had had tenure or he was close to it. But, this was a case where the entire program in industrial/organizational psychology was being phased out and he remained. So there had been a slew of cases where people were denied tenure. That was the climate, that people were being denied tenure, that that I came into, and there was a whole lot of controversy. That was the time when the meetings to discuss tenure cases were open to junior faculty. And Mary Main and I were sitting in that meeting, the first one we had attended, and we must have been aghast at the discussion, because we were each called in, individually, into the chairman's office after the meeting and said as a result of your expression... That's what I was told as a result of your facial expression during the meeting, we will no longer allow assistant professors to sit in during the discussion of tenure cases. So it was disallowed for a period of years. And, I was sorry because that cut off my access to the knowledge of what issues were important in the tenure decision. But I must admit, I was horrified, I guess, about some of the things that were said regarding the candidates being considered. So, I became very concerned about how would I get the information that was necessary and how would I be mentored. At the time, we didn't have any clear pattern of mentoring. And, also, there were the poker games that the men organized, not open to the female faculty.

Rhona Weinstein:

So it became clear to me that the men got together a fair amount in the department. Clearly in the men's room and Tolman Hall, you'd hear a lot of talk and laughter and good cheer. People would get together for beer or for lunch, or the poker games, and I'd hear about it. But of course the women weren't invited. Though, once it was joked, I should come to the poker game. But I never felt that that was...

Christina Maslach:

An invitation.

Rhona Weinstein:

A real, a real invitation. And as I discovered from going to conferences, going out for a drink and beer was not an easy situation.

Christina Maslach:

No.

Rhona Weinstein:

That was a rude awakening: going to conferences, seeing how much pickups were a reality there, and, I found myself in some very uncomfortable situations. So, I focused on attending events with groups of people and sort of avoiding, just a little bit tense about, the one to one encounter, and not, not knowing, how, how to handle them. Indeed once, I had to fend off a colleague who physically attacked me.

Rhona Weinstein:

And I began to reach out to the women on the campus, trying to learn as much as I could. And in the very beginning in those years, '73, '74, I found that the women who had not married and not had children, were very uncomfortable to deal with. That they just acted very male-like about their careers and weren't interested in engaging in any talk about difficulty or whatever. And when I became pregnant, I began to see why. And in fact, some of the encounters I had, one female faculty member said to me, "You're trying to have it all, it's just not right. Look what I had to give up. I had to give up so much to do this work. What makes you think that you can be married and have a family and be a professor at the same time?" Talk about, "Whoa." This, this is hard stuff, to deal with.

Rhona Weinstein:

So, I made the so-called mistake, as it was described, by becoming pregnant in the fall of the second year I was at Berkeley. I'd only been there one year, not much of a track record at all. And I might add, it had been a difficult year. Some of the stories I remember in, in the meetings. I was the only woman in my area and I was always asked to bring in the coffee or bring coffee cake or clean up the room or whatever. I was just aghast.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah.

Rhona Weinstein:

You know, until I had to confront them and say, "Hey, just because I'm a woman doesn't mean I'm going to be dealing with the food here. It has to be shared."

Christina Maslach:

What did they do before you came?

Rhona Weinstein:

Exactly. Exactly, exactly.

Rhona Weinstein:

And, and it was different. I was the only one working in my research area. My work ran against the grain even though they wanted to have somebody working in the community, everything was set up to be based in the clinic and the department. It took more time to work in the community. People had to travel. So, the structure of the meetings and the way the clinic was run didn't fit well with the work in the community. Because when we're there, we have to be there for half a day, or a day. And neither the core structure nor the clinic or training structure fit. And I was looked at as an oddity by the students who were heavily focused on the treatment of individuals. And here, I was interested in prevention and they were focused on psychotherapy and I was interested in, in systems.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah.

Rhona Weinstein:

So, it was a very difficult fit and it was very hard to find my research direction where the pressure was to produce and yet my work needed to come out of relationships that needed to be built with community settings.

Rhona Weinstein:

And I had a very different style of teaching. So, I had a very large class, abnormal psychology, with 250-350 students, and I arranged for field projects for all of them. I sent them out in the community (in schools, mental health settings, rec departments, and criminal justice system) and that took enormous effort. It was quite exciting and I was pleased with the courses and I collaborated with Stiles Hall and existing places that had strong community relationships. But I, our teaching assistants had to keep track of their work and, I ran against the norms, the way things were done, and clearly my way took longer. So I was struggling during that first year. And then the mistake I made was to get pregnant, and I wasn't planning to tell everybody right away about it nor make public announcements. My pregnancy was okay, but I was very big. I was very uncomfortable.

Rhona Weinstein:

So I said to the doctor, there's a war going on in there. He said, “How are you, would you know you've never been pregnant before?” I said, “This is not the gentle movement that's supposed to happen.”

Rhona Weinstein:

In fact, I went to a conference in upstate New York and in the wilderness at seven and a half months, which clearly, I shouldn't have traveled at that point, but I didn't know it was twins yet. It hadn't been

diagnosed. And, so I was the first sonogram to be given at Alta Bates Hospital, but we didn't realize the enormity of it and Harvey didn't even come. So I went by myself. 100 people were there because it was the first sonogram – the doctor came into the room and said, "It's twins." Then he said, "No, it's triplets." And I said, "Oh no." I started crying. And then he confirmed, "No, it's twins." They had seen a third shadow in the sonogram. And, so I came into a faculty meeting right after that in shock because I knew there was no maternity leave and I whispered to my colleague, Phil Cowen, and said, “It's twins.” He blurted out to the entire meeting, "She's having twins." My husband didn't even know yet that we were having twins. So the chair of the department said, "Good, she'll get it over with all at once."

Rhona Weinstein:

Now, before that meeting announcing my twins, five male faculty had already come into my office and suggested that I resign, give up the faculty position, and leave now. I was, as you know, the first faculty member in the department to be pregnant (although you followed me in four months). So, I had that first honor for a short period of time until, until you joined me. But it led to what my colleagues considered “friendly” advice: “I'm telling you, it's not going to work. Time to leave now. Don't see how you can combine having a baby with being a serious professor, not going to make it through tenure. Why don't you leave right now?”

Rhona Weinstein:

And then with the chair saying, “Well, you're going to get it all over with at once, at least it will be behind you.” But, of course, even though it was a one-time pregnancy, having twins was double the workload and the complexity.

Christina Maslach:

Do you remember by the way, how you came by my office right after that?

Rhona Weinstein:

No, I don't.

Christina Maslach:

Oh my gosh. I was meeting with my teaching assistants for my course in my office. And you came by because the door was open and you were waving the sonogram and you were just so upset and so distraught, saying “you know that it's twins.” Because we had talked about it before and you were saying it was one child and you'd already made the room...

Rhona Weinstein:

Right. Everything had already been bought.

Christina Maslach:

Okay. And you were waving this thing and really upset and you know, whatever. And one of my teaching assistants said he had had twins. And he said, "Do you mind if I leave and go talk with her? Because I have twins." I said, “Please go.”

Rhona Weinstein:

That's right. That's right.

Christina Maslach:

And he came to you...

Rhona Weinstein:

He comforted me and said that I'd be able to manage.

Christina Maslach:

You would do it. Yeah. I was so concerned about how you were doing. I had never seen you so discombobulated.

Rhona Weinstein:

Well, at the hospital, they didn't understand it either. Saying, “You should be happy, you know, for such good news.” But I was thinking. “No maternity leave, no maternity leave. How will I prepare for the mid-career review and...”

Christina Maslach:

Wow.

Rhona Weinstein:

So, it wasn't an easy delivery. The babies were premature. It was C-section and they were very ill for the first year of their life. Long hospitalization for Josh, shorter for Jeremy, then Jeremy nearly died from septicemia, from a stubbed toe that became infected. And both of them had some difficulties associated with prematurity, especially Josh, that took years and years to iron out. So it was very, very tough. I delivered in May, May 14th, a month early, which was timed a little early for the summer break. I missed an orals meeting and this is where my clinical colleagues were helpful.

Rhona Weinstein:

They came up with a suggestion that I examine the student earlier, so at least I could sign off and I wouldn't hold up the student. So I did. And then the call from Harvey came the night before the orals. She remembers it: “Rhona will not be at your orals, tomorrow she's giving birth.” But I was able to convey to my colleagues my vote that she had passed. So that's how, I had covered an important responsibility. So, I had the summer off, but unfortunately, I was given five courses (including a large lecture class) instead of four to teach, to show that I was determined to continue to be a professor. I remember arguing with the chair and saying, “This is inhumane here. Four is heavy enough as it is. How, how can you give me an extra course to teach? And the reply from the chair: “It's not fair vis-a-vis the others. No, you have to show us that, you know, you're up to the rigors of this professor role.”

Rhona Weinstein:

And I sometimes think about the differences between my experience and your experience and why I had rougher treatment. And I think it had to do with the fact that I became pregnant earlier in my career. You had been there a little longer, so you had already established more of a record.

Christina Maslach:

Right.

Rhona Weinstein:

Maybe that was one feature. You know, the fact that I was somewhat out of the mainstream, you were more in mainstream social psychology. I was the only one in community psychology.

Christina Maslach:

Right. But I was kind of the only one, only one person who was here, left in social psychology.

Rhona Weinstein:

Right. That's true. You were the only one there, too.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah, I know. And Shelly was the only one left in industrial-organizational psychology.

Rhona Weinstein:

So, it was really a tough, tough year and I had enormous childcare problems back then. It was far more difficult to get childcare then, than it is now. And, in the first few months, we had to fire somebody who wasn't taking good care of the babies and then find somebody else. And then we had dual career considerations, when my husband took another post at the Stanford Student Health Center, which came with the requirement that he live no more than 10 minutes away (for on-call coverage). So, we were forced to move from Berkeley to Palo Alto.

Christina Maslach:

Oh my God.

Rhona Weinstein:

And that was during the leave that was given to help faculty prepare for the mid-career review and for tenure. But the move was during that time. And, of course, I lost my childcare person, and then we had to fire two more childcare people when we moved down to Palo Alto. We moved when the boys were just two years old and all this was happening before the mid-career review.

Rhona Weinstein:

Other things... So, at this point, you know, dealing with the birth of twins who were not well, I was recovering from the surgery (the C-section) and I wasn't well (had surgery for a thyroid tumor). And then the added burdens of a fifth class, the move for dual career reasons down to Palo Alto, the selling of a house and the buying of another, and firing three childcare givers, ultimately needing to choose an all-day Montessori school. And all this during a period where I had been given six months to help prepare for a mid-career review. Needless to say, this left me ill prepared for the review and I had not produced a great deal. I had plans but not much to show at the time. So, it was a dismal mid-career review.

Rhona Weinstein:

The chair called me into his office to give me the feedback. He gave very strong feedback, as he explained later, to wake me up to the reality of what this position really required. In words I could never forget, he said, “You've done nothing, you are nothing and you will do nothing. And...”

Rhona Weinstein:

...He said “It's time to leave. Leave now before the tenure review.” Again, you know, this was no surprise to me because the record was slim but the words stung.

Rhona Weinstein:

But I guess I was aghast that we have even a review called mid-career, in the third year of a position that might be held 40 years or more.

Christina Maslach:

I know!

Rhona Weinstein:

That was in year three or something...

Rhona Weinstein:

...year three of a lifetime of career contributions. And for women facing the collision of their childbearing years with this early judgment, this seemed to me to be a gross injustice. But inside I collapsed and it was only the support of many people that helped me turn this thing around and to go back to my chair and say, “I'm not leaving. I'm going to stay, I have a right to stay. I'm going to thrive here at Berkeley and I'm going to have a career as a professor in psychology come hell or high water.”

Rhona Weinstein:

So, it was my husband who said, “You wanted to do it. You are going to do it, period, you are not going to run from it.”

Rhona Weinstein:

And it was also reading Arlie Hochschild's chapter, “Inside the Clockwork of a Male Career.” Which is an amazing piece of work, written before her tenure.

Christina Maslach:

I know. That's the thing that always really stunned me. But yeah, yeah.

Rhona Weinstein:

And it was the late Jeanne Block, a research psychologist at IHD and wife of Jack Block, who said to me, “You are in a precious tenure-line position. Do you know how many women in this university wanted that opportunity and did not get it because of nepotism? Because of attitudes toward women. This is not your individual problem. This is a systemic problem. Hang in there for all of us and carry it through.”

Christina Maslach:

Yeah. Wow.

Rhona Weinstein:

So on one hand you had those messages. On the other hand, you had, I gave up all of these things to have this career. You can't have it all.

Christina Maslach:

Right.

Rhona Weinstein:

But there were no policies in place yet to help. There had been no maternity leave.

Christina Maslach:

Oh, I well remember.

Rhona Weinstein:

And, there was no stop the clock yet for the tenure appraisal. I don't know if you want to move into the tenure process yet or...

Rhona Weinstein:

So, with the encouragement, you know, of many women and some men, I just reframed it. This can't be about me. It's about not me individually. This is about women. And, this is a systemic oppression and discrimination. And I had to find a way to thrive at Berkeley. Female faculty like Sue Ervin Tripp would blanket me daily with articles about gender inequality in academe. And then I became aware of the salary inequities, and colleagues helped identify some resources to take a period of time off to help develop my focus. My husband took our twin sons for a vacation to Tahoe. I can still see the two little faces, everybody's waving at me, and off they would go. And I would have a period of all time to write.

Christina Maslach:

Right.

Rhona Weinstein:

And, when I was writing, the boys would know the door was closed and they were not to come in. It used to break my heart to be pushing so hard at work while they were so young. But I was shored up with a lot of support. Still it was a constant assault to the senses, just how different the lives of female and male faculty were. Before children and before I moved to Palo Alto, a colleague drove me home after a meeting and said that the lights were dark in my house. I said, “Yeah, of course. Just coming home now.” And he said, “Well, when I come home, the lights are all on, dinner is ready on the table, a delicious meal. And then I go to my study and prepare.” He asked, “What are you going to eat?” I said, “Well, that's the difference between you and me.”

Rhona Weinstein:

“I have to start now and when my husband comes home, we're going to cook and it's going to take a while to get dinner on the table. And it probably will be late until I get to my study.” But there was no awareness that this really could impact your productivity or...

Rhona Weinstein:

...just how different that was from a two-person one career model of old. And the example we shared, where we were talking about our classes and a male colleague (that same male colleague) stopped by and said, “If you two ladies are going to be gossiping in the hall, you might as well be home taking care of your children.” Or I'd be in an event and and a colleague would say, “I just don't know how women

really can develop their research programs." Or out to lunch in the faculty club, the presumption was you were gossiping, not doing serious work. And it was just discomforting to ask, when there was a sick child at home, to leave early, even though we have much freedom, you know, around our schedule.

Rhona Weinstein:

But it was looked down upon to leave immediately when a meeting was over. It was not safe to disclose where you were going. But women tend to be more disclosing, which was a habit I tried to change, to learn to say, "I can't do this at this time."

Rhona Weinstein:

So now it's lovely to see that men as well as women are leaving meetings to take care of some shared childcare responsibilities...

Christina Maslach:

They've got kids and yeah.

Rhona Weinstein:

So that it was a very different climate then. Meetings were held later and it was very uncomfortable to say that you could not attend or had to leave earlier to pick up your children. So, the tenure decision comes up in the fifth year of the six-year period, so that's really the end of the fourth year (over the summer), that you're preparing your case. And, my twins were just two years old. There was no way I could be ready for the tenure decision and there was no opportunity to delay it in any way on campus. And I started reading seriously and entering discussion with other people about this option to delay tenure. Stop the clock for childbirth, one year for each child.

Rhona Weinstein:

When I brought this option to my department, I was turned down by the department chair.

Christina Maslach:

And told "No way." Turned down by the Dean. Again, no way. So, I went to the vice chancellor, who was Mike Heyman at the time (he later became chancellor), and I still remember that meeting as if it were yesterday. Tall, imposing, he was sitting behind a very big desk.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah.

Rhona Weinstein:

...But a wonderful smile. And I explained the situation to him and I didn't get much of a response initially. I then asked how many kids he had. I asked him to remember when they were very young and asked who took care of them, what did the care involve and so on. Then I laid out my circumstances. My kids are two years of age and I have got two of them, and I commute from Palo Alto and so on.

Rhona Weinstein:

I said, "Look at my teaching load." And so on, saying "There's just no way that a decision about my future as a professor of psychology should be made in this time brief period." And "Here's a policy that

would make a difference. Stop the clock, one year per child and give me two extra years before being judged for tenure.

Rhona Weinstein:

So, he thought it over and very quickly, as I remember, he made the decision in his office and said, “Okay, I'm going to do it. As an exception to the rule. This is not policy, but an exception to the rule. You will need to sign a statement that you will have no extra time beyond the tenure decision. You could be informed, perhaps the day before your contract is ended, that you could be out in less than 24 hours if you do not get tenure.” I had to sign a special document about that issue because he was worried about that. Well. I was very grateful. The department was quite skeptical. When I worked to put that policy in place for others, the pushback we most often got, was that female faculty working under “a stop the clock policy” would be more productive than men during that time, which is really quite impossible.

Rhona Weinstein:

So ultimately, and I think it's fair when childcare is shared, that both men as well as women had that privilege to be able to stop the clock. It took a number of years to go from “exception to the rule” to policy. But in my case, this opportunity led to a successful tenure decision. But I have to say that getting my research program underway in classrooms, with so many teachers and in so many schools proved to be an enormous challenge. And it was communicated to me at the time that I got tenure based on future potential, not on actual achievement.

Rhona Weinstein:

I don't know how many times that appears in the minutes of the Budget Committee. I was grateful to later serve on the Budget Committee so I could see for myself. I suspect it's not that common.

Rhona Weinstein:

But the numbers weren't there, in terms of accepted work, but the papers had been submitted.

Rhona Weinstein:

So that's how they chose to see it. But, that was a bit hard to hear. I felt strongly that I deserved to be here and that I could have a wonderful career, as I did, and that it was unfortunate that the biological clock and tenure clock were so aligned.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah. And that you couldn't pull them apart, although you tried and actually got, you know, quite a bit. I mean in the sense of everybody else. I mean, I think people were trying to get a semester or a year of extension.

Rhona Weinstein:

Right. And I got two years, one per child. Well, I would have been out. So, this clearly was the last hurrah as there was no other way to stay. I was desperate to make it work. Yeah. And you know, the association of academic women, the women that were organized. The women on the campus who were already tenured were largely supportive as were some male colleagues, urging us to fight for this. Yeah, this policy makes a difference. And maternity leave and stop the clock were critical policies of support for women. And the third thing that I was involved in, which I found very interesting, was the

development of a document to make knowledge about the tenure process available to more people, women and minorities who were not invited to the departmental poker games. And Sue Ervin Tripp and I worked on this document together, to create an academic survival, a tenure guide. And looking through her files, I see there was a version in the files that Michigan had done the same thing. So, we must have been stimulated by that original document, but we added things very specific to Berkeley as well. And I did a lot of that writing and we had a special section in there, special to the needs of women and minorities and we argued that for greater equity, the university had to change its culture and polices. We released this document, anonymously, under the auspices of SWEM (Senate Committee on the Status of Women and Ethnic Minorities). And, immediately upon its release, we were called to meet with the Budget Committee, representing SWEM.

Christina Maslach:

Wow.

Rhona Weinstein:

...about the document. Sue didn't come with me that day. I can't remember why. I remember saying to her, she was needed because she was so much taller than me and she was older and imposing. I did not want to go by myself to this meeting.

Christina Maslach:

Did she ever say?

Rhona Weinstein:

I can't recall her answer, but she must've had another appointment or she thought I could handle it (she was not timid at all), but maybe she was toughening me up or something.

Christina Maslach:

Did you ever talk to her later afterwards?

Rhona Weinstein:

Oh yes, I told her about it, but I didn't ever say, why weren't you there with me? So, I remember going in and it was very much like my own doctoral defense at Yale, you know, tall men and me.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah.

Rhona Weinstein:

All men, white men. Yeah. I remember going in and just feeling that I stood out like a sore thumb. And I was literally yelled at, I mean literally, they lost it in there. They said, “This document is blasphemy. You are cheapening the meaning and the value of tenure?” “A tenure guide,” they said, “Do you think the tenure process is about all this crap? It's about your scholarship. Either you've done it or you haven't done it.”

Christina Maslach:

Wow. Oh.

Rhona Weinstein:

And I remember, comments such as “this should be shredded, never circulated.” Just everything thrown at me and honestly, I can't remember everything I said. But I did try to respond to say, "You don't understand that when you talk to each other…"

Christina Maslach:

Yeah.

Rhona Weinstein:

"When you gather, you share information about the process of your work, how you respond to editorial criticism, how you build networks of academic colleagues, and so on."

Christina Maslach:

Yeah.

Rhona Weinstein:

"What meetings you decide to go to, which journals you might publish in and not. You're sharing a fund of knowledge over beer or over your poker games or in the men's room, and given their scarcity in the university, women and ethnic minorities have no access to that information. And that is the implicit curriculum, the conditions under with the work is published or read or honored, and we have no access to these learning opportunities.” So, it was like coming from another planet, things that have been taken for granted by them, this view that it's simply what you write, and what you write has to be published. Whereas there is an entrepreneurial role in getting your work out there and finding grant support.

Rhona Weinstein:

Not to mention the things that Sue Ervin Tripp was studying, bias in how female scientists are viewed as compared to male scientists.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah.

Rhona Weinstein:

So, we didn't withdraw the document or change it in any way. And each year, it got revised as new policies came into play, and eventually it became something that all new faculty were given.

Rhona Weinstein:

And my biggest delight: the document was posted on the web.That something that was so subversive in 1981 when it came out, was now displayed on the web publicly.

Christina Maslach:

Well, but then also later, I don't know exactly when, they started having tenure workshops for all assistant professors. It became practice.

Christina Maslach:

So I was like, yay. Talk about the indication for all of that. I mean that was amazing, but wow, what an ordeal to have to have gone through.

Rhona Weinstein:

So, I was very delighted when I was recommended to be on the Budget Committee. This was an opportunity I was not going to give up. And, of course, what I discovered and I long believed in it, that many of the practices here at Berkeley were development-focused. This was a place where you could thrive, not just selecting the best, so to speak, but developing the best in everyone, was a large part of this academic culture. Just the opportunity to complete the personnel questionnaire, to reflect on your research program, your future directions, its strengths, the questions you're answering. To see the work of the Budget Committee, the depth with which faculty review research and discuss the research...

Christina Maslach:

Right.

Rhona Weinstein:

...was humbling and the achievements of the campus, amazing but also to sit in judgment. And I remember, you know, there were cases for whom I fought hard. If I saw bias or if I saw fields not well understood.

Rhona Weinstein:

I felt like I was there to represent the underdog. But, so it came full circle in a way.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah. Yeah, that was really important. Oh wow. Great achievement on that one. I have to say. Okay. Tenure, teaching, how are you, you know, especially early on the kind of courses, the load, the, you've already alluded to that, but also, people often talk about how students responded, undergraduates, graduates, and if you have anything to share on those experiences, I mean, you, you won a distinguished teaching award. So you were clearly one of our best but...

Rhona Weinstein:

Happy to be in that honored group. Starting out was exceedingly difficult. But it all turned around. I was happy about that. But, in the beginning, I mean, walking in to the university after the free speech movement, was a bit of a change, from Yale and McGill and, I didn't even have the right wardrobe. I remember I used to wear suits, stockings, and heels for many years. That was my wardrobe and at McGill (certainly undergrad and graduate), that's how we dressed and Yale as well. And in that first year, I was stopped multiple times on the campus by students saying, “Hey lady, we don't dress like this here. This is Berkeley. Don't you know, this is Berkeley.” I'd walk into a class as a teacher and even students would have the gall to say that to me.

Rhona Weinstein:

So, I didn't fit in with regard to dress and I had a certain formality that didn't fit in. This was 1973. And male students, in particular, felt totally comfortable saying it right out loud in large lecture classes and try to bring me down.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah. Yeah.

Rhona Weinstein:

And I never learned how to deal well with it. And in that big abnormal psychology class of 350 students. One of the early classes again, "Hey lady." That's how they called me. "Hey, Hey lady, we don't want to think. We just want to be, don't you understand? We're really not interested in any of these things. We just want to be." Then I had a lot of pushback about grades. Oh my. Particularly males, If they did not get an A and an A-plus. I would have one great complaint after another, including, a threat on my life that I actually had to report to the campus police because this male student came by and said, “You ruined my life with this B-plus. I'm headed to medical school and you have stopped me in my tracks. I know where you live. I'm coming after you.”

Rhona Weinstein:

So it, in the early days, it was difficult to establish authority with males at the time, but also with graduate students, it was difficult in the beginning. Again, because my interests also were a little different from the primary interests in the program. But as we moved more and more toward an apprentice model of choosing graduate students, I was able to bring in more graduate students who were aligned with my research interests. But with time, whether, changing attitudes toward women or my increased maturity or change in style or my very interactive teaching ways, I developed great comfort with it, loved it. The high point has been teaching, you know, at, at a graduate and undergraduate level. And I can't remember exactly when that started to turn around, but when I think about teaching, I only think about really all the positives because there were so many.

Christina Maslach:

Well your story, about the challenges of establishing authority and particularly with males, but sometimes also with female students, I swear every female academic I've talked with has talked about that. And, and sometimes I think I'm just in some stories, I mean, if you're an ethnic minority as well, that's, it's almost even more so and so it was we all had to go through this, I had to go through that. Yeah, it might take different forms. It might be, you know, but you hear that a lot in terms of that time being a woman, being one of the few, having a different, being different in terms of how you were teaching or whatever. And particularly if you were younger than some of your teaching assistants or people in the class. I mean, it was, it was more so.

Rhona Weinstein:

This comment is not related to teaching per se, but access to resources on the campus with the staff or in the community as I developed my teaching projects, and one of the first projects was working with the police. Even though I specialized in the schools, I offered my graduate practicum students the choice of community settings they wanted to work in. So, it's being seen as an authority working out in the field and even accessing university resources as a female was difficult. So that project with the police at that time, to be taken seriously with regard to training for mental health interventions, was very difficult for a woman. Whenever I would call, sadly, even for reservations at the faculty clubs, it was just assumed I was the secretary. Never, it didn't matter. And here if I said Professor Weinstein, they didn't hear the professor part. It's the female voice. I was the secretary. And the same —we made calls across the country or whatever, I tried to change my voice. I tried to change the order in which I said things, but I was always the secretary calling for the professor to this day. It has still not changed.

Christina Maslach:

You're kidding me.

Rhona Weinstein:

And I don't know, is it my voice? Is it how I engage on the phone? But it happens more often than not, when they take my name down, so you're calling for professor so-and-so. And, so that's never escaped me. You don't have that problem?

Christina Maslach:

I haven't noticed that. No. But, wow.

Rhona Weinstein:

And sometimes, you know, when you show up there's disbelief sometimes, that it's a woman. This was more frequent in the earlier days, when I showed up, you could see a visible reaction. Oh, it's a woman.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah.

Rhona Weinstein:

And then, even in my work in the schools, as I went further up to the higher administration, I was hampered. And by that perception, you're only a woman or...

Christina Maslach:

Wow.

Rhona Weinstein:

So, you know, I had to do a lot of the community work, negotiating and dealing with power. And if it was a male-dominated group or the person in charge was male, I knew I was going to be up against a different situation. So, I found that community intervention harder than on the teaching side, which got better and better.

Christina Maslach:

I can see that. Okay.

Other things that we thought to ask about were, your leadership roles. And also, you've already talked about family life. But in terms of leadership, other kinds of opportunities, other things you did beyond the research, teaching, service triumvirate.

Rhona Weinstein:

I would've liked more leadership roles then, but it was very hard at Berkeley for some reason to get them. Harder, I wonder, than at some other places because, and we heard in the panel, Berkeley was a very male-dominated university turf.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah. Yeah.

Rhona Weinstein:

And, I was not a department chair. I was interested at one point in being department chair, but somebody else was chosen. And, at some point, I considered moving for leadership roles, for example as a dean of a school of education, but that became a complicated thing from a dual career perspective.

Rhona Weinstein:

So, there were choices and tradeoffs made, you know, with regard to that. But I always thought at some point maybe I would have liked to be a college president or dean? But I also had health issues that I had to constantly battle. So that was one thing that, that was difficult all along and these health challenges always stood in the way. Also, the long commute to work for more than 22 years stood in the way...

Christina Maslach:

Twenty-two, wow, okay.

Rhona Weinstein:

And I had to leave by car at least two hours, two and a half hours, before anything started here just because the traffic was so unpredictable.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah.

Rhona Weinstein:

And ended up staying overnight during the week when my kids were in high school...

Christina Maslach:

Yeah.

Rhona Weinstein:

...Just to make it easier. So, there were other things that interfered, but I felt at the time I was coming through, that it was much harder for a woman to be groomed for a leadership position. So, I was director of the clinical program and the psychology clinic for two terms and that was a pretty heavy, heavy load of responsibility and, on the budget committee. And then, starting the school was a lifelong dream. And I was involved in that board, for many years and worked on the ground, in creating and studying this new design secondary school for a “first in the family to go to college” population.

Christina Maslach:

You should say the name of the school.

Rhona Weinstein:

California College Preparatory Academy or Cal Prep.

Rhona Weinstein:

And I've written a book about it, *Achieving College Dreams*. But this was an enriched high school curriculum, college prep for all for first generation kids. So, I've had many interesting, you know, cross-

campus opportunities, the school, SWEM, BC under chancellor Tien. So, wonderful experiences. But I think if there was a part of me that was not fully expressed, it would be more leadership roles. Now, there is much more grooming of women for leadership. There are many training opportunities in which our young colleagues participate.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah. It's interesting to think of how those came about and how they began to shift and change, but I also found that at some point, and I hadn't known this, it was like signaling that you're interested. And of course one of the, not the only way, but one of the many ways in which you signal that is by saying, “I'm going to interview for a job somewhere else.”

Rhona Weinstein:

Right.

Christina Maslach:

An administrative job, not a faculty job, but that you're going to look for other things. And that's saying, Oh, you know, kind of thing. But I also remember, and you probably do too, I mean, when you have young kids, even if somebody hints that there might be, maybe you could help out as an assistant Dean something or other. And it was like, are you kidding me?

Rhona Weinstein:

Right.

Christina Maslach:

So, I mean, not realizing that that might be sort of sending a different signal.

Rhona Weinstein:

Right.

Christina Maslach:

As opposed to at this time in my life, no, but...

Rhona Weinstein:

But maybe later. Right.

Christina Maslach:

You know, kind of thing. So...

Rhona Weinstein:

But the timing had to be right when the openings were there. And of course, that's what women miss out on, if they're unavailable for a period of time. And the signaling thing. I mean, frankly, and I know, it's much harder to look elsewhere for jobs. I did it twice, but I did not get a response from a chair. In terms of fighting in that same way, I was told, "Oh, you're not going to leave." Harvey's not going to leave. This isn't serious. So, I didn't...

Christina Maslach:

That's the husband problem.

Rhona Weinstein:

But things are changing more and more, not totally, but on some of these things, I do want to mention one other change that's important to know. In the advancement of faculty, the substance of the reviews, internal and external, are shared with the candidate. This transparency in the review process is an enormous change. And that's not true on many campuses, but it allowed people to see whether indeed the review looked biased in any way. And so that was a great advance.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah, that was huge.

Rhona Weinstein:

And of course, having access to sit in faculty meetings is very important. I don't know if you noticed in our department, that psychology was reconsidering again whether assistant professors should sit in at the tenure meeting. So, we may be having a backward shift in terms of transparency. I imagine these considerations move in cycles.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah. No, I didn't see that. Interesting. Okay. So, is there anything else, that you think was important that we haven't touched on in any way that you would want to share?

Rhona Weinstein:

Well, this is just a general kind of comment about the qualities of this university environment. So, we talked about some of the tough issues that were here, but on the positive side.The UC system in general and Berkeley, as an example, has a longtime commitment to developing talent.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah.

Rhona Weinstein:

This is in contrast to other campuses like a Harvard or a Yale, with a pyramidal tenure structure. And it is similar to what I study in elementary school classes, in the using of tracking and ability-based instruction—which selects the talented ones for the most challenging curriculum. The UC system has a tenure slot waiting for each of its hires who compete based on an absolute standard and much effort is put into developing the talent of all, creating a level playing field (like CAL Prep). This is a place that develops talent and it's very precious. So, if you look at how the array of ways the university supports the development of all of its faculty, e.g. distributing monies across fields that might not bring in as much outside money, developing policies to make the tenure process visible, programs to give people a semester off, you know, to develop their research, and so on.

Rhona Weinstein:

They're just examples built into the history. And these examples contribute to the excellence of faculty within each campus and across campuses. I write about this achievement culture in my book, *Reaching*

Higher: The Power of Expectations in Schooling. Graham and Diamond wrote about the rise of the UC system - that all boats rise by some of these common and talent-development standards held. And when I think back about this time, I think about a very male-dominated environment that was very tough for women and minorities, white male-dominated, and yet existing within a broader campus ecology, there was the value and support for developing talent. There is bias, because we fail sometimes to see talent in woman and minorities, but on the other hand, the university moves forward to develop talent in all who are hired. There is a belief in focusing not just on the numbers of publications, but the actual depth of the contribution, the originality of the contribution. So there have been two sides of this complex campus, but it's the second side that makes me love it.

Christina Maslach:

And you have contributed in your writing to getting people more to see the value of that.

Rhona Weinstein:

Of that, that talent. Talent development.

Christina Maslach:

Great interview, Rhona – thank you!