

more to build mentoring relationships by taking advantage of increasing mentoring opportunities through APSA and other organizations (Mershon and Moyer) or by strategically seeking both vertical (i.e., senior) and horizontal (i.e., peer) mentorships (O'Brien).

However, addressing the challenges that come with being in an underrepresented group extends also to advisers and colleagues. This includes greater awareness about the challenges that women may face in a male-dominated field, whether in opportunities for

community within the LSS. We also thank Phillip Ardoin and PS reviewers for the opportunity to share the LSS newsletter with the broader political science community. ■

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It is clear from our contributors that there is no single reason for the low proportion of women in the LSS.

informal mentoring or double burdens (Mershon and Moyer). Like women in other male-dominated fields, female legislative scholars may face challenges to "prove it again," "walk a tightrope" between femininity and masculinity, and "address the maternal wall" (Mügge and van Oosten). Alert colleagues can lessen these challenges and help female scholars navigate the field when they arise. We as a field can do more to help our advisees and colleagues identify good mentors (which is true for both men and women). Junior scholars may not know how to identify characteristics of a good mentor (Lee and Wyckoff) or how to think strategically about coauthorship networks (Schiller). Using resources such as Women Also Know Stuff and People of Color Also Know Stuff can help all of us to increase the diversity of our speaker series and syllabi. Designing our syllabi to be more representative is a small step toward making the field (and each of us as advisers and mentors) approachable for both men and women (Lee and Wyckoff).

Finally, there may be actions the LSS can take to foster greater community for both women and men, including recruitment, mentoring, and fostering a wider range of "legislative" research questions (Swers). Although the Congress and History Conference has been an avenue to bring together a subset of congressional legislative scholars, it does not include state or comparative legislative scholars, and there is no legislatures-wide annual conference with an open call for papers (which other subfields such as state politics have) (Powell). More broadly, the field may be able to foster greater inclusion of research on state and comparative legislatures, where there may be more women and where new research questions may arise (Powell; Rosenthal); research linking legislatures and representation (Sulkin); and research at the intersection of legislatures and gender or race (Mügge; Caballero, Jackson, and Brown; Rosenthal; Schiller). The field also may benefit from greater openness to new questions and approaches, even if they oppose established approaches (Fowler). One possibility may be to consider more cosponsored panels about race, ethnicity, and politics or about women and politics. Whereas panels sponsored by the LSS tend to be male dominated, those sponsored by the Women and Politics Section tend to be female dominated (Swers). Greater integration would improve the currently gendered networks and also provide cross-fertilization of research agendas.

We thank the contributors to this spotlight for their thoughtful reflections and efforts to promote greater inclusiveness and

CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES: AN INTERVIEW WITH CAROL MERSHON

Dana Moyer, *University of Virginia*

Carol Mershon, *University of Virginia*

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Changes in the Field

Dana Moyer (DM): How has the study of legislatures changed since you entered the field?

Carol Mershon (CM): I have seen multiple changes in the field since I started as an assistant professor in the mid-1980s. Rational-choice scholarship now more thoroughly dominates the field and theoretical arguments have acquired greater rigor, in part through wider use of formal theory. The methods we use have become more diverse. For instance, legislative scholars now incorporate experiments into their research (e.g., Harbridge, Malhotra, and Harrison 2014; McClendon 2016). Moreover, our research questions have become more varied. For example, we now have abundant research on how members of underrepresented groups win legislative representation and how they exercise power once in office (Baldez 2004; Barnes 2016; Htun 2004; Kanthak and Krause 2012; Krook 2010; Lawless 2015; Orey et al. 2007; Smooth 2011). Finally, the study of legislatures beyond the United States has blossomed. As a result, scholars probe the impact of elected legislatures (Gandhi 2008) and increased legislative transparency under authoritarianism (Malesky, Schuler, and Tran 2012). In addition, we are more aware of the importance for legislative politics of variation in, for example, the number of parties represented, the dimensionality of the policy space, the electoral system, and the executive's legislative prerogatives. With the accumulated comparative work, we can better appreciate commonalities across legislatures in presidential and parliamentary democracies (e.g., Cox 2006) and distinctions within the set of presidential systems (e.g., Palanza and Sin 2014). All told, given the field's evolution, we have enhanced understanding of legislative politics since the mid-1980s.

Experience Entering a Male-Dominated Field

DM: What was your experience as a junior scholar in a male-dominated field?

CM: I entered legislative studies with my second, not first, major project (on the second, see, e.g., Mershon 1996; 2001; 2002). When I entered the discipline and the legislative studies subfield, I recognized both as dominated by white men. In my first 15 or so years in the profession, many times I walked into panel rooms at APSA or MPSA meetings as the second—or the sole—woman in the room. In my first job, I was the second woman ever hired in the history of the department. For me, moreover, the personal and the professional were intertwined at the outset of my career. As a not-quite-minted PhD on the job market, a dean suggestively put his hand on my knee. Although my memory is spotty (as is typical in cases of sexual harassment), I quickly exited that particular interview. Details aside, I also am the survivor of a rape linked to research on my dissertation.

Given the difficulties I have encountered, I send two messages to colleagues. First, to those who are underrepresented: you are not alone, and find strength in that fact. Second, to all colleagues: never underestimate the resilience and grit that members of underrepresented groups have had to muster just to “keep on keeping on” in their careers. Yet, in two chief ways, my entry into legislative studies was easy. I responded strongly to the elegance, beauty, and power of formal theory as a tool to structure research on legislative parties and parliamentary politics. Internalizing the theory, I could readily observe real-world phenomena that puzzled me.

First, to those who are underrepresented: you are not alone, and find strength in that fact.

Disadvantages Faced by Women in a Male-Dominated Field

DM: From your perspective, what are some of the disadvantages that women have encountered and continue to encounter in the discipline?

CM: Early in my career, I made do with relatively little mentoring. In graduate school, my committee members were all men, my department did not have a single senior tenured woman, and it had few women faculty members of any rank. I learned only after graduate school that I was excluded from informal mentoring relationships that benefited male graduate students. The “missed-mentoring” disadvantage appeared most clearly in retrospect: five to eight years after receipt of my PhD, a conversation with one of the few women from my graduate program led us both to realize that we had learned the hard way—on our own, by trial and error—such basic professional practices as how to move a manuscript through the journal pipeline and navigate the probationary period.

There also is a double burden that even white women face in a field dominated by white men (on the “double bind” of black women in science, see Malcom, Hall, and Brown 1976). Anyone in academe performs many roles (teacher, researcher, writer, adviser, and more) and the combination can be daunting. Yet, there is more. A double burden is borne, for instance, when a member of a woman’s dissertation committee states, on hearing that she is engaged to be married, that he assumes she will not complete the PhD. The double burden arises when, on a semester’s first day, someone walks to the front of a classroom

and students ask, “Where’s the professor?” They do not see the answer: the woman in front of them. The double burden appears when a senior male colleague tells a junior colleague that she should have a child. The double burden contains repeated lumps of microaggression, implicit bias, and overt bias, which all add up to a disadvantage that can threaten to drag us down. Especially toward the start of the career, carrying this weight creates uncertainty and saps psychic and intellectual energy. Even so, we have ways to lighten the load, as suggested in the next section.

I also count myself fortunate. In graduate school, I benefited from excellent preparation for fieldwork. During the past several decades, I have sought and found superb mentors in women and men, within and outside of political science, and indeed outside of academe. As I have mentored others, I have learned that mentors receive as much as they give.

Strategies for the Next Generation of Women

DM: What strategies do you suggest for the next generation of women in political science?

CM: Your question leads me to expand on some of the themes already raised in this discussion. The strategies I emphasize are: mentor, network, and push. First, cultivate multiple mentoring relationships. Do not rely only on senior women political scientists as mentors: after all, the people who fill that bill are still

relatively few in number. Seek out peer mentors, mentors in other social sciences, and mentors who are men. Do all you can to mentor others. Join the mentoring programs sponsored by APSA, MPSA, and other professional organizations. Take advantage of the Wondering Woman blog at the APSA Committee on the Status of Women (available at <http://web.apsanet.org/cswp/welcome-to-the-wondering-woman>).

Second, network with women and scholars of color in multiple arenas, starting at your home institution. Organize and benefit from a women’s caucus in your home department, or, if you have a small department, across several cognate departments (e.g., Mershon and Walsh 2015). Beyond your home institution, take part in meetings and receptions of the APSA Women’s Caucus and the APSA Committee on the Status of Women in the Profession and those at the regional associations. Network by taking advantage of the abundant resources gathered at the APSA Diversity and Inclusion Programs site (available at www.apsanet.org/diversityprograms), noting the multiple caucuses and status committees there, links to fellowships for members of underrepresented groups, an impressive set of diversity and inclusion resources, and much else.

Third, push yourself to investigate the products developed by the 2018 APSA Diversity Hackathon (available at <https://connect.apsanet.org/hackathon/products>). Push your department to do so as well. In particular, push your department to complete the Hackathon’s Leadership in Academic Climate Excellence certification process. In addition, push your department and school to invite at least two underrepresented candidates per search;

push the telling finding that when the number of underrepresented candidates visiting campus increases from one to two in a group of four, the odds of hiring an underrepresented candidate increase from zero to 50% (Johnson, Hekman, and Chan 2016). Push your department to use the site, Women Also Know Stuff (WAKS) (available at <https://womenalsoknowstuff.com>), to diversify speaker series, roundtables, and syllabi, among other things. Push, too, the affiliated site, People of Color Also Know Stuff (available at <https://sites.google.com/view/pocexperts/home>). Moreover, advertise your own expertise at WAKS, POCalsoknow, or both.

So far, I have discussed strategies as they pertain primarily to professional practices and less to intellectual agendas. We also can push ourselves to enter new subfields and pursue new research questions wherever they take us. For example, I was among the first political scientists to investigate systematically the phenomenon of legislative party switching, and this corner of the subfield now has grown and matured (e.g., Heller and Mershon 2005; 2008; Mershon 2014). Reflection on open questions in that area led me to develop a new theory of and amass evidence on degrees of change and stability in legislative party systems between elections (e.g., Mershon and Shvetsova 2013a; 2013b; 2014).

Push again as you cite research. Be sure to cite women and members of underrepresented groups working in a given area. Note that women are authors or coauthors on almost all of the research cited in this article. Cite yourself, which helps overcome the documented patterns of relatively low self-citation among women scholars (e.g., Maliniak, Powers, and Walter 2013).

In closing, the meta-strategy is to find support among the underrepresented and support those you find. Support yourself as well, whether through self-citation, blogging, presenting at other institutions, or proposing an “author-meets-critics” panel on your recent book. By supporting one another and ourselves, we amplify underrepresented voices in the field—and we all advance and thrive. ■

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GENDER BIAS IN LEGISLATIVE STUDIES?

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I was fortunate to begin my career as a PhD student at the University of Rochester. (I was actually lucky that my first-choice school offered to put me on its waiting list, stating that I would be accepted if any of their admits were drafted and unable to attend.) Bill Riker was establishing a serious graduate program at Rochester, and he looked for applicants that the top-ranked schools might overlook. Hence, at Rochester, often underrepresented groups (e.g., women) were overrepresented. Bill’s merit-based attitudes were shared by the faculty—women and other underrepresented groups were not treated as second-class citizens. Consequently, Rochester produced several well-known women scholars. Dick Fenno’s presence in the department ensured that some of them would be Congress scholars, including Barbara Sinclair, Wendy Schiller, Linda Fowler, Diana Evans, and Christine DeGregorio, and in comparative legislatures, Gail McElroy and Tanya Bagashka.

These Rochester alumnae all started their careers as legislative scholars and generally continued to publish exclusively or primarily in that subfield. However, many of us either have