

departments because men are given significantly more credit than women for coauthorship on a mixed-gender team publication (Sarsons 2017). Research also found that women are about as likely as men to manifest gender bias disadvantaging women—so, the problem is “us” collectively. Addressing the problem is difficult. One solution designed to take childbearing out of the equation had the opposite effect of what was intended. Gender-neutral tenure-clock stopping increased the likelihood that a man gained tenure while decreasing the likelihood that a woman would (Antecol, Bedard, and Stearns 2018). With regard to Sarsons’ work on team authorship, it has been suggested that changing our authorship pattern from alphabetical last names to an ordering that reflects each author’s contribution to the work might be helpful. We need to think creatively about ways to reduce gender and other forms of bias in our profession. Top orchestras used to be overwhelmingly male, because—we were told—men were simply “better.” This changed when auditions using screens that concealed the gender of the musician showed otherwise and created orchestras that now are close to gender parity. ■

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WELCOMING AND MENTORING WOMEN IN LEGISLATIVE STUDIES

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The legislative studies field transformed during the period of my career but, unfortunately, not enough to benefit fully from and provide professional mentoring to the growing number of women political scientists. As the paucity of women members in the Legislative Studies Section (LSS) suggests, women political scientists turned to other venues for their professional networks and research outlets.

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My own experience suggests two of the key realities for women scholars pursuing legislative and congressional studies in the 1980s and 1990s. First, the legislative studies field has not been particularly welcoming to research on women and politics. In legislative studies long dominated by scholars of the US Congress, American gender scholars typically turned to state legislatures or comparative legislatures to research interesting questions. As long as women were largely absent from the US Congress, so too

was the study of gender and legislatures an underappreciated “stepchild” in legislative studies. Second, and as a consequence, many scholars of my generation turned to other professional networks, mentoring, and research outlets, particularly the Women and Politics Section of APSA.

Welcoming New Scholars

When I attended my first LSS business meeting as a graduate student, I saw few women in the room beyond the distinguished and formidable Barbara Sinclair. When the meeting adjourned to the most important business of the section—the reception—I found myself a distinct minority, feeling literally on the sidelines and looking from the outside in. If a grad student was lucky enough to have a senior scholar to introduce her to colleagues, then the venue could be welcoming. If not, the cocktail hour event was an isolating event. Of 43 different APSA sections, LSS still is largely a male domain with the third lowest percentage of women (22% female), followed closely by the Political Methodology Section and the Executive and Presidential Politics Section. By contrast, the sections with the highest percentages of women are Women and Politics (more than 80%) and Migration and Citizenship (more than 50%). Perhaps a more similar, large membership section is Comparative Politics, which is approximately 35% women.

The absence of a welcoming environment went well beyond the social aspect of the LSS business meeting. I presented my first paper as an assistant professor at an APSA Annual Meeting in 1995 in Chicago. I had previously presented research as a graduate student at the Western Political Science Association (WPSA) conferences in 1993 and 1994 with encouragement from the late Rita Mae Kelly, who advised me that the WPSA was a friendly venue for women and politics research. My early-career conference experience confirmed Rita’s advice and shaped my own career.

Our 1995 APSA panel had been assembled to reflect some of the best emerging research on women in legislatures and to pose a future research agenda on gender and politics. The LSS accepted the panel and then assigned a young male Congress scholar, who proceeded to tear into the papers, offer a scathing critique of which statistical tests were being used, and essentially “show off” his political science bona fides. His behavior derailed the panel’s goal of framing future research questions and focused instead on dismissing research as inconsequential, given the small-N nature of the population being studied. The experience stayed with me for years, and that discussant’s behavior later became recognizable on other panels and in job talks as something one of my male

colleagues referred to as “towel-snapping” one-upmanship—a locker-room practice to display knowledge dominance.

Notably, a search of the *Legislative Studies Quarterly* revealed only nine articles between 1991 and 2000 identified with the term “gender” or “women”; another eight between 2001 and 2010; and only eight more since 2011 to the present. This may reflect multiple factors, including the establishment of *Politics and Gender* in 2005, but other journals have clearly been more

welcoming of gender and politics research. For example, a search of *Political Research Quarterly* (PRQ) with the same terms in the same period returned 748 results. Yes, PRQ reflects a bigger outlet and a broader research scope, but the numbers are startling.

Searches of the APSA panels reveal a similar pattern. Looking at the titles for panels in the last four APSA programs (2015–2018), LSS has sponsored only two panels that included the term “gender” or “women.” Six panels were cosponsored with the Women and Politics Section and one with the Race, Ethnicity, and Politics Section. I acknowledge that the creation of panels

the audience. Nonetheless, the program was skewed toward senior male scholars and less populated by presentations of emerging scholars. To remedy this problem, I recommend the model that we used at the Women Transforming Congress conference, which invested funding in graduate students who have returned that investment many times over.

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is a complicated matter, but my point is that LSS would not be a scholar’s first choice to place a paper on gender and women in legislative studies.

The pattern is not the result of a lack of interesting and provocative research. When the Carl Albert Congressional Research and Studies Center hosted the Women Transforming Congress Conference in 1999, we welcomed an incredibly rich group of research projects by senior scholars. We also funded travel for a talented group of a dozen or so graduate students who have gone on to distinguished research careers. (Incidentally, the edited volume resulting from that conference needs to be updated to reflect the impact of women in the US Congress almost two decades later.)

Mentoring to the Profession

Women scholars often have found mentors outside of the field of legislative studies, turning instead to senior scholars in other sections that support research efforts on gender and politics; comparative politics; and race, ethnicity, and sexuality.

Clearly, the section membership has changed, numbering more women as senior scholars for junior women scholars to follow. For many of us in the field, however, we turned elsewhere for professional mentoring and social connections. I am forever grateful to Rita Mae Kelly for placing me on that first research panel at the WPSA meeting in 1993 in Pasadena.

In contrast to a typical LSS business meeting, I recall many times in a room of predominantly women and politics scholars, where graduate students and new assistant professors were routinely introduced during a reception or business meeting to jumpstart their networking and connecting with potential mentors.

What the Future Holds?

Talent will go where it is most valued and nurtured. The LSS will thrive if it meets the challenge of attracting and mentoring the rising generation of women scholars. In 2016, the Carl Albert Center hosted the annual Congress and History Conference at the University of Oklahoma. My colleague and successor, Mike Crespin, developed an excellent program, and one important takeaway for me was the presence of many young women in

DOES THE LEGISLATIVE STUDIES SECTION HAVE A “WOMAN” PROBLEM?

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Does the Legislative Studies Section (LSS) have a “woman” problem? Some statistics suggest that women have not participated in section panels, attended LSS meetings, or published in *Legislative Studies Quarterly* (LSQ) at the rates we might expect in 2018. Other data indicate that women have served regularly as chairs of the section, as section program and panel chairs at major conferences, and as editors of the section journal and its newsletter. If women feel unwelcome in our subfield, it is not because they have been shut out of visible leadership roles.

Before assuming that the LSS is at fault for not being as inclusive as it could be, there are several things I would want to know. First, how many women have finished the PhD in legislative politics as a percentage of all PhDs in our field? It may be that the pool of female legislative scholars narrows during graduate school. Perhaps women have gravitated away from American politics toward other political science fields or other American politics subfields. Perhaps they have lacked mentors or have not forged bonds with their departmental peers that later developed into professional networks. This would be a recruitment problem for the section that shows up in lower rates of engagement compared to other political science sections.

Second, how many of the female scholars who entered the academy have joined departments with graduate programs or liberal arts colleges with high expectations for publication? Conference participation is expensive, and many institutions have experienced budget cuts from state legislatures or battered endowments after the Great Recession. I remember discussions when I was on the APSA Council several years ago about the rising cost of conference attendance, which has become an issue for scholars of both sexes. Perhaps women have tended to find work in departments with fewer resources for travel, or perhaps they have allocated fewer days for meetings to save money in their research budgets. Or perhaps they