



Gender and the Academic Experience: Berkeley Women Sociologists

Kathryn P. Meadow-Orlans

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"These memoirs provide new and thoughtful evidence that pioneers are necessarily diverse, illuminating two crucial decades of dawning self understanding for women, for America, for the discipline of sociology."—Mary Catherine Bateson, author of *Composing a Life*

It is difficult to imagine an intellectual world with only a few—if any—women scholars and sociologists. But that was the case, nor so long ago, for women such as Arlene Kaplan Daniels, Dorothy Smith, Arlie Russell Hochschild, Jacqueline Wiseman, and Lillian Rubin. These and many other now-eminent women in sociology began their careers as graduate students at Berkeley; they tell their stories in this volume, which spans two decades beginning with the first woman graduate student in 1952. With Berkeley as the backdrop, each woman constructs a personal memoir of her educational experience in a department and a profession then dominated by men.

In this thought-provoking book, sixteen women describe their marginal status and how their struggles informed their studies and their later work. Though each woman's story is unique, common themes surface: mixed feelings of intellectual self-confidence and inadequacy, difficulties in integrating personal and professional worlds, a net humor that both masked and helped the women cope with their hardships.

These compelling essays tell how these women creatively met the challenges and obstacles of our gendered society, conducted their lives intrepidly, and left a clearer path for those who followed. *Gender and the Academic Experience* illustrates that times are changing: by 1991, women made up the majority of graduate students in the Berkeley sociology department.

Kathryn P. Meadow Orlans is a senior research scientist and professor in the Department of Educational Foundations and Research at Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C. She helped pioneer a program of research and mental health services for deaf people, and her inventories for teachers of deaf children have been translated into eight languages. She has published *Deafness and Child Development* and co-authored *Sound and Sign: Childhood Deafness and Mental Health*.

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