Women, Language and Linguistics

Three American Stories from the First Half of the Twentieth Century

Julia S. Falk

Routledge Studies in the History of Linguistics

WOMEN, LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTICS

Women have been a dynamic force in American linguistics, yet this has not always been apparent in current histories of linguistics. For twentieth century linguistics, Julia S.Falk argues, the same story has been told over and over: a story of leading men, their followers, and their interest in language as a structure observable in patterns of the distribution of forms.

This book challenges this received history by presenting a much-needed reevaluation of twentieth century American linguistics which focuses on the contributions of women to our modern understanding of language. This book relates an account of linguistics as perceived and experienced by three American women in the first half of the twentieth century. Alice Vanderbilt Morris dreamed of creating a new auxiliary language for international communication, and brought together professional linguists and members of the New York upper class to achieve her goal. Gladys Amanda Reichard devoted her life to the study of Native American languages; despite opposition from men who claimed the territory, her studies still survive. And E.Adelaide Hahn brought themes of modern linguistics to the study of Latin and Hittite, keeping her colleagues mindful of ancient and classical languages.

Rather than the standard American story of an increasingly triumphant march of scientific inquiry towards structural phonology, *Women, Language and Linguistics* reveals a linguistics where the purpose of language was communication; the appeal of languages lay in their diversity; and the authority of language resided with its speakers and writers. Julia S.Falk explores the vital part which women have played in preserving a linguistics based on the reality and experience of language; this book finally brings to light a neglected perspective for those working in linguistics and the history of linguistics.

Julia S. Falk is Professor of Linguistics at Michigan State University. She is the author of *Linguistics and Language,* and is 1999 president-elect of the North American Association for the History of the Language Sciences.

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PREFACE

Despite increasing interest over the last few decades in both linguistic historiography and the status of women in linguistics, there have been surprisingly few attempts to explore the roles and lives of women in the early years of American linguistics. The Committee on the Status of Women in Linguistics of the Linguistic Society of America has begun to remedy this gap with important materials about women linguists (e.g., Davison & Eckert 1990), but so far all of their work has focused on women currently active in the field. Historians looking to the past have chosen to include only male linguists in the series of memoirs and recollections titled *First Person Singular* (Davis & O'Cain 1980, Koerner 1991, 1998). The major histories of early twentieth century American linguistics generally relegate women to footnotes.

Six years ago, when I began a search for the women I was sure must be there– my intellectual ancestors–some friends and colleagues gently conveyed their skepticism that I would find anything (or anyone) of interest or value. Others were encouraging and even optimistic, and for their continuing support I am grateful, especially to Sally Thomason, John Joseph, Talbot Taylor, and many members of the North American Association for the History of the Language Sciences, who responded to papers that were, in effect, early drafts of sections of this book. Other colleagues over the years have sent references, anecdotes, hints, offprints, and comments that aided my work, and I was able to draw both information and inspiration from studies on women in other fields, particularly Margaret Rossiter's books on *Women Scientists in America* (1982, 1995), Nancy Parezo and her colleagues' essays on women anthropologists (Parezo 1993a), and Desley Deacon's account of *Elsie Clews Parsons* (1997). Archives and archivists at the Canadian Museum of Civilization, the Linguistic Society of America Secretariat, the Museum of Northern Arizona, the New York Public Library, Radcliffe College, Syracuse University, and Yale University provided valuable documents. Special thanks go to Beth Carroll-Horrocks, formerly of the American Philosophical Society Library, to Frank Esterhill of the Interlingua Institute, and to Julio Hernandez-Delgado of the Hunter College Library for their always prompt responses to my frequent requests for papers and photographs, as well as to Robin D.Franklin

for her assistance with research for Part IV. From the University of Michigan Library Tatiana Schwartz searched the nation for uncommon books and documents, finding everything I asked for. Michigan State University provided me with released time and funds to travel to archives and collections through its All-University Research Initiation and Completion Grants.

I have done what I could, with all of this help, in the six years devoted to this project. The work was a challenge and a joy, but this book is not yet enough. My fondest hope for the future is that others will take up these stories and take on other stories of other women linguists. There is so much more to learn.

I was never alone. There were always letters, e-mails, and telephone calls in response to queries, people volunteering new documents or critiquing drafts. The women from the past spoke to me constantly, about their lives and their work, through their letters, their articles and books, even their photographs. And when it all seemed too much, or too little, my husband, Thomas H.Falk, stood nearby to comfort, to cajole, and to coax me back to my study, my computer, and my documents, until these, the last words, are written–at least for now.

Williamston, Michigan
Julia S.Falk

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In Figure 9.2 the excerpts from 'Why Should We Cut Out Our Tongues?' by Alice V.Morris, *The Forum* 77.712–716 (May 1927), are quoted with permission of the current presumed copyright holder, Mark Remond, Publisher, Current History, Inc. In Figure 13.1 Dave Hennen Morris's radio address, originally published in *World Order,* January 1936, pp. 386–387, is reproduced with the permission of the Bahá'í Publishing Trust. The complete credit for Figure 20.1 is Canadian Museum of Civilization, image number: Edward Sapir Correspondence (I-A-236M-folder Reichard, Gladys A., 1923–1924). In Figure 20.2 the excerpt from 'The Character of the Navaho Verb Stem' by Gladys A. Reichard, *Word* 5.55–76(1949), appears with permission of Ruth M.Brend, Assistant to the Managing Editor, *Word,* Journal of the International Linguistic Association.

Nathalie F.S.Woodbury, literary executor for Gladys Amanda Reichard, generously granted permission for the reproduction in Part III of Reichard's letters, memoranda, reports, photographs, and passages from her publications. For Part IV, Yale University Library authorized the publication of correspondence in its collection between E.Adelaide Hahn and Bernard Bloch, 1935–1965, from the Bernard Bloch Papers, Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

ABBREVIATIONS

AAA	American Anthropological Association
AAU	Association of American Universities
ACLS	American Council of Learned Societies
APA	American Philological Association
APS	American Philosophical Society
BBP	Bernard Bloch Papers. Yale University Archives
ECPP	Elsie Clews Parsons Papers. American Philosophical Society
EHS/LSA	Edgar Howard Sturtevant papers in the Linguistic Society of America Archives
ESC	Edward Sapir's Correspondence. Canadian Museum of Civilization
FBC	Professional Correspondence of Franz Boas. American Philosophical Society
GARC	Gladys A.Reichard Collection. Museum of Northern Arizona
HCA	Hunter College Archives and Special Collections
IALA	International Auxiliary Language Association
IIP	Interlingua Institute Papers. Rare Books and Manuscripts Division, New York Public Library
IJAL	*International Journal of American Linguistics*
ILP	Intensive Language Program
IRC	International Research Council
JAOS	*Journal of the American Oriental Society*
LSA	Linguistic Society of America
LSAA	Linguistic Society of America Archives. Formerly, American Philosophical Society. Currently, Western Historical Manuscript Collection, University of Missouri-Columbia
MNA	Museum of Northern Arizona
NRC	National Research Council
NYT	*New York Times*
SUA	Syracuse University Archives, Byrd Library
TAPA	*Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association*
YWCA	Young Women's Christian Association

Part I

INTRODUCTION

1

TURNING POINTS

Diversity and pluralism, realities of modern society in much of the world, have long been characteristic of academic communities. In both the humanities and the sciences it is rare that any two members of the same academic department share exactly the same specialization, even when they agree on theoretical orientation. Theoretical diversity sometimes exists within an institution, but it is more likely to differentiate one program from another. Differences, even disputes, over theory are, in fact, at the heart of the intellectual enterprise. To question a theory, to uncover new evidence to support or refute a hypothesis, to reinterpret a known text, to bring into consideration an idea that has been neglected, these are critical to the advancement of knowledge. Such challenges are possible precisely because the members of a discipline differ from one another, in perspectives, assumptions, theories, and methods.

No current participant and no historian would deny the pluralism that exists at any given time within modern linguistics. Indeed, linguists discussing recent events are likely to dwell on differences, as, for example, can be seen in the various accounts of the 1960s and early 1970s in generative grammar in the United States (Harris 1993, Huck & Goldsmith 1995, Newmeyer 1996). But for the history of a time well past and yet still present in living memory, that diversity of views is rarely the focus. Indeed, the same story is told over and over. For the first half of the twentieth century in the United States, the story begins with the foundational work of Franz Boas at the turn of the century, proceeds to the work of Edward Sapir and Leonard Bloomfield, goes on to the 'structuralism' or 'descriptivism' of their most prolific students, and concentrates there on the subject of phonology and the methodology of distribution (see, for example, Sampson 1980, Hymes & Fought 1981, Matthews 1993, Robins 1997).

Such histories of American linguistics are hegemonic, though not necessarily intentionally so. Written by men, some of whom were themselves a part of the very past they portray, the accounts provide just one view of linguistics, the scene discerned most clearly by participants whose own professional success over time has been due in large measure to the place where they themselves

once stood, when they first took the picture. Even when controversy is depicted, it is narrowly focused.

A somewhat different kind of picture emerges when history is written for a more distant past, one in which the historian was not a direct participant. In Julie Tetel Andresen's *Linguistics in America, 1769–1924* (1990) we see a pluralistic field, with three 'arcs of development' that overlapped through much of the nineteenth century before they began to separate in its final quarter. The arcs were English studies, American Indian studies, and the development of linguistic science. For the last, as linguistics moved toward autonomy in the first quarter of the twentieth century, Andresen repeats the Boas-Sapir-Bloomfield story. But because she took a wider view, also considering English studies, she was led to Louise Pound, a linguist never mentioned in more traditional accounts of American linguistics (pp. 233–235). Further, she reports what other historians do not mention, that when the Linguistic Society of America was founded in 1924, there were more than two dozen women among its first members (p. 241). Andresen counted twenty five; the Foundation Member list included even more—thirty one—as discussed here in the following section.

Yet virtually no women appear in most accounts of American linguistics prior to 1950, and even when women are there, they are very difficult to find. Sampson mentions a single woman, unidentifiable as such because he uses an initial, not a first name, describing the person only as one of Roman Jakobson's students; E. Aginsky (p. 131) is Ethel G.Aginsky. Elsewhere a few women appear not for their own work but because they wrote something about prominent men, e.g., Adelaide Hahn is mentioned once by Hymes and Fought, in a footnote, recounting an incident in which Edgar Sturtevant praised Sapir (Hymes & Fought 1981:115n.35). Margaret Schlauch is in the text, but she, too, appears not for her own linguistic work but for her criticism of the work of Bloomfield's male followers (Hymes & Fought 1981:57). Matthews and Robins cite no work by women prior to 1950. Hymes and Fought do include Mary Haas's work on Tunica (pp. 86, 90)—her 1935 doctoral dissertation and a grammatical sketch (Haas 1946); other references are to her later work, also mentioned by Matthews and Robins. More recently, a memorial issue of the journal *Anthropological Linguistics* contains a collection of eulogistic essays on Haas, who died in 1996 (vol. 39, no. 4, Winter 1997).

Otherwise, there simply are no detailed accounts anywhere of the linguistic work conducted by women prior to 1950 in the United States, nor are there histories of American linguistics that reveal the diversity of interests, topics, and research that characterized the work of that period. What we have available now are any number of works that present 'the great man theory of history,' history based solely on men who have been the most interesting and influential contributors to the field, a restriction seriously questioned by contemporary historiographers (Novick 1988:8).

Confronting just this situation more than a decade ago, the women of American anthropology took it upon themselves to 're-place' women scholars in history, a turning point in the historiography of anthropology. Nancy J.Parezo led a remarkable effort that focused on women in the American Southwest. The project included interviews with nineteen senior women anthropologists; an exhibit of work by women anthropologists and a catalogue, published as *Daughters of the Desert* (Babcock & Parezo 1988); a 1986 academic conference on women in Southwest anthropology; and a volume of papers by fourteen anthropologists, documenting, describing, and sometimes theorizing the lives and the contributions of dozens of women, the *Hidden Scholars* (Parezo 1993a). Included among them were several women who had done linguistic, as well as anthropological work, in the earlier years, in the first half of the twentieth century, women such as Gladys A.Reichard and Ruth Bunzel. But of course these studies focused on contributions to anthropology.

Despite this extensive effort to recover the contributions of women, to consider their roles and the strategies they used to become and remain part of 'a male-dominated and controlled' discipline (Parezo 1993a: xiii), Parezo and her colleagues realized that 'it would be impossible to discover enough comparable information on cohorts to make meaningful generalizations' (p. xiv) . The study of women's contributions to the field was 'a subject that is only just beginning to emerge' (p. xviii). How much more true for the history of women's contributions to American linguistics, and so the first historiographic question is where to begin. Perhaps paradoxically, one answer is to examine the records of an institution that became the stronghold of the men and the approach that was to dominate the field, eventually submerging both diversity of interest and the presence of women.

The founding of the Linguistic Society of America (LSA) in late 1924 marked a turning point for the discipline. Previously linguists had been scattered among the academic departments of universities, in departments of English, of the familiar languages and literatures of western Europe, of classics, of anthropology. The Call for the Organization Meeting for a new Linguistic Society, signed by twenty nine men, sought to bring together these 'students of language…to meet each other, give…opportunity for the exchange of ideas, and represent the interests of our studies' (*Language* 1:1.6–7[1 925]) . Since half of the 'Signers of the Call' were situated at colleges, universities, museums, and government offices along the northern east coast, the first meeting was held in New York City, at the American Museum of Natural History, on Sunday morning, 28 December 1924. That location also made attendance possible for the women faculty of New York's oldest and largest institution of higher education for women, Hunter College. Luise Haessler, E.Adelaide Hahn, Anna Jacobson, Henrietta Prentiss, and Helen H.Tanzer were all present, the largest single contingent at the meeting (*Language* 1:1.8[1925]).

By calling on 'students of language,' the LSA's organizers included in linguistics not only academic scholars affiliated with institutions of research

and higher education, but teachers in high schools and even members of the public: 'Membership in the Society is not restricted to professed scholars in linguistics. All persons, whether men or women, who are in sympathy with the objects of the Society, are invited to give it their assistance in furthering its work' (*LSA Bulletin* 2.2[1928]). The explicit invitation to women and the open scope seemed to promise an organization of diverse membership and interests. In fact, very quickly there arose a movement to define linguistics narrowly, to stress the scientific study of language, to withdraw from philological study of written texts and their cultural context, and to exclude the nonprofessional. These shifts, too, were a turning point, and the newly professionalized discipline was gradually redirected to the mechanistic, synchronic study of language that would characterize what became known as 'American structuralism.'

The founding of the LSA was seen by its organizers as a historic step, one to be carefully documented. The records, therefore, were comprehensive although not always entirely accurate, and membership lists provided not only names, but affiliations and areas of special interest. These early membership lists give a clearer indication than any other documents of the participation of women in linguistic work in 1924–1925.

2

WOMEN FOUNDATION MEMBERS OF THE LINGUISTIC SOCIETY OF AMERICA

When women are included, American linguistics at the time the LSA was founded was more respectful of the past and less revolutionary, more diverse and less constrained than existing historiographic work leads us to expect. It is not that women had some special niche in the field, but rather that, viewing the field from the perspective of their work and their careers, we come to see those early years differently. With this different perspective, it is impossible to accept the characterization given by Stephen Murray (1991:3):

> With their contempt for how languages were studied at the time, their rejection of received categories and presuppositions…, their regard of fieldwork as the only reliable method of gathering data, and their tendency to disregard any previous scholarly work, the founders of the Linguistic Society of America look like scientific revolutionaries.

While this emphasis on American structuralism occurs repeatedly in standard historiographic writing, it is simply untrue of the majority of men who founded the LSA and of the women who were among its earliest members.[1]

Following the organization meeting in December 1924, the LSA established the designation of Foundation Member for anyone who paid 'the annual dues for 1925 on or before March 31, 1925' (*Language* 1.26[1925]). There were some slight adjustments to this requirement to accommodate a few people whose checks arrived late, and at the second annual meeting of the society, Roland Grubb Kent (1877–1952), secretary-treasurer, reported a total of 274 Foundation Members (*Language* 2.65 [1926]). Of these, thirty one, or 11 percent, were women.

Throughout the first decade of the LSA, women comprised 10–15 percent of the membership. Many had earned doctoral degrees at prestigious institutions and held professorships. Some published their dissertations and other scholarly works, served within the professional organizations, and spoke at the conferences of learned societies. In addition to recognizing their contributions to knowledge, education, and the profession, it is important to understand how and why they, and the areas of linguistics they pursued, have all but disappeared from our histories.

From the 'List of Foundation Members' in *Language* 1.26–36(1925), with postscripted names alphabetized. The entries are reproduced here as they were published, including inconsistencies (e.g., 'College' unabbreviated for Haessler, abbreviated for Hahn). The year in brackets following an entry is the year membership terminated, determined from subsequent annual Lists of Members and reports of the LSA secretary-treasurer.

Prof. Sarah T.Barrows, Univ. of Iowa, Iowa City, Ia. (Phonetics) [1927]
Prof. Gertrude H.Beggs, Univ. of Richmond, Richmond, Va. (Latin) [1930]
Miss M.Julia Bentley, 3517 Middleton Av., Clifton, Cincinnati, O. [1929]
Prof. Louise M.Bourgoin, 54 West St., Northampton, Mass. (French, Smith Col.) [1927]
Miss Florence C.Brachman, 8439 Germantown Av., Philadelphia, Pa. [1927]
Mrs. Beatrice Allard Brooks, 9 State St., Wellesley, Mass. [1927]
Dr. Edith Frances Claflin, 17Felton Hall, Cambridge, Mass. [1953]
Miss Roberta D.Cornelius, Randolph-Macon Woman's Col., Lynchburg, Va. (English) [1938]
Prof. Luise Haessler, 100 Morningside Drive, New York City. (German, Hunter College) [1940]
Miss E.Adelaide Hahn, 640 Riverside Drive, New York City. (Greek and Latin, Hunter Col.) [1967]
Dr. Anna Jacobson, Hunter College, New York City. (German) [1926]
Prof. Eva Johnston, Univ. of Missouri, Columbia, Mo. (Latin) [1926]
Prof. May Lansfield Keller, Univ. of Richmond, Richmond, Va. (English) [1962]
Miss Ruth M.Keller, 568 S.Champion Av., Columbus, O. [1933]
Miss Selma S.König, 604 E.Erie St., Albion, Mich. (Modern Langs., Albion Col.) [1965]
Miss Mary S.Lee, 879 Wynnewood Road, Philadelphia, Pa. [1930]
Miss Charlotte Townsend Littlejohn, 23 E. 67th St., New York City. [?]
Mrs. Robert M.Littlejohn, 23 E. 67th St., New York City. [?]
Dr. Anna P.MacVay, 418 Central Park West, New York City. [1926]
Mrs. Dave Hennen Morris, 19 E. 70th St., New York City. [1950]
Dr. Elsie Clews Parsons, Harrison, N.Y. [1932]
Prof. Louise Pound, Univ. of Nebraska, Lincoln, Neb. (English) [1942]
Prof. Henrietta Prentiss, Hunter College, New York City. (Speech and Dramatics) [1938]
Miss Else M.Saleski, 508 N.Frances St., Madison, Wis. (German, Univ. of Wisconsin) [1932]
Prof. Lillian S.Smith, Agnes Scott Col., Decatur, Ga. (Latin and Greek) [1926]
Miss Maria W.Smith, 6 Lantern Lane, Philadelphia, Pa. [1941]
Mrs. Mary Summers Steel, 132 S. 18th St., Philadelphia, Pa. (Defects of Speech, Univ. of Pennsylvania) [1927]
Miss Grace Sturtevant, 114 High St., New Haven, Conn. [1940]
Prof. Helen H.Tanzer, Hunter Col., New York City. (Classics) [1937]
Miss Lella B.V.Watson, 1814 W. 8th St., Santa Ana, Calif. (Head of Lang. Dept, Santa Ana Junior Col.) [1927]
Prof. Ola Elizabeth Winslow, Goucher Col., Baltimore, Md. (English) [1929]

Figure 2.1 The Women Foundation Members of the Linguistic Society of America.

LSA officers, and particularly Kent as secretary-treasurer, kept detailed records of the Society's membership, of participants at the annual meetings, and of the faculty and the registrants for the courses of the LSA's summer Linguistic Institutes. These records were published in the LSA journal *Language* and its supplement the *LSA Bulletin*. For the most part, it is not difficult to identify the women in these official records. It is more challenging to move behind and beyond the lists of names, to understand who they were, how they came to be associated with American linguistics, why some remained and

succeeded over the years, and why others dissociated from the field in just a short time. There are almost no biographies or autobiographies of American women linguists, and many who appeared on the early LSA lists were not included in the standard biographical directories of their own time or ours.

The membership lists provided titles and areas of specialization, to the extent that these were known to Kent. This practice tended to disadvantage members who were not affiliated with the major universities where Kent and most of the LSA leadership held their appointments. Since many of those institutions did not grant faculty positions to women and most admitted very few, if any, women to graduate study, women in general were less likely than men to be known personally by the secretary. As a result, not only were the records for women incomplete, but, as discussed below, it seems that few women 'came to mind' when the leading men appointed people to serve on committees, invited reviewers of books for the LSA journal, or selected faculty for the summer Linguistic Institutes sponsored by the Society.

An example of the inconsistencies in the records can be found by comparing the entries from the 'List of Foundation Members' (*Language* 1.27, 32[1925]) for two holders of the doctoral degree, both married women: 'Mrs. Beatrice Allard Brooks, 9 State St., Wellesley, Mass.' and 'Dr. Elsie Clews Parsons, Harrison, N.Y.'

Elsie Clews Parsons (1874–1941) was a wealthy New York woman with a doctorate from Columbia University. She conducted and published anthropological and ethnological research. The LSA roster of members for 1925 used the title 'Dr.' and identified her as 'Anthropologist' (*Language* 2.88[1926]). Even before the LSA was founded, Parsons had worked directly with several Signers of the Call, including Franz Boas (1858–1942) and Alfred Louis Kroeber (1876–1960). She was well known to a number of early LSA members.

Beatrice Allard Brooks (b. 1893), like Parsons, in these years had no formal college or university appointment. Following receipt of her doctorate in 1920 from Bryn Mawr College, she taught biblical history at Wellesley College for a year, but apparently she had neither the social status nor the personal funds that enabled Parsons to maintain an active professional life and contacts in the academic world. Brooks's LSA entry was never changed; she remained 'Mrs. Brooks' without doctorate or recorded specialization until her resignation from the Society effective at the end of 1927 (*Language* 5.53[1929]). Four years later she began her long career as professor and head of the department of religion at Western College for Women in Oxford, Ohio (*Who's Who of American Women,* p. 170).

May Lansfield Keller (1877–1964) serves as a second example of the LSA's records of its early women members. She may have been present at the initial organization meeting; the roster includes a 'Mary L.Keller' (*Language* 1.8[1925]). Since 1914 May Keller had held the deanship of Westhampton College, the women's division of the University of Richmond, but this was not listed in the LSA directory until 1941 (*LSA Bulletin* 15.39–40 [1942]). Perhaps

this is a minor omission, but it may help to explain why Keller was never included in the organizational business of the Society even though she had earned a research doctorate (with a dissertation on Anglo-Saxon at the University of Heidelberg, 1904) and had a great deal of administrative experience. Keller retired from Westhampton in 1946 after thirty two years as dean, still a member of the Linguistic Society. (For a brief biography and a collection of Keller's letters compiled by another early woman LSA member, see Turnbull 1975.)

Certainly among the LSA membership there were men who were unknown to the leadership, men whose records were incomplete or inaccurate, men who were never called upon to assist in the Society's work, men who disappeared from the history of linguistics. But the fact remains that the leaders were all men, while nearly all of the women were forgotten.

Of the thirty one women Foundation Members, more than half left the Society during its first decade, and by the start of 1945, with the passing of a second decade, only seven remained as active members: Keller and Edith Claflin, Adelaide Hahn, Selma König, Charlotte Littlejohn, Rebecca Bolling Littlejohn, and Alice Morris. A study of this attrition and retention reveals some of the forces that formed the profession and the discipline of linguistics in the United States during these years, not only for women but also for men. Indeed, the attrition/ retention rates for women and for men were nearly identical: ten years after the founding, 45 percent of the women and 48 percent of the men Foundation Members were still enrolled; after another ten years, 23 percent of women and 23 percent of men remained.

Many of the women Foundation Members were educators rather than scholars, and of course some were both. Like Keller, a few remained LSA members for many years, such as Selma S.König, who taught French and German at a number of institutions, including Peru State Teachers' College in Nebraska and the Extension Teaching Division of the University of Wisconsin. As one of those who had 'retired from the active exercise of their profession' she was exempted by the Society from further payment of dues in 1959 (*LSA Bulletin* 33.15[1960]) and remained on the LSA rolls until her death in 1965 (*LSA Bulletin* 38.153[1965]).

Most women faculty from small colleges resigned within the first decade: Gertrude Beggs from Westhampton College; Louise Bourgoin of Smith College; Anna Jacobson of Hunter College; Else Saleski first at Milwaukee-Downer College, then at St. Lawrence University; Lillian Smith from Agnes Scott College; Lella Watson of Santa Ana Junior College; and from Goucher College, Ola Elizabeth Winslow, later a Pulitzer Prize winning biographer. Julia Bentley, Mary Lee, and Anna MacVay also left the Society after just a few years; they were high school teachers, a common occupation for women and men earning money to support advanced graduate study, as well as for those who could not find professional positions in the colleges and universities even after

they had completed doctorates, clearly the case for Edith Claflin, discussed below (see also Falk 1995a).

The LSA today is a professional organization focused on research and scholarship, and so it may seem surprising that so many of the early members were not affiliated with research institutions. But in its formative years, the Society actively encouraged such memberships, unlike other professional associations and learned societies of the time, especially those in the sciences (see Rossiter 1982:275–279). The women teachers at high schools and small colleges who joined the LSA had every reason to expect that their presence would be welcomed and that the Society would respect and even address their professional interests and needs.

Indeed, in his opening address at the first LSA meeting, Hermann Collitz (1855–1935), the Society's first president, noted: 'A matter worthy of our particular attention is the study of ancient and modern languages in our public schools and colleges' (Collitz 1925:16), and announcements of the Linguistic Institutes in the early years included the following statement: 'There will be courses for…high school and college teachers of language who feel the need of acquaintance with linguistic science or with the history of a particular language or group of languages…' (*LSA Bulletin* 3.5[1929], 5.5[1930], 7.5[1931]). The third Institute included a course on 'Linguistics in High School Latin' (*LSA Bulletin* 5.9 [1930]), but apparently this effort was too little and came too late. It may be also that the national economic depression affected enrollment. In any case, the first high school Latin teachers among the membership had already resigned, and only one of the four people who enrolled for the course joined the Society. The course was not repeated, and classes for high school teachers do not appear among the 'essential purposes' of its formal courses in the official 'History of the Linguistic Institute' written in 1940 by Edgar Howard Sturtevant (1875–1952) (*LSA Bulletin* 13.83–89[1940]). This movement away from 'students of language' and 'all persons in sympathy' was part of the growing professionalization of the field of linguistics and of the Linguistic Society itself, a movement that tended to exclude the women members in disproportionate numbers.

There were earlier signs of this change. When Kent and Sturtevant conducted a 'Survey of Linguistic Studies' in 1926, they limited themselves to 'a tabulation of the linguistic courses in the more important graduate schools,' 'to those advanced courses in linguistic subjects that carry graduate credit,' and they 'considered only institutions which are members of the Association of American Universities [AAU]' (Kent & Sturtevant 1926:3–4). In so doing, they largely excluded women faculty and, to a lesser extent, women students. Most of the early women members teaching at the post-secondary level had posts at women's colleges and at the less eminent coeducational colleges and universities. It is noteworthy that only two women faculty were consulted for the survey: Sarah T.Barrows (b.1870) of the University of Iowa and Louise Pound at the University of Nebraska; both were Foundation Members, though Barrows resigned in 1927 (*Language* 5.53[1929]).

While there were men among the LSA membership who taught in high schools and at small colleges and minor universities, the Society's leadership throughout the first decade held appointments at the major research universities of the United States, i.e. those twenty six institutions then affiliated with the AAU. Indeed, from 1925 through 1934 only a single LSA officer–president, vice president, secretary-treasurer, editor–was not on the faculty of an AAU institution. For women, the situation was almost exactly opposite; only three women Foundation Members had such AAU positions, Barrows at Iowa, Pound at Nebraska, and Eva Johnston of the University of Missouri.

AAU affiliation was not just a matter of prestige. It meant opportunities for research and support of professional activities. Historian Peter Novick described

> the very partial and uneven extent to which an ethos of scholarly productivity dominated American higher education in the interwar years… Although no institutions remained unaffected by the spirit of research, there were only a few where it was dominant, and many where its impact was minimal. Teaching loads were heavy, often fifteen or eighteen hours a week, and library resources in most places all but nonexistent. (Novick 1988:175)

It is possible, and even likely, that some academic women at the time preferred appointments at smaller colleges (as argued, for example, in Bernard 1964:89– 91). Certainly the major women's schools (e.g., Hunter, Goucher, Mount Holyoke, Smith, Vassar) were among the elite institutions of higher education in America, attracting many of the nation's brightest women as students and as faculty (see Rossiter 1982:19). But these schools were not as supportive of research as were the AAU institutions. Well into the 1930s,

> the climate for research remained difficult at the women's colleges. Even at the wealthiest ones, research funds, facilities, and faculty time remained scarce or nonexistent, making a career there increasingly difficult for those women who were strongly research oriented…even proven researchers were rarely given reduced teaching assignments. (Rossiter 1982:174)

For many women interested in languages and linguistics, it was extraordinarily difficult if not impossible to conduct the research necessary for full participation in the professional meetings, Linguistic Institutes, and publications of the Linguistic Society of America. And those on the faculties of schools far from the intellectual centers where the annual LSA meetings and Linguistic Institutes were held had the burden of travel added to these other deprivations.

Unable to pursue research, in some cases not interested in doing so, many Foundation Members from the high schools and the smaller and more distant

colleges resigned from a Linguistic Society that became more and more focused on scholarship. Of the seventeen women Foundation Members who resigned in the first decade, only Sarah Barrows, Professor of Phonetics at the University of Iowa, an AAU institution, published in *Language,* the only book review by a woman in the journal's first twenty volumes and beyond (Barrows 1926). Barrows attended the LSA meetings geographically closest to her home institution. At the Cincinnati meeting in 1927 her talk on 'A frequently occurring usage of pronunciation in Iowa' (*Language* 4.61 [1928]) prompted discussion by eleven of the members present. Whether the discussion was critical and a cause of her resignation, effective four days later (*Language* 5.53 [1929]), is not reported in the record.

Barrows's area of specialization was phonetics and this may have been a factor in her departure from the Society; Mary Summers Steel, with similar interests, also resigned early. Phonetics for these women included applications to teaching and speech therapy. They had not stumbled accidentally into the LSA. In his LSA inaugural paper, 'Why a Linguistic Society,' Leonard Bloomfield explicitly remarked that linguistics demands…the recording of speech-movements or of the resultant sound-waves' and noted that 'methods of mechanical observation, both physiologic and acoustic, are being developed' (Bloomfield 1925b: 2). Collitz had spoken, as well, of '"practical" or "applied" linguistics' in his own inaugural paper (Collitz 1925:15). Again, the LSA did not long support this early theme. Two courses in phonetics were offered at the first Linguistic Institute, each to a single student (*LSA Bulletin* 2.17[1928]). The following year, phonetics courses were directed to 'teachers of the deaf,' half of them women (*LSA Bulletin* 3.6, 12[1929]). As with the special course for high school Latin teachers at the third Institute, these 'applied' offerings were not repeated.

The departure of two-thirds of the founding women members of the Society over little more than a decade passed almost without notice. Most did not hold an appointment at research institutions; they were unconnected to the leadership of the organization; some had been geographically isolated from the Society's meetings. Even when their interests extended beyond teaching to scholarship, their specializations were too 'applied' for a society that had originally encouraged their membership but was in the process of redefining itself. Through the mid 1930s, that definition remained focused on historical studies. The presidents and vice presidents were drawn largely from scholars of ancient languages, philology, and comparative grammar. The longtime editor of *Language*–George Melville Bolling (1871–1963)–was a specialist in Greek; secretary-treasurer Kent listed his own area as Comparative Philology.

The women who retained membership and contact with linguistics over a longer period of time were associated with two overlapping cohorts: those who were active scholars and those who provided financial support for the Society or for linguistic research. Among the latter were Rebecca Bolling Littlejohn (Mrs. Robert M.), and her daughter Charlotte Townsend Littlejohn (later listed as Mrs. Edward Norris Rich). They became 'Benefactors of the Society, by the

payment into the treasury of Two Hundred and Fifty Dollars each' (*Language* 3.154 [1927]), a gesture of family support for Professor George Bolling, Rebecca Bolling's brother. Another family member to belong was Grace Sturtevant (later identified as Mrs. Francis W.Hopkins), oldest child of Edgar Sturtevant, Signer of the Call and Professor of Greek and Latin at Yale University. Her receipt of the AB degree from Vassar was actually announced in the *LSA Bulletin* (4.13 [1929]). She went on to study under her father's direction at Yale, completing her doctorate in 1931. The LSA published her dissertation in its *Language Dissertations* series (Hopkins 1932), the required subvention apparently paid by her father (*Language* 9.107[1933]).

Two other women benefactors of linguistics, in deed but not in title, were Alice Vanderbilt Morris and Elsie Clews Parsons. Educated in the private schools of New York City, Alice Vanderbilt Morris (1874–1950) did not have a college degree. Her association with the academic world came largely through her work to develop and promote an international auxiliary language, an endeavor which attracted a number of LSA members over the years. Elsie Clews Parsons, mentioned earlier, displayed only slight and passing interest in the languages of the subjects of her ethnographic research, but behind the scenes as well as through the Southwest Society that she founded and funded, she supported the work of Franz Boas and provided grants for linguistic fieldwork to several young scholars in the 1920s, including Gladys Amanda Reichard. We return to Morris in Part II and to Parsons and Reichard in Part III.

While Parsons supported the new American focus on the study of Native American Indian languages, another early LSA woman member subsidized the older philological approach. Klara Hechtenberg Collitz (c. 1865–1944) was not a Foundation Member, though she attended that first meeting in December 1924 ('Mrs. Collitz,' *Language* 1.8[1925]); her husband was Hermann Collitz. Klara Collitz was an established scholar with a 1901 Ph.D. from the University of Heidelberg. She had held a number of teaching positions, including a post 'in charge of Germanic philology' at Smith College in Massachusetts from 1897 to 1899 (*Who's Who in America,* vol. 21, p. 621). Following her marriage in 1904, Klara Collitz never again held an academic position, but she remained active in scholarship. She joined the Society in its third year (*Language* 4.69[1928]); her presence was recorded at many of the annual meetings; she presented papers before the Society and participated in the discussions; and her work on the semantics of verbs of motion was published as *Language Monograph* No. 8 (Collitz 1931).

Hermann Collitz died in 1935; Klara Collitz retained her membership until her death on 22 November 1944, and she left most of her estate to the Linguistic Society of America (*LSA Bulletin* 18.17[1945]) with the intention that the LSA was

> to establish a Professorship for comparative Philology in the United States, to be named 'The Hermann and Klara H.Collitz Professorship for Comparative Philology' (i.e. 'eine Professur für vergleichende

> Sprachwissenschaft'). By vergleichende Sprachwissenschaft I mean the term in the sense that my husband used it, i.e. including not only Germanic Philology, ancient and modern, but likewise ethnography, archaeology, dialectology, metrics, and subjects related thereto…(*LSA Bulletin* 38.21 [1965])

A special Committee on the Collitz Bequest recommended to the LSA in 1945 that a Hermann and Klara H.Collitz Professorship be founded within the Linguistic Institute (*LSA Bulletin* 19.11[1946]). Klara Collitz's part in the formal title was almost immediately forgotten with the appointment of the first holder of the chair. In his report on the 1948 Linguistic Institute, Hans Kurath (1891– 1992), the director, recorded that E.H.Sturtevant 'occupied the Hermann Collitz Professorship in Comparative Indo-European Grammar' (*LSA Bulletin* 22.12[1949]).

The history of Hermann and Klara Collitz and their professorship illustrates a shift along the continuum that comprises historical studies of language, from the long established philological tradition, to the late nineteenth century neogrammarian approach and beyond, to more contemporary views in the mid to late twentieth century. Both Hermann and Klara were identified with specializations in 'German Philology' from the first years of their LSA memberships until his death in 1935, at which time her entry was changed to 'Germanic and Romance languages' (*LSA Bulletin* 9.26[1936]). But in Hermann's teaching and in Klara's will there are steps away from strictly Germanic philology and toward the comparative linguistics that had begun to eclipse the older approach in American linguistic circles in the first decades of the twentieth century. However, Klara Collitz had not explicitly incorporated the newer views in the wording of her will. When Kurath took it upon himself to retitle the professorship, he not only excluded her name but also altered the field from her 'Comparative Philology' to his own 'Comparative Indo-European Grammar.' The latter change, with one more alteration, became official almost twenty years later when a Committee on the Collitz Professorship determined that the chair should be 'in what would now be called Comparative Indo-European Linguistics' and quoted Klara Collitz's will (*LSA Bulletin* 38.21 [1965]). Yet in further deciding that this did not exclude 'structural, systematic, transformational, and other kinds of linguistics within the areas named' (ibid.), the Committee explained that 'If Hermann Collitz were alive today, he would certainly not ignore the pertinence of a structural approach in modern comparative Indo-European linguistics' (p. 22). If the Committee considered what position Klara Collitz might have taken, it was not reported, though it was her bequest that established the chair which officially carried both of their names. In 1994, apparently in response to the account given here upon its first appearance in *Language* (Falk 1994), the officers and the Executive Committee of the Linguistic Society of America quietly restored Klara Collitz to the title of the professorship she had endowed fifty years before (*LSA Bulletin* No. 145, p. 15 [October 1994]).

Of the original thirty one women LSA Foundation Members, five were scholars who took on active roles within the LSA during its early years. Edith Frances Claflin, Luise Haessler, E.Adelaide Hahn, Louise Pound, and Maria Wilkins Smith all pursued research in philology, or 'classical linguistics' in the phrasing of Bernard Bloch (1953:219). Their work could also be classified as historical linguistics.

Louise Pound (1872–1958) earned the doctoral degree at the University of Heidelberg in 1900, one of a number of American women to study in Germany in an era when many still experienced difficulty gaining admission to advanced study in America (see Rossiter 1982:40–43). An undergraduate and master's student at the University of Nebraska, upon her return from Europe she spent her career on its English department faculty. Initially her scholarship drew on the traditional philology of her training.[2]

Martin Joos, in his personal reconstruction of the early years of the LSA, reported being told by one of the men who signed the Call for the Organization Meeting that 'Louise Pound…would have been included' among the Signers but that '[f]or family reasons, there were no women' (Joos [1986]:9). Whatever this obscure remark may have been intended to mean, there is no doubt that in 1924 Pound was a significant, national figure among 'students of language.' Margaret Rossiter has called her one of the three 'major academic stateswomen of the 1920s' (1982:363–364n.12). In 1925, Pound cofounded the journal *American Speech* with her fellow LSA Foundation Members and junior colleagues Kemp Malone (1889–1971) of Johns Hopkins University and Arthur G.Kennedy (1880–1954) of Stanford University, one of her former graduate students (Kennedy 1949:x). News of the first issue was posted in *Language* (1.157–158[1925]): 'It will appear monthly and will contain comments on current usage, on phenomena of vocabulary, on shifting pronunciation, on the lore of place names; studies in style, in local dialect, in slang, in the influence of foreign languages, etc.' (p. 158). Many of those comments and studies were produced by Pound, who filled various editorial positions with the journal from 1925 to 1938.

Pound's leadership role in the study of American English was acknowledged in the early days of the Linguistic Society. Her first LSA talk and its subsequent publication in *Language* (Pound 1927) dealt with etymology, but she was also clear that 'we need not go back to Old or Middle English' to account for American English forms (p. 99). The work immediately followed an article by Charles C.Fries ([1887–1967] Fries 1927) and together they constituted the first publications in the Society's scholarly journal to deal with American English. The next year Pound taught at the first Linguistic Institute, offering a course in American English (*LSA Bulletin* 2.9[1928]). She was the only woman on the twenty four member faculty and surely provided a model for the thirteen women students among the total of forty five registrants (*LSA Bulletin* 2.13–16[1928]). One cannot ignore the real loss for women students when for many years neither Pound nor any other major woman scholar was appointed to the faculty of subsequent Institutes.

At the second Linguistic Institute Pound was one of two women among the fifty invited participants at a concurrent conference held to establish policies and procedures for what became the *Linguistic Atlas of the United States and Canada* (Kurath 1929). The record does not include her among those contributing to any of the discussion. When one member suggested that only the male voice be studied because it 'is more easily reproduced' in mechanical recording, it was Hans Kurath, later selected as the project director, who responded that it was 'important to study the speech of both sexes' (Kurath 1929:41). Whether the conference report is accurate in its record of discussion participants cannot be determined, but in any case Pound apparently had no influence on the project despite her prominence in the field of American English and her position at the time as national vice president of the American Dialect Society.

Nevertheless, she continued to support the LSA, but her participation became increasingly inconsequential. Earlier she had attended the second, third, and fourth annual meetings (*Language* 2.64[1926], 3.30[1927], 4.54[1928], respectively), giving a paper at the third (Pound 1927) and then at the sixth and seventh meetings (published as Pound 1930a, 1930b, 1930c and Pound 1931a, 1931c, respectively). She was also registered for the ninth, eleventh, fourteenth, and fifteenth meetings (*Language* 9.104[1933], 11.53[1935], *LSA Bulletin* 11.3 [1938], 12.8[1939], respectively), but there is no record of her so much as discussing others' papers, nor did she serve on the Executive Committee or in any routine capacities. However, in December 1938, Fries was elected president of the LSA for 1939 and Pound became vice president (*LSA Bulletin* 12.25[1939]), the first woman to hold this high elective office. Together they constituted the first leadership team whose work was concentrated on the description of contemporary American English.

Why the LSA turned to her at this time is unknown. An inactive officer, Pound did not participate in arranging the program for the next annual meeting, and she did not attend the meeting itself in Philadelphia. This may have resulted from a lack of funds for travel and conferences, a common situation at the time and one noted specifically as a continuing problem in Pound's career by a colleague at Nebraska (Wimberly 1949:xiv). But she remained active in other professional organizations, serving as national president of the American Dialect Society 1938–1944 and president of the Modern Language Association of America 1954–1955, the first woman to hold the latter office (*Who's Who of American Women,* p. 1030). It seems more likely that Pound became alienated from the Linguistic Society. She resigned at the end of 1942, perhaps not coincidentally just as Fred N.Robinson (1871–1966) was about to take office as president. Aside from Charles Grandgent (1862–1939) in 1929, Robinson was the only LSA president up to that time who was not a Foundation Member. His election may have insulted Pound.

Despite her LSA papers, Linguistic Institute course, and vice presidency, Louise Pound never became a key figure in American linguistics. Not only was her home institution located far from the East Coast base of many of the leading

LSA founders, but her early graduate studies at Heidelberg deprived her of the network of American faculty and fellow students that aided her colleagues. Some revealing contrasts of geography and generation can be found in the short career of Maria Wilkins Smith whose studies remained within the traditional philological framework, displaying none of the innovation that characterized Pound's work during the LSA decades.

A graduate student when she enrolled as a Foundation Member, Maria Smith's brief career exemplifies the opportunities available to her generation following the establishment of the LSA. She published her first article in *Language* in 1928 (Smith 1928) and the same year read a paper on Avestan at the fifth annual LSA meeting, based on her doctoral work in 'Indo-European Philology' at the University of Pennsylvania under Roland Kent's direction (*Language* 4.153 [1928]). This direct association with a prominent member of the organization provided her with access to the Society's programs and publications. Her dissertation was among the first published in the LSA *Language Dissertations* series (Smith 1929). She was promoted from instructor to assistant professor of Latin at Temple University in Philadelphia (*Language* 4.153 [1928], *LSA Bulletin* 9.44[1936]), but after the eleventh annual meeting, held in Philadelphia, in 1934 (*Language* 11.53 [1935]), she is not reported in attendance at further meetings of the Society, and the next year her directory listing no longer specified academic rank or affiliation. She apparently never fulfilled the promise noted by a reviewer of her dissertation who had written: 'it will be a pleasure to look forward to further Avestan studies by Dr. Smith, who has shown her colors so brightly in this first piece of work' (Jackson 1930:332). Smith resigned from the Society effective at the end of 1941 (*LSA Bulletin* 16.7 [1943]).

Luise Haessler (b.circa 1866) also had only a brief scholarly career in linguistics, although she had taught German for many years at Hunter College in New York City. She was present at the organization meeting (*Language* 1.8[1925]), attended the second annual meeting in Chicago in 1925, and thereafter registered for almost every LSA meeting held on the East Coast until her retirement a dozen years later. After chairing the German Department at Hunter, she moved to Brooklyn College, a newly founded school that joined Hunter within The City University of New York system in 1930. A paper she presented on Old English at the LSA meeting in 1934 was published in *Language* (Haessler 1935a), and her University of Chicago doctoral dissertation appeared as *Language Dissertation* No. 19 (Haessler 1935b). Haessler was listed as 'Ph.D., Professor and Head' of her department at Brooklyn College in the membership directory for 1935 (*LSA Bulletin* 9.30[1936]), and she gave a second paper at the next LSA meeting ('Middle High German *houbetstat*,' *LSA Bulletin* 9.16[1936]), where she was also appointed to the Committee on Resolutions (ibid.), a largely honorary post with the sole responsibility of formulating an expression of thanks to the meeting hosts. She gave a third LSA paper in 1936 ('Old High German neman and its Compounds,' *LSA Bulletin* 10.18[1937]).