

# The Elements of Style: A Tribute to Suzanne Corkin

Alice Cronin-Golomb

When Brad Postle invited me to submit a contribution to this Festschrift for Sue Corkin, I had to mull over what to present. I knew there would be many scientific papers but wanted to do something more personal. What I decided might be meaningful to Sue would be a contribution about her role in the development of women scientists in her lab. I know she was very important to me in this respect. I started with all the women I could think of who had been in Sue's lab around my time, contacted them, and asked them to help me find others, especially those who came before and after me. Those who responded are included here. There are 20 women representing many different roles in Sue's lab: research scientist, undergraduate student, graduate student, postdoctoral fellow, secretary, research assistant. Their dates and roles in the lab and what they are doing now are presented in Table 1. To provide a little structure but not to constrain their responses too much, I provided some intentionally vague guiding questions and left it up to them as to which ones they wanted to address. My edits have been confined to explaining abbreviations and special terms [*in brackets*], shortening some responses without changing the meaning (I hope), and offering some grammatical improvements that I believe Sue would have done herself if she'd been given the opportunity.

Though my name is here as author, I can properly take credit for only one twentieth of the content of this article. I am indebted to these many women who took the time to reminisce in a public forum—the “public” part may not seem extraordinary until you get to the final entry! Needless to say, we are all tremendously indebted to Sue herself, in both predictable and surprising ways. We hope you enjoy the reconstruction of life in the Corkin lab over the years and its reverberations in our lives to the present day.

## HOW IS IT THAT YOU CAME TO WORK IN SUE'S LAB OR WORK WITH SUE IN SOME OTHER WAY?

(N. Hebben) I originally came to Sue's lab in 1979 through her mentor, Brenda Milner. Fortunately, while

I was an intern in neuropsychology at what is now called the VA Boston Healthcare System (and was previously the Boston Veterans Administration Hospital) I had the good fortune to be allowed to test Dr. Milner's patients for my dissertation, “The Role of the Frontal and Temporal Lobes in Acoustic and Articulatory Coding of Speech” at the Montreal Neurological Institute. I was introduced to Sue through Dr. Milner, and Sue invited me to submit a grant for a postdoctoral position in her lab, which I happily did and even more happily was awarded.

(C. Fennema-Notestine) I responded to a posting for a UROP [*Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program*] student to work in her Behavioral Neuroscience Laboratory. At that time, I was thinking of focusing my research on visual information processing, taking classes from Ellen Hildreth and others. Sue's UROP posting on the study of memory and disorders of memory intrigued me. Once I met with Sue and the people in her lab, I knew it was a place I could learn a great deal, from experimental design and statistical analysis to writing.

(J. Ogden) My Auckland University Ph.D. supervisor, Professor Mike Corballis, was a friend of Sue's. They were both at McGill together, I think. He used to help her with her statistics! He recommended me to Sue.

(M. Kjelgaard) As an undergraduate psychology major from a state school, I didn't have a lot of great options for careers. I knew that I wanted to “go to graduate school,” but coming from a working class family and the first one in my family to have a Bachelor's degree, I really had no idea what that meant. I didn't really even understand the difference between experimental and clinical psychology. I learned about neuropsychology working in a head injury rehabilitation facility and instantly knew *that* was what I wanted to do. In those days, jobs were posted in the newspaper. I read the *Boston Globe*, and one lucky day, I saw a position for an RA [*research assistantship*] at MIT in Sue's lab, applied, and got the job!

(H. Mapstone) I got an interview with Sue through a woman who worked for Sue and also worked weekends in the same head injury rehabilitation center where I worked full time. Sue was interested in the whole person. The questions I remember from the interview: “Do you play tennis?” and “Are you in love?”

Most excitingly, I remember hearing: “I always like to give a Smithie [*a fellow Smith College graduate*] a break.”

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Boston University

**Table 1.** Members of the Corkin Lab Who Contributed to this Article

<i>Name</i>	<i>Years in Corkin Lab</i>	<i>Position Then</i>	<i>Current</i>
Sullivan, Edith V. (Eddie)	1976–1985	Research Associate/Scientist	Research Professor, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Stanford University School of Medicine, Stanford, CA
Shedlack, Karen	1979–1982	Research Assistant	Assistant Clinical Professor of Psychiatry, McLean Hospital/Harvard Medical School, Belmont, MA and State of Massachusetts Department of Developmental Services, Weymouth and Norwood, MA
Hebben, Nancy	1979–1982	Postdoc	Assistant Clinical Professor of Psychology, Department of Psychiatry, Harvard Medical School, Boston, MA and Clinical Associate, McLean Hospital, Belmont, MA
Sauer, Karen	1979–1981	Secretary	Wellesley College Music Department, Wellesley, MA (retired)
Nissen, Mary Jo	1981–1983	Postdoc	Cancer Epidemiologist, Park Nicollet Institute, Minneapolis, MN
Keane, Margaret (Maggie)	1984–86; 1986–91	Research Assistant; Graduate Student	Professor, Wellesley College, Department of Psychology, Wellesley, MA
Sherman, Janet	1984–1988	Postdoc/Research Scientist (with M. Garrett, MIT)	Clinical Director, Massachusetts General Hospital Psychology Assessment Center, Boston, MA
Schweickert, Janell	1980s	Postdoc	Clinical Psychologist, Wake-Kendall Group, Washington, DC
Ogden, Jenni	1985–1986	Postdoc	Associate Professor Emerita, Department of Psychology, University of Auckland, New Zealand
Cronin-Golomb, Alice	1985–1989	Postdoc	Professor of Psychology, Boston University, Boston, MA
Kjelgaard, Margaret	1986–1988	Research Assistant	Assistant Professor, MGH Institute of Health Professions and Director of Psychology, Clinical Research Center, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA
Fennema-Notestine, Christine	1987–1990	Undergraduate Student	Associate Professor of Psychiatry and Radiology, University of California, San Diego, CA
Mapstone, Heather Clarke	1990–1992	Research Assistant	Attorney, Rochester, NY
Mendola, Janine	1991–1996	Graduate Student	Associate Professor, McGill University, Montreal, Quebec, Canada
Jennings-Shaw, Peggy	1992–1995	Postdoc/Research Scientist	Artist; Freelance Data Analyst/Consultant, Santa Rosa, CA
Stern, Chantal	1994–1998	Postdoc (with B. Rosen, MGH-NMR Center)	Professor of Psychology, Boston University, Boston, MA
Xu, Yaoda	1995–2000	Graduate Student	Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA
Kensinger, Elizabeth	1998–2003	Graduate Student	Associate Professor of Psychology, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA
Steinvorth, Sarah	2000–2002	Postdoc	Cognitive Neuroimaging Lab, Boston University, Boston, MA
Chung, Christie	2005–2007	Postdoc	Associate Professor of Psychology, Mills College, Oakland, CA

(C. Chung) As a student I had always admired Sue's work with H.M. but had never imagined working with someone like her! When I was searching for postdoc positions, I was interested in learning more about the brain from the neuroscience perspective because my Ph.D. training was primarily in cognitive aging and memory modeling. I met Sue at SFN [*Society for Neuroscience*] in 2004 and knew at that point that she would be a great mentor for my postdoc training. I was excited to have the opportunity to learn from her.

(E. Kensinger) During my junior year of college, I attended one of Sue's talks on memory changes in age-related disease and I visited one of her laboratory meetings. I was fascinated by the breadth of her research, inspired by the dynamic discussions that took place during her laboratory meeting, and excited by the prospect of gaining solid training in both neuropsychology and neuroimaging. I was therefore thrilled to join Sue's laboratory as a graduate student.

(S. Steinvorth) After finishing my Ph.D. in Germany, my "doctor mother" encouraged me to go abroad to learn more. I found out about Sue's lab, contacted her, and she agreed to take me on as a postdoc if I brought my own funding, which I did by writing up and getting a grant from the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG).

(J. Mendola) I came to MIT to work with nonhuman primates but found myself looking for a different environment during my first year. So, in a way it was simply good fortune that our paths crossed and I decided that working with human subjects, but from a neuropsychological/biological perspective, was the best of both worlds. I also appreciated that Sue managed her lab effectively as a team.

(Y. Xu) As a grad student, I was on the cognitive neuroscience track. I was coadvised by Mary Potter (primary) and Sue (secondary).

(K. Sauer) I came to work in Sue's lab because, at the time, I wasn't making enough as a musician.

(M.J. Nissen) In the first 10 years of our two-career marriage, my husband and I took turns deciding where we would move next. In 1980 it was his turn, and he selected Boston so that he could do his residency at MGH [*Massachusetts General Hospital*]. Boston seemed like a lovely choice to me, but of course I was faced with the problem of finding a position there. I started knocking on doors more or less, and one day met with Richard Held. He was gracious, said he didn't have any positions available in his lab, but said he thought Sue Corkin did. And in fact she did, I believe because Edie Sullivan was just leaving for Geneva, Switzerland. So Sue hired me as Edie's temporary replacement.

(A. Cronin-Golomb) I had finished my degree at Caltech working with commissurotomy (split-brain) patients in the lab of Roger Sperry. There were only four such patients, and I felt the need to broaden my exposure to other neurological groups when I was looking for a postdoc. I wrote to the heads of several laboratories. Most said I could come if I brought my own grant money, but I was a

brand new Ph.D. who'd never worked on a grant proposal. One thing I did know about the grant-writing process was that the time from submission to funding was at least a solid year. Sue's response to my application was different from the others. She said, "Come. And you'll write a grant proposal to support yourself." That made all the difference in the world. It meant that I could start right away, and, as important to me at that point, it told me that my work was good enough to merit support; that someone had confidence that I would in fact get a grant, and soon. And I did—I wrote a postdoc NRSA [*National Research Service Award*] application under Sue's guidance, and it was successful.

(J. Sherman) I was a Sloan Postdoctoral fellow in Merrill Garrett's lab. My interest was in how different aspects of language processing are impacted by brain damage resulting from stroke (i.e., patients with aphasia). Sue generously offered that I could also investigate language in AD in her lab—which I did at the CRC [*Clinical Research Center at MIT*] and obtained funding from the ADRA [*Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Association*] to support my research.

(E. Sullivan) Chris Darwin was at my doctoral thesis defense on tactile short-term memory and thought I would be a good fit with Sue. It happened that within the year, we moved from Connecticut to the Boston area. I pursued work with Sue, just when she was pregnant with Damon and needing a stand-in during her maternity leave.

(C. Stern) I was a postdoc with Bruce Rosen at the MGH-NMR [*Nuclear Magnetic Resonance*] Center, which is now the Martinos Center for Biomedical Imaging. I met Sue through Gil Gonzalez, the head of neuroradiology at MGH, who was working with John Growdon. We worked together on the first fMRI study to demonstrate hippocampal activity (which came out in 1996), and I worked on studies with Brad Postle and Chris Moore while they were both students in Sue's lab.

### WHAT OPPORTUNITIES DID SUE OFFER YOU AT THAT TIME THAT YOU THOUGHT (OR NOW THINK) WERE SPECIAL?

(Y. Xu) I was very fortunate to have had the opportunity to test the famous patient H.M. while I was working with Sue. That was such a special and unique experience that made me really appreciate tremendously the importance and the hard work that go into testing patients.

(M.J. Nissen) It all turned out so very well! I had been interested in neuropsychology since college but had not had the opportunity to be involved in neuropsychological research. Sue offered the training and opportunities to do that. One of the things I learned from Sue that has served me well is the importance of collaborations, including how to develop and maintain them.

(J. Sherman) The opportunity to look at language in Alzheimer's disease—an area I am still working in—helping me to establish a lifelong interest in clinical populations

and in particular dementia. She also generously allowed me to test H.M. on our language studies! A truly unique opportunity.

(H. Mapstone) All of it! Maybe because I didn't go on in science, I don't think about specific opportunities, just general lessons like work hard, play hard; stay positive; do not fear conflict; mind your integrity; match your poster board to your outfit (☺).

(E. Sullivan) My charge was to learn how to do as much neuropsychological testing—standardized and home grown—as possible. I did that and introduced many new, “home-made” tests of different components of memory and also other tests of contextual memory and processing. I had the special opportunity to initiate testing of patients with Alzheimer disease and Parkinson disease. Two unique opportunities were (1) the 40-year recall of Teuber's World War II veterans and administration of tests we remade in the likeness of the original 1950s stimuli and, of course, (2) the testing of H.M.

(C. Stern) Through Sue, I was able to help mentor two of her graduate students, Chris Moore and Brad Postle, in fMRI. At the time, the MGH-NMR Center was predominantly physicists, and the connection to Sue and BCS [*Brain and Cognitive Sciences*] allowed me to have more interaction with neuroscientists including Brad Postle, Chris Moore, Janine Mendola, and Peg Jennings.

(K. Sauer) Besides typing (and retyping and retyping) manuscripts on the IBM Selectric (no computers yet!), I made posters and slides the old fashioned way, with press-on letters. Everything about working in a science lab was new to me, but one special opportunity that Sue offered me was an all-expenses paid trip to Bethesda to hand deliver a grant application with one hour to spare!

(J. Schweickert) My original reason for studying psychology was my interest in brain processes, and Sue gave me the opportunity to circle back to neuropsychology once I had learned a lot about cognition and the research process. I will be forever grateful for the opportunity to work with H.M. and to collaborate with Janet Sherman. Sue's connections to MGH allowed me to teach a very fun class in applied statistics to health professionals. And the experiences in her lab allowed me to land a job first as a psychometrist, then as a postdoctoral fellow at Boston University Hospital, where I started down the path to clinical practice.

(N. Hebben) I was affiliated with Sue's lab to study pain perception in patients undergoing cingulotomy for chronic intractable pain or intractable psychiatric disorders. While there, I was also involved in research projects involving H.M., including an investigation of whether or not H.M. had impairment in his ability to monitor his internal states. This was a rather clever study (if I do say so myself) in which we served H.M. his dinner twice; the second time 20 minutes after he had consumed his first tray. H.M., of course, had no memory that he had already eaten, and he proceeded to consume all but his salad on the second tray, saying he did not like salad—not that he

was full. H.M. also underwent my pain perception task and had an increased tolerance to pain. Remarkably, he left the heat gun on so long he had 12 quarter size “sunburn-like” circles of red, six on each arm, and shortly after the study ended, he went up to a charge nurse at the CRC, asking how he had gotten the marks on his arms.

(C. Fennema-Notestine) In Sue's lab, undergraduates were provided significant opportunities to learn about experimental design, human subjects experience, and statistical analysis (go VAX BMDP!). Of course, one of the things that got me hooked was being allowed not only to meet H.M. but to talk with him, test him, and experience memory impairment “in person” under Sue's guidance. Visual information processing never seemed as boring as in those moments. Sue was a great teacher and created an incredible learning environment, attracting individuals with a variety of strengths but all of whom had similar approaches to mentorship.

(J. Ogden) I was one year out of my Ph.D. when I arrived in Boston with my husband, John, and our two youngest children, aged 9 and 11 (similar ages to Sue's children). I was very excited and very nervous about being found out as a complete fraud! How would I, from little old backwoods New Zealand, ever meet the standards of the mighty MIT! Sue was about to leave for overseas the day after we arrived, and she had asked us to meet her at the beauty salon where she was getting her hair, etc., done. My first sight of her was of her sitting in a chair with her head under a dryer and her feet on a stool while the beauty therapist varnished her toenails. The dryer was turned off, and within minutes of our introductions, after mentioning she had got me a generous stipend (I had arrived thinking I might not have any financial assistance), she asked if I had any particular project I wanted to work on. I was open to suggestions so she suggested I work on PD [*Parkinson disease*] and gave me a great stack of research papers to read before the next day, and said I should go to Mass General *the next day* and sit in on John Growdon's motor disorders clinic. (I knew nothing about PD and, up until that point, had no inkling that I would work in this area while at MIT). Sue (of course) lent us her car while she was away. (We had arrived from NZ the day before and were staying in the house of some lovely random academic I had met briefly at Auckland University two days before we left: Typical of all the Americans we met, he spontaneously offered us his house for a few weeks while he and his family were travelling).

So the most important thing Sue gave me was confidence. She treated me, without hesitation, as an equal. She believed that I could do whatever I wanted to do. Everyone in her lab was treated like this, and everyone treated their peers like this. At the same time, the people in her lab never doubted she was our leader. In NZ, neurologists are at the top of the pile, and psychologists can never be their equal, whatever they achieve and however little the neurologist achieves. So this belief that we can all work together, whatever our label, was something



I carried away with me and hopefully continued in my own career.

And of course the opportunity to work with H.M. was amazing and has remained my greatest claim to fame in the area of neuropsychology! Sue has been very generous in allowing me to write more personal reminiscences about H.M., including giving me access to the first MRI scan of his brain (published in my textbook before it was published in the journal paper). My latest book, *Trouble in Mind*, is dedicated to H.M., but without Sue, I would never have had that honor.

(M. Kjelgaard) The singular most critical event in my career was working in Sue's lab as a research assistant. Were it not for that, I would not have had the background needed to complete a Ph.D. program and then a career in clinical research. Seeing the example of such a strong female scientist in the 1980s truly influenced me. I never questioned whether being a woman would inhibit my ability to be a scientist.

(C. Chung) Sue allowed me to be in charge of several projects in the lab. However, ultimately, she encouraged me to find something that I was passionate about to pursue as a career.

(E. Kensinger) The access to patients was incredible. Within my first 2 years of graduate school, I had tested patients with Alzheimer disease, Parkinson disease, semantic memory deficits, and amnesia. Sue allowed me to study the topics I was passionate about, fostering my scientific curiosity. On more than one occasion, I presented her with an experimental proposal that was unrelated to ongoing research in the lab; she worked with me to figure out how I could obtain funding for the projects and fully supported my research in these new areas. It was because of this freedom that I discovered my interest in emotional memory, a topic that has held my interest for the past decade.

There were few things that remained "behind the scenes" in terms of how her laboratory was run. From early in my graduate career, she involved me in grant writing, conversations with the IRB [*Institutional Review Board*], and discussions of project budgets. This meant that, when I started my own laboratory, I had a good understanding of what it would entail to keep it running smoothly.

Sue set a wonderful example for the importance of teamwork in scientific research. She encouraged collaboration and consultation, both among her laboratory members and with others in the field.

(S. Steinvorth) I think the fact that she took me on as a postdoc without knowing any of my former mentors, coming from a bit of a different background (I had worked as a clinical neuropsychologist, doing clinical research), and letting me work with H.M. (I still do not like writing his full name, somehow) was special.

(J. Mendola) Sue was particularly skilled as a facilitator. During my time in her lab, she facilitated a great variety of topics—from memory, of course, to motor skill, to somatosensation, to phantom pain, to perception and

beyond. Rather than always asking people to fit into rigidly defined projects, she had a gift for bringing out the best in what others wanted to pursue. Despite the fact that she was a memory researcher first, Sue never shook the passion for visual perception out of me but allowed me great freedom to follow my own compass. My thesis project was truly a collaborative creation. This freedom combined with the rather rigorous environment at MIT provided a great preparation for life after grad school.

(A. Cronin-Golomb) What attracted me to Sue's lab in the first place was the high quality of the work, the variety of neurological patients, and the superb facilities that Sue had built up over the years. There was also the impressive lineage of neuropsychologists Sue followed from, people such as Brenda Milner and Hans-Lukas Teuber. The experience I needed, which Sue's lab more than any other offered, was large numbers of patients with a great variety of conditions, including Alzheimer's disease, global amnesia, Parkinson's disease, penetrating head injury, cingulotomy, Huntington's disease, and others. I spent 4 years there. At every step along the way, Sue offered me opportunities for research, for presenting my work at invitation-only scientific meetings, and for networking with the giants of the field. Early on in my postdoc, when I was still in awe of the famous names and shy about introducing myself to them at conferences, Sue would make a point of bringing me to them or them to me, saying a word about why we would find each other's work interesting, then discreetly disappearing so that I could continue on my own. I have observed other laboratories in which the directors are not nearly so generous in promoting their trainees, perhaps trying to keep all credit for themselves. In Sue's lab, the situation was quite the opposite. I still marvel at this generosity.

An example of an opportunity Sue gave me: She put me in charge of identifying a new postdoc. She handed me the pile of applications, asked me to go through them and help her choose the candidates, had me set up their visits and talks, and asked for my recommendations at the end, which she actually followed. I was just a postdoc myself! She apparently had confidence in my abilities, and it worked out well for our overall project.

Of course I'd be remiss if I didn't mention H.M. I was doing a study of abstract conceptualization in Alzheimer disease, and H.M. was a control—if you can believe it—because he was amnesic but maybe OK on conceptualization (as in fact he was). I reciprocated for the opportunity to be part of the H.M. studies by enrolling my mother as a control for him, as they were born in the same year and had the same education level. My other contribution was to drive H.M. to Connecticut or back several times. I was in constant terror of getting in an accident—of being the one who killed H.M.! I was maybe also the only person to actively try to keep his memory from working, I am ashamed to say. During those drives between CT and MIT, there was a highway sign for Chicopee Falls, which would always cue him to say "Chicopee Falls? I had an

aunt in Chicopee Falls!” and I’d be listening to the same story time after time. One time I just couldn’t bear the thought of hearing the story again, so when I saw the sign before he did I yelled, “Henry! Look over there!” and pointed in the direction opposite the sign so he wouldn’t get that cue. I only recently told Sue about that. Fortunately she thought it was funny.

(P. Jennings-Shaw) Perhaps what I really owe to Sue is that she gave me the opportunities I needed to either succeed gloriously in academic research or to figure out that I didn’t have what it takes and to go do something else with my life. I did the latter. And I know that Sue bore some considerable cost to give me the time and space and resources to figure that out—resources that some other talented woman scientist might have put to better use. Sue’s gamble on me didn’t pay off for academic research in cognitive neuroscience, but it did put me in the right place at the right time with the right talents to spend nearly 15 years doing human rights work with women living in countries in conflict. I hope there’s some return on her investment there.

### WHAT SPECIFIC GUIDANCE DID SUE PROVIDE FOR CAREER ADVANCEMENT?

(J. Mendola)

- A grant is not a contract.
- What can you do for them?
- Let go of the taffy—that is, let go of a conflict.
- How is your paper progressing? ☺

(M. Keane) As a graduate student, I deeply appreciated Sue’s confidence in me. Implicit in our interactions was the message that I had something important to contribute to the field and that my ideas were worthy of attention and exploration. Sue never condescended to her graduate students but treated them as respected collaborators, offering support and encouragement of many kinds. Beyond providing intellectual and moral support, Sue is unequalled in her ability to help her students overcome practical obstacles. Sue does not often encounter professional or practical impediments that she does not feel equipped to meet and overcome. She is equally tenacious in addressing problems that affect her students’ progress.

(J. Schweickert) Sue guided me more by example than verbal guidance. She also saw value in really knowing clinical as well as research neuropsychology, which helped me pursue my interests there. Also, having clinical speakers in was helpful to learn what others were doing outside of research.

(N. Hebben) Sue knew my degree was in clinical psychology, but she tried very hard to retain me in the research end by encouraging me to seek another grant after my NRSA was due to end. In fact, we drew up plans for my application for another award while eating at the Pancake Place in Edinburgh, Scotland, one morning in September 1981. Unfortunately, I was unable to get additional funding beyond three years so I moved on to clinical

work. I believe Sue valued my clinical training, however, and while I was in her lab, whenever a “clinical” report detailing and interpreting the research data collected on a particular patient was needed, Sue had every confidence that, even though I was fresh out of my internship and graduate program, I could write these reports. She also encouraged submitting posters and presentations (and in those days we used slides and enlarged photos to create poster presentations, can you imagine?) to scientific meetings, and that is how I came to go to Scotland. I have very fond memories of that trip. I stayed in the halls of residence (Pollack Halls) at the University of Edinburgh; saw a Military Tattoo (with Sue and Jocelyn); walked the Edinburgh city streets; toured the countryside; did a lot of shopping, including with Sue and Jocelyn; swam nearly every day at the Royal Commonwealth Pool; attended meetings and poster sessions; and proudly presented our data to the scientific community.

(C. Fennema-Notestine) After I worked with Sue, Maggie (Keane), and John (Gabrieli) for a few years, Sue was invaluable in discussions of what to do post-B.S. We discussed many options, from medical school to experimental psychology, as well as research assistantships in international locations. She offered to make any connections I would need, encouraged my own research on programs and research mentors, and suggested the importance of getting multiple perspectives. In the end, she guided me to UCSD (this young woman from the Midwest, who had studied in Cambridge, had not yet considered southern California as an option), to meet Nelson Butters and Larry Squire, top options in the field. I had a number of options for graduate school (including Brown, which, I recall, did not accept me as an undergraduate—thank you Sue and MIT!). I chose UCSD, and I ended up working closely with Nelson, moving from one great mentorship to another. I consider myself incredibly fortunate.

(J. Ogden) Because of my short stint at MIT, while I was there, I was asked to apply for the Directorship of the Clinical Psychology program at Auckland University (having only graduated from it myself two years previously) and got the job over many much more clinically experienced applicants. Sue was one of my referees (and probably the most influential one) and has been a referee for every major academic promotion and grant I have had since.

I modeled many aspects of running the Auckland clinical psychology program on the way Sue ran her lab. It was her other family. The celebrations of everyone’s birthday and other important occasions with those amazing Italian cakes, the meetings where everyone felt comfortable and enthusiastic about getting involved, the respect everyone had for the viewpoints of others, the fun we had, the work ethic Sue modeled for us all. Even after that very first trip she had away just after I arrived, she included me in the thoughtful presents she bought everyone in the lab. I still have the leather bookmark with

my name inscribed in gold on it! Her welcoming and leaving parties for people in her lab were wonderful. I was only there for 10 months, yet it felt like a major part of my academic life.

Many years later, I overheard a male research officer of my own telling someone that I was like a mother crocodile. He realized I had heard his comment and somewhat red-faced explained that a mother crocodile seemed scary (and was scary if you didn't come up to scratch) but if anyone else so much as thought about putting her babies down, she'd eat them for lunch. I took his comment as a compliment, but I think I inherited this crocodile mother characteristic directly from Sue.

(M. Kjelgaard) Sue was supportive during the application to Ph.D. programs and made suggestions. In fact, I did not know about Northeastern's excellent psychology program at the time. This is where I ended up.

(C. Chung) Sue encouraged me to apply for grants and fellowships, although it was a big challenge for an international scholar (U.K. citizenship). I still remember her working tirelessly with me on my first grant application as a postdoc and driving me to the post office to send it off late at night! She also shared her own stories and struggles as a woman researcher/professor and told me many times to stand up for myself and not let being a woman stop me from pursuing my career goals. She made me believe in myself and my ability to excel in academia.

(S. Steinvorth) Sue's approach to any of my research projects was always a thorough one. By discussing every single aspect, she let me build a deep understanding. Also, she was always more than happy to introduce me to people who facilitated ongoing projects.

(Y. Xu) Sue has always been extremely warm, caring, and supportive. She had always given me freedom to explore what I was interested in.

(M.J. Nissen) Until I worked in Sue's lab, I had never personally known a female scientist who was raising children. I think it goes without saying how important having such a role model is for women who are in the process of trying to figure out whether and how it can be done.

(A. Cronin-Golomb) Invitations to meetings, introductions to important people, discussions about where to apply for faculty positions and the odds of getting them, and of course writing endless letters of recommendation—these are all things that Sue did for me that I loved. One thing she did that I did not appreciate at the time was when I was in the early days of my faculty position at BU, still testing people with Alzheimer disease through John Growdon's Memory Disorders Unit at MGH and through Sue, and one day Sue told me that I shouldn't keep drawing from their patients—that I needed to get my own source. Here I thought it had been a great arrangement, but Sue was right. My odds of getting tenure would be lower if I couldn't demonstrate that I was really independent and not relying on my postdoc mentors to accomplish my current research. It took a lot of work, but I managed to develop the new contacts needed to

provide a fresh source of research participants, and that has served me well ever since. You do eventually have to leave the nest.

(E. Sullivan) Sue handed out a copy of Strunk and White to each of us. I took it seriously and still live by it. Just ask the folks in my lab! Evidence of its continued influence, one of my dear friends and colleague gave me the 50th anniversary edition of *The Elements of Style* (2010) for Christmas. In addition to learning how to write directly and succinctly, Sue taught me how to take criticism—at face value—and to acknowledge and take advantage of it.

(C. Stern) My children were born in 1994 and 1996. My papers with Sue span the years 1996–2000. I think the fact that you can't find a gap in my publications during that time period was due to Sue's persistence.

(H. Mapstone) Sue provided a model of success that I had never seen up close before. I think it is so important for young women to know what is possible and how it is possible. Alice, you probably know better than I the story about breastfeeding the baby in the file room during the site visit? How she would always take a call from her kids no matter what she was doing. How she sent her dogs to the kennel in a taxicab when she had a trip. Taking her secretary along to the manicures or hair appointments or whatever they were. Once I heard someone ask her "how she did it," and she said that she was very tired for many years, but so what, being tired was not a character flaw. Those are the things that stick with me. Like the old saying that you go to the mentor to learn how she ties her shoelaces. She was like that to me.

## **DO YOU HAVE ANY EVIDENCE OF SUE BEING ESPECIALLY INTERESTED IN ADVANCING WOMEN IN SCIENCE IN GENERAL?**

(M. Keane) From the time I decided to pursue a career in research and teaching, Sue's support has been unfailing and invaluable. I believe that because of her own experience, Sue has insight into the particular difficulties and struggles of pursuing an academic career as a woman. As my advisor, Sue had an ability to identify and speak to those struggles, even though I myself was not always able to voice them explicitly. Furthermore, Sue has the rare quality of knowing how to offer guidance to her students without compromising their intellectual independence. She always gave me the freedom to pursue research ideas independently and encouraged me to think of myself as a capable and independent scientist.

(J. Schweickert) Just how she conducted herself daily. She gathered many capable women around her and her lab was large and loyal. Although I was more of a "fringe" member of the lab, I was always made to feel welcome.

(E. Sullivan) Numbers of successful women emerging from Sue's lab is a more relevant metric than enumerating purposeful policy.

(C. Stern) I think she just pushed everyone equally hard...





where a sumptuous feast was accompanied by a reading of limericks individually composed by Sue for each member of the lab?

(E. Kensinger) A personal highlight for me was a lovely engagement party that Sue hosted at her home; although I had only been in her laboratory for a short time at the time of the party, she made my fiancé and me feel like family. I also have a very fond memory of Sue's attendance at my wedding, where she surprised me by reading a limerick she had written at the reception.

(J. Schweickert) Again, just being included in a lab that had a "social life" was really nice. Sue's holiday parties were always a highlight! I still have a Christmas ornament of a Santa in a hot air balloon to represent the "hot air" of talk in the psycholinguistics experiments that Janet and I were doing.

(N. Hebben) One of the bonuses of being a member of Sue's lab was that she viewed all members as part of her team and she frequently "guested" the team at her home during the holidays or her cottage during the summer. There were picnics too. The focus at these events was relaxing and having fun. At the cottage, we would all swim out to the raft to lounge there in the sun, and we would sit by a bonfire late into the night. I recall on one night how the universe treated us to a spectacular show of the Northern Lights. At Sue's house, we'd always have our fill of good food, but I especially remember that she always served scallops wrapped in bacon.

(M. Kjelgaard) I remember that Sue opened her home to the lab, for parties, took us to lunch fairly regularly, and would tell us about her career. I also find myself integrating a personal side to the mentor relationship. I remember that she always bought us gifts when she went somewhere exotic on a trip, and I do the same. I loved getting little things from all over the world.

(C. Chung) My first Thanksgiving in Boston was spent with Sue and her family. I am forever thankful to Sue for her openness, love, and care.

(J. Mendola) There was always fun to be had at weekly lab meetings. I think I remember that one lab meeting was a picnic in the Boston Common. Sue always appreciated my love of art, design, and fashion. It was pure fun to mention if the color of a planned outfit would match the color scheme of an upcoming poster presentation! I remember shopping with her in Montreal for original art to adorn the walls of her then new waterfront condo in Boston. Her generosity also went so far as to include me (seemingly effortlessly) in her holiday plans when I could not make it home to visit my own family.

(Y. Xu) Sue always takes care of you. ☺ There was not a single birthday cake that we had in our lab meetings that was not delicious. And the parties at Sue's house were always fabulous.

(A. Cronin-Golomb) It was a lab where people read real books! I remember that Maggie Keane and Sue and I all read Jill Ker Conway's *The Road from Coorain*. A vivid, more social memory is of Sue inviting me to pre-

sent at the International Neuropsychological Symposium in 1990 in Nafplio, Greece. I drank ouzo and schmoozed with Nelson Butters, watched Laird Cermak frolic in the pool with his kids, and went shopping with Sue, Leslie Ungerleider, Jerre Levy, Lynn Cooper, and others (I hope I'm remembering the cast of characters correctly...). A bunch of them bought drapery Greek dresses and were totally generous with compliments to each other and with ideas of who looked most like Athena (it was Lynn Cooper). I learned from Leslie Ungerleider that you buy a straw hat whenever you arrive at a hot destination and you toss it before you leave, because it will never survive the trip uncrushed. I filed this nugget along with the important information that Sue relayed from Brenda Milner about packing your conference clothes individually in dry cleaning bags before you put them in a suitcase because then they won't wrinkle. Another great time was when Sue hosted a farewell party for John Gabrieli at her house: formal attire—the gentlemen in tuxes, ladies dressed to the nines. Most personally to me, Sue had planned a secret baby shower for the arrival of our first child, but the baby arrived before the shower—so it became a postpartum celebration. Sue was endlessly inventive with her parties.

(J. Sherman) I recall a wonderful boat ride on the Charles to celebrate John Growdon's birthday; a really fun party at her home in Concord and lots and lots and lots of birthdays celebrated in her lab! Even years after leaving MIT, Sue would always deliver a bottle of wine to my office at MGH for a holiday gift. Her thoughtfulness is unsurpassed.

(C. Stern) Sue and I both went to McGill, and so we liked reminiscing about McGill, Montreal, and the MNI [*Montreal Neurological Institute*]. Of course I also remember the Christmas lunches with fondness, as well as the SFN reunion dinners.

(S. Steinvorth) 9/11 happened while I was in Sue's lab. At that time I was working with a student from whom I learned that a lot of teachers did not show up to their classes due to the confusion caused by the events. This, of course, was not very helpful for the students. Sue, however, did go to her classes during this time, specifically to be there for the students, and help where she could. She was standing out by being there for others in this situation.

(J. Ogden) Sue was the main invited speaker at a memory conference in Queenstown, NZ, many years ago. Her talk was to open the evening session, but she had gone on a bus trip that day and the bus had got held up in a snow storm. The organizers waited until the last minute and then asked me (I was the next speaker) to put my slides in the carousel and start my talk first. I had just begun and was onto about my third slide when Sue burst through the door still dressed in her padded ski gear and says, "I'm here! Move over Jenni, I'm on first!" So I did of course. Fifteen years later, she was still my leader....

**ANYTHING YOU FIND YOURSELF DOING NOW THAT YOU KNOW WAS DIRECTLY RELATED TO SUE'S INFLUENCE (E.G., GRAMMAR USAGE: CAN NEVER SUPPRESS IT)?**

(C. Chung) Yes! I now make my students do them too 😊. For example, I have to make sure titles of graphs summarize the general findings. Titles of paragraphs on posters or presentations can only break at meaningful places. I stopped saying “so” a hundred million times during presentations.

(M. Keane) Sue provided voluminous feedback on written work. I still have the first draft of my first manuscript, covered in Sue's comments. Her feedback always made my writing clearer and crisper and forced me to think more carefully about my arguments. I know that I am a better writer because of Sue's influence. I often hear Sue's voice as I comment on my own students' work. She modeled for me how to provide challenging critiques in a context of support and affirmation. I learned from Sue how important it is to instill confidence in students, and I carry that lesson with me in all of my interactions with my own students.

(J. Schweickert) I think of Sue *whenever* I write a report or a paper (so this is a daily occurrence!) and I have taught the phrase “which hunting” to many people, although my husband believes I am too zealous in my approach. I will also always be grateful to Sue for explaining the origins of the word “snafu” and why it was not appropriate for me to use in a paper I was presenting for publication. Sue made it clear that her hand ruled when she edited papers, and I think that firm boundaries can be helpful, even if they are not always pleasant! I now tell my supervisees that they just have to adapt to my style of writing, using Sue's example of a firm boundary, and they all do!

*[“Which hunting,” a pun on “witch hunting,” refers to checking to make sure you didn't use “which” (the word that introduces a nonrestrictive clause) when you meant the word “that” (the word that introduces a restrictive clause). Note the differences between these sentences: “The hippocampus which is very small can be seen in Figure 3” and “The hippocampus that is very small can be seen in Figure 3.” The first sentence can be read with commas: “The hippocampus, which is very small, can be seen in Figure 3.” This sentence may lead the reader to believe that any hippocampus is very small—it's just in the nature of hippocampi to be very small. The second sentence specifies that this particular hippocampus—the one in Figure 3—is very small. If you find this explanation difficult to follow, you can look up “which and that” on the Internet and get lots more examples or read your copy of Strunk and White].*

(N. Hebben) Sue's influence? What'd you expect, of course—she influenced me as a scientist, an influence that shows even in my clinical work now, and she modeled in her behavior as a scientist and a mother how it was possible to be a professional woman while raising children. It was not until I had children of my own that I truly appreciated how well she managed the balancing act of work and family. Sue also greatly contributed to my determination to stay involved in research, publishing and teaching, despite my primarily being a clinician since leaving her lab.

She also influenced me, however, in other more subtle ways. You mentioned grammar. Well, because of Sue I became acquainted with Strunk and White. I still have the copy of *The Elements of Style*, Sue gave me on January 6, 1980. How do I know the date so specifically? I only had to read Sue's dedication. Both my sons used it as a guide in high school, and one of my sons has permanently co-opted it for his extensive library. We used IBM Selectric typewriters and correction tapes back when I worked in Sue's lab, so before computers became ubiquitous, Sue was the original spell checker. I was always a fairly good speller, but I still remember Sue catching me out on the word questionnaire, which I repeatedly spelled with only one “n.” Also, speaking of “which,” it was Sue who taught me there was a difference between “which” and “that,” not that I can honestly say I always use the two correctly. It was also Sue who taught me you put the period inside the quotation mark at the end of a sentence, not outside the quotation mark. That has become my own pet peeve with transcribers. Funny the things one remembers, and they're not always directly related to science. I still recall Sue telling me that one way to get a mark off material is to rub the material against itself. It is advice that has nothing to do with our work, but it is a clear example of how Sue was willing to share her expertise and help her team with even those seemingly unimportant details.

(J. Ogden) Giving tough feedback on writing and particularly seminars. Those practice runs before we gave a seminar! My first experience of this was when I was due to go to the Montreal Neurological Institute to give a seminar and where Brenda Milner would be in the audience. My practice run was the afternoon before an early morning flight. The 45-minute talk I had prepared took about 3 hours to get through because of the constant interruptions from Sue and the many others in the lab who were there. In those days we had slides and no powerpoint, and Sue told me to redo one or two slides (I can't remember how I achieved this in the time I had!) (As an amusing aside, T. John Rosen told me I was too stiff and needed to loosen up, wave my arms about more.) By the time I was through, I was an absolute wreck and thought that the entire talk was a disaster. Sue had to go ten minutes before everyone had finished their questions and critiques, and as she strode out the door she turned and said, “Great talk, one of the best

I've heard," and disappeared! The next day, the talk went swimmingly, and even Brenda seemed to enjoy it. From this I learnt that students need hard critique from their mentors and peers: Once they have learned to cope with that, the never-ending critique and rejections they will receive throughout their publishing careers will be water off a duck's back.

(E. Kensinger) I still consult my Strunk and White on occasion!

(S. Steinvorth) I think she influenced how I write, not only related to grammar use but also how the "flow" of a paper is.

(Y. Xu) To be perfect in your presentation.

(J. Mendola) I go "which hunting," am very aware that data are plural, and hardly ever use the word "involve." I know that my ability to hit the ground running in terms of writing grant applications after graduate school was directly related to her excellent grantsmanship and her generosity in including students.

(A. Cronin-Golomb) Everything everyone has said above—"which" and "that," no "involve" (a weasel word), plural data, etc. At a meeting of the Massachusetts Neuropsychological Society (possibly the occasion on which they honored Sue), she and Edith Kaplan got into a discussion about starting a sentence with "however." They agreed it shouldn't be done and informed the audience of that decision. Sue also taught me that you should take any opportunity to edit papers, not just when you have time (because you never have time). Don't tell the state police, but she used to have a manuscript propped against her steering wheel (of the car with the Deadhead sticker), red pen in hand, to edit during red lights. I use a red pen. My students past and present live in fear of it. I tell them that everything I know about editing I got from Sue and don't try to make me change.

(J. Sherman) Yup—I'm a relentless editor of my post-doc and interns' clinical reports.... I remember Sue's careful editing of a grant I submitted to MGH. She called me on a Sunday to tell me that my grant needed *lots of work*—I was so relieved when I came in and found that her edits were primarily grammatical! I came to appreciate her insistence for clarity in writing and now pass this along to my trainees.

(E. Sullivan) I live by my pink editing pen.

### OPEN TIME—ANY COMMENTS AT ALL THAT YOU'D LIKE TO MAKE ON ANY TOPIC

(H. Mapstone) Sue taught me one of the most important lessons of my career. I was a year out of undergrad, working for her as a research assistant. One of her very ambitious goals was not on track. Getting it on track required the contributions of a lot of people, really all of them senior to and busier than me. She sat me down and described to me what was supposed to happen and how the efforts of all of these other people needed to be realigned in order for it to happen. Finally I got frus-

trated. These people worked for her, not for me. I had no formal authority and little influence. I said to her, "What do you expect me to do about this?" She said to me, "I expect you to make it happen." First I thought, "That's



**Figure 1.** Photos from three decades of Corkin lab events. Top photo: Edinburgh, Scotland, World Congress on Pain, 1981. Left: Nancy Hebben. Right: Jocelyn and Sue Corkin. Photo courtesy of Nancy Hebben. Center photo: MIT graduation, 1996. From left: Mark Snow (programmer), Mark Mapstone (research assistant), Janine Mendola (the new Ph.D.), Sue Corkin, and Kristin Hood (research assistant). Photo courtesy of Janine Mendola. Bottom photo: Opening of the new Brain and Cognitive Sciences Building at MIT, 2005. From left: Christie Chung, David Ziegler (graduate student), Dr. Brenda Milner, Emily Connally (lab manager), and Sue Corkin. Photo courtesy of Christie Chung.



not my job,” then I realized, “That is precisely my job.” Making it happen is always the job. I’m grateful to Sue that I learned that early in my professional life.

(E. Sullivan) Sue is fearless—one of the most useful and enabling characteristics that a mentor and leader could confer on professional offspring.

(C. Chung) Sue has been an inspiration in my life. She is the most direct and honest advisor I have had in my academic career. Without her, I would not be the researcher/professor I am now. I have been able to achieve early tenure at Mills College mostly because I quickly implemented the research strategies at Mills College that Sue encouraged me to adapt at MIT. While at Sue’s lab, I started examining a topic that has now become my main area of research—positivity effect in old age. I received an APA postdoctoral research award and have pursued this line of research ever since.

(N. Hebben) Please feel free to share with Sue the photos I am sending you. Of the photos, three are of a picnic the lab had (one of which features John Gabrieli, who has returned to MIT where he has a lab of his own, and where one of my sons worked last summer while on summer break from Reed College) and the rest of the photos were taken in Edinburgh, Scotland in September 1981 when Sue and I and her daughter Jocelyn traveled there for the Third World Congress on Pain and where I presented a poster detailing my research in Sue’s lab (Figure 1).

(S. Steinvorth) At some level, I cannot believe that Sue is retiring. I thought she would work forever. I know that at some time she was playing with the thought of opening a cafe/restaurant as she enjoys cooking. So, maybe, hopefully, we can all meet at some time at her cafe?

(K. Sauer) Sue was uncompromising and seemed to me to be working and living life on her own terms. Admirable! Don’t get me wrong—uncompromising can also be tough to take and sometimes she made me furious. But she didn’t even flinch when I threw a bunch of keys across the room in a frustrated moment. My message to Sue: I wasn’t aiming at you.

(A. Cronin-Golomb) I never thought I would see Sue retire, but the evidence of it is in my office at BU—boxes and boxes of neuropsychological tests and books that I have inherited! If you’re reading this and could use an old WAIS or WMS or more obscure assessment tool, just let me know.

### **AND FINALLY, THE BEST STORY SUBMITTED FOR THIS ARTICLE, FROM KAREN SHEDLACK**

After graduating from Wellesley College, I spent several years as a research technician at MIT while trying to figure out what I wanted to do with the rest of my life. I came to Sue’s lab from the Chorover lab when I decided that I wanted to move from animal learning to gaining some experience in human neuropsychology. And I can truly

say that the experience I received in Sue’s lab in terms not only of science and career development but also in terms of Sue’s mentorship and our lasting personal friendship have been invaluable to me throughout my life.

So, in special gratitude for the many very important lessons I learned from you, Dr. Suzanne Corkin, I’d like to share a never-before-publically revealed science story, the moral of which is “all in the name of science....”

In 1980, when I mentioned that my boyfriend was going to do a sabbatical in NYC during the Fall semester, Sue immediately jumped on the idea that, by sending me along to New York, this would provide a way to accomplish some much-needed follow-up testing on Dr. Teuber’s WW II veterans who were becoming too frail to continue travelling to MIT for testing. So Howard [Eichenbaum] and I set about illegally subletting an apartment on the upper east side of Manhattan and packing Sue’s station wagon full of neuropsych testing materials to set up the MIT-in-NYC satellite lab. Meanwhile, the other technicians and I spent months scheduling the veterans such that there would be at least one full day of testing for each and sometimes two days for those who would need a slower pace. In true Corkin lab fashion, no days were to be wasted. The subjects were scheduled back-to-back for the entire fall. Testing materials and data sheets were duplicated, the schedules were set, and off we went.

Upon arrival, much to the curiosity of the doormen, we laboriously carried lots and lots of odd-looking cognitive, sensory, motor, etc., etc., equipment up to our new combination living quarters and lab space in the illegal sublet. Shortly thereafter, we began our daily routine of Howard leaving each AM for his project at Downstate Medical Center, while I dressed in my professional, neuropsychologist attire and awaited the arrival of the subjects for their testing. One by one, the elderly and usually physically impaired, head-injured men would arrive by cab, ring the buzzer, and I would come down to greet them and escort them upstairs to the apartment for the morning testing session. I would then leave the apartment at noon to escort the men out to lunch, return within the hour and then go upstairs for the afternoon testing session after which I would escort them back downstairs to hail a cab to home. Shortly afterwards, Howard would arrive home for the evening, and then the next day the whole schedule would start all over again. It was perfect. Everything was working out just as we had planned, until one day when...we received a cease-and-desist letter from the landlord’s attorney stating that we were being evicted for running a prostitution business in the building!

Oh my—just imagine that version of what the doormen were witnessing each and every day.... So, also in true Dr. Suzanne Corkin fashion, we actually wrote



a letter back to the attorney stating that we weren't involved in prostitution and thereby not violating our illegal sublet nonlease but were instead running an important scientific experiment!! It worked. As we were nearly at the end of our sojourn at MIT-in-NYC, a few more rounds of letters went back and forth over the next several weeks after which we finished up, packed up, and moved out—all in the name of science.

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