



Left brain? Where was it left?

For Laurie Stowe, May 11, 2015, J. Joyce Nerbonne
Including a brief history of psycholinguistics

We're here to say, we love you Laurie!
The songs, the cats, the whole damn story.

The Finger Lakes were first your home,
There, where the last Mohegan roamed.

Perhaps a childhood in New Yo'k
Whets a funky taste for talk.

On to college, parties, roister,
And language soon became your oyster.

Cornell, Wisconsin taught you wonder,
So Melbourne, Monash -- both down under.

But *Grunn'n* needed expertise
In ERP's and latencies!

The call arrived from Dr. Zwarts,
"Psycho-stuff, that's just our sorts!"

"Wanna chence for greater stunts?
Get pecked and leer your *Nederlands!*"

To us you've been that colleague rare,
Attentive, cheerful, sharp but fair.

But psycholinguists've got an itch,
To regard our speaking as a twitch.

What's automatic, that's the stuff,
Not poems, or jokes or off the cuff!

Forget the fun, forget sublime
Just track it all, and right on-line!

Phoneme monitor! Catch that sound!
And keep on reading when it's found!

With/without a lex'cal prime,
Measure that reaction time!

Subject/object relative clause,
Right brain/ left brain -- which is yours?

Behavior tests are really great,
But black-box probes can't tell it straight.

We've got to see the nuts and bolts!
Not just the hum, the jumps and jolts.

A neural image dredges deep,
Links brain to talk in one clean sweep!

Shoot positrons in someone's blood,
PET tracks their streams in cortex's flood.

And if you need to damp the glow,
fMRI can locate flow

Because a synapse leaves a trace,
Magnetic ions in its place.

Now Laurie seldom works alone,
Collaboration's her real home.

Involve her in experiment:
Design, recruit and implement!

Counterbalanced presentation?
Just the thing for gaze fixation!

Longish right-tailed distribution?
A logarithm's the solution!

Your door's ajar to welcome guests
From Boston, Rome and Budapest.

As long as cats will cause no sneezin'
In *Parkweg* we've got tourist season!

A cook-out for an honored guest?
Laurie's house has stood the test!

Mentor, singer, friend of cats,
Good we had a chance to chat!

Like you, we're all enthralled with Babel,
Which we know -- we'll not unravel.