

**Psychology's Feminist Voices Oral History Project**

**Interview with Carol Gilligan**

*Interviewed by Leeat Granek  
New York, NY  
September 15, 2009*

**When citing this interview, please use the following citation:**

Gilligan, C. (2009, September 15). Interview by L. Granek [Video Recording].

Psychology's Feminist Voices Oral History and Online Archive Project. New York, NY.

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**Interview with Carol Gilligan**  
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**New York City, New York**  
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CG: Carol Gilligan, Interview participant

LG: Leeat Granek, Interviewer

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LG – So first, thank you so much for taking the time to talk with me today. I am going to ask you three different sets of questions. The first will be, in general, about how you developed a feminist identity, the second set of questions will be about the intersection of feminism and career, and the third set of questions will be more about feminist psychology in general and your thoughts about it. So if at any time there is anything you want to expand on or add on, even if you think it's tangential, go ahead and just jump in and feel free to expand.

CG – Sure.

LG – So the first question is just a very general question. How and when did you first develop a feminist identity?

CG – At the beginning of the second-wave of the women's movement.

LG – Okay.

CG – I had been active in the Civil Rights Movement. I did voter registration. I was part of the Anti-War Movement. I was part of the movement to stop the atmospheric testing of nuclear weapons. So in other words, I was very engaged in all of the liberation movements of the sixties.

LG – Okay.

CG – And feminism was just an extension of that. I remember the early 1970's and the sense of revelation when women, including myself, we started talking to each other in a completely different way about our experience. So it was first with my friends and everything else, it just became an extension, a logical extension, of the Civil Rights Movement, I would say basically, and the anti-war movement.

LG – Okay, and how did you get involved in those movements? What drew you to that?

CG – [laughs] I mean, what drew me to that? The obvious.

LG – Okay.

{2:12}

CG – I was in college. I remember, I went to Swarthmore, and was standing in the line for dinner in the dining room, and there was a signup sheet about going to Montgomery [Alabama] to participate in the Montgomery Bus Boycotts. I didn't do that, but after I went to graduate school, we went to Cleveland because my husband went to medical school there. It must have been 1962, the midterm elections. And there was voter registration which would register voters, African American voters, to vote. I had a two-year-old at the time, and it was the summer, and I remember going into the Hough area of Cleveland which was really 'the' Black neighbourhood, the ghetto. I had been going there anyway because I was a modern dancer and I was involved in a performing modern dance company that was located in Hough, called **Karamu [3:23] House**, which was - the word at the time was - "interracial." In high school, I'd sung in a so-called "interracial chorus". We used to sing Haydn masses and we used to sing at all the Black churches of Harlem.

So I had gone to a progressive school, then I went to a Quaker college, so I grew up in this atmosphere. So I was involved in this dance company at **Karamu [3:47] House**, which was basically White people from the university world, and the outstanding dancers in the company were Black, they were not to dance with **Limon** and everything else, but there were also people who worked in button factories during the day who were dancing at night. So I was familiar with the neighbourhood because that [dance company] was in the middle of that neighbourhood. So, I'd had a two-year-old. It was the summer, so I took my two year old in the stroller and I went from house to house. Now, if you go with a two-year-old, you were invited in.

LG – Right.

CG – And I would knock on the houses. They had screen doors in the back, in the kitchen. I would knock on the door. There I was with my two-year-old, and people would invite me in. This is before I did any of the work [on different voices], and I would sit and talk with them about the importance of having a voice, and, therefore, the importance of voting.

LG – Yeah.

CG – These were long, long conversations. And this was still before Hough blew up before the riots, before all of that. So it was still a time where you could do that. And I was involved in the anti-war movement...until feminism. It wasn't like one morning I woke up. It was: Oh! The extension of this is feminism.

LG – Yeah.

{5:23}

CG – And you’ll see, where I’ve come to in my understanding of feminism is in a way that it encompasses all of these things. So, I became a feminist. I remember things I read at the time, an essay by Joan Didion. What I remember most vividly was, suddenly... I was married. That was the time women got married in our twenties and we had children. Instead of this kind of competition between women of “Who has the better husband and the more perfect children,” we start telling each other about our experiences in marriage and motherhood, and it was this huge opening. It was like things that you thought of as “just my experience,” it turned out, were very shared experiences. It was a revelation.

So, I had been teaching. First of all, I have three sons, so I lived in a house full of all men, and I was teaching at Harvard. There were almost no women on our faculty, and I was teaching psychology, which you know.

LG – Yeah.

CG – I can remember sitting at home, here I am, the mother of three children. Also, when my husband was in medical school we lived in married student housing, which is international. Because we were in apartments, we had to go out with our children. So I was spending my days with an international group of women, meaning women of color, from all over the world. And I was doing voter registration, I was dancing in this interracial dance company, and I go back to psychology and it’s portraying this world as a world of White men.

LG – Right.

CG – I mean, it’s got to be odd for me. I also remember myself, I was teaching a section of Erik Erikson’s course. He was a very significant mentor for me at that point because he had shown me something that I hadn’t known was possible. But I remember trying to memorize how Erikson or Piaget said to talk about mothers and young children because I knew if I spoke from my own experience I would get it wrong. I would hear myself say to women students in these large lecture classes, they’d ask you a question and I’d say, “That’s a great question, but that not what we’re talking about here.” Then I had to say who’s “we” and where are “we” and what are “we” doing.

LG – Yeah. So can you back up a little bit in terms of being at Harvard, and talk about how you brought this feminine consciousness, which, as you were saying, is something coming from a long time back and wasn’t just this revelation, into your psychology? What drew you to psychology? How did you merge the two [feminism and psychology] together?

CG – Well, I should just say as an undergraduate at Swarthmore, I majored in English literature and there was an Honours program where you had one major and two minors. My major was English literature and my minors were history and psychology.

LG – Okay.

{8:28}

CG – Psychology at Swarthmore was Gestalt psychology which was all about perception, which was fascinating to me.

LG – Yeah.

CG – When I went to graduate school at Harvard, it was clinical psychology. I thought I wanted to be a therapist. When I got there I was appalled by the field of psychology. That's the only thing I can say. My understanding of the human world was shaped by Tolstoy, Faulkner, Virginia Woolf, Jane Austen, you name it. How could you think about human life apart from an understanding of history? My psychology training at Swarthmore was how you can both see through illusion, how a two-dimensional object on your retina, how you perceive [it] as three-dimensional when it turns. Also how you can be a prisoner of illusions. I come and I find the clinical world, language such as "mother is cold and father is distant," and I thought, "what?" It just seemed to be so reductionistic. I remember this thing about response set, Walter Mischel would teach this class and he would put his hands over his eyes and he'd say, "I'm thinking really, really hard about something. You might agree with it or you might disagree with it. How many of you agree?" And people would raise their hands! [Laughs] I thought I would go insane. Then the thing that really got to me is that to study morality, moral development... I was interested in moral questions, this literature and history... they were doing these studies of so-called "prosocial behaviour," and what they would do is somebody would go into Harvard Square and mimic having a heart attack to see if people would stop and help them, or they would set up an experiment and then some kind of hokey thing would happen. So I thought, "So you, first of all, try to confuse people's sense of whether or not to help by duping people, you're lying to people. You're deceiving them to study how moral THEY are?" The whole thing just didn't work for me.

Now, I'd been at Swarthmore in the Honours program. Graduate school work was easy for me after that in psychology. I wrote a very short dissertation called "Responses to Temptation and Analysis of Motives," where I showed how you could change cheaters into non-cheaters, and non-cheaters into cheaters by reading them a story. The temptation situation is a conflict situation. You manipulate the conflict, you change behaviour, changing their toilet training or superego, whatever that was [sarcasm], and so forth.

LG – Yeah.

CG – So my study came out, and I published. I submitted my 75-page thesis which was basically a critique of the field. And I thought, "That's it," and I became a modern dancer, and I became a social activist, and I was not going back into psychology.

LG – Okay.

{11:45}

CG – In our clinical training, we had supervisors who were telling us to say to children, “This is not the happy way to be.” [Laughs] I couldn’t. I thought the language of the clinical world was sort of thinly-veiled contemptuous, very judgmental.

LG – Not even that thinly-veiled.

CG – Yeah, exactly. I then had a second child, then I had a third child. I was a modern dancer, I was involved in voter registration, my husband was making his way through medical school. He did his internship at the University of Chicago. We had no money. The Assistant Dean says to me – [he is] a friend of my husband’s, “You have a Harvard PhD, why don’t you teach?” “Yeah, why not?”

LG – Yeah.

CG – I taught the Introduction to Modern Social Science at Chicago, which was fascinating. We were suddenly not reading the JPSP [Journal of Personality and Social Psychology]... but we were reading Freud and Max Weber and Durkheim and everything else, and having faculty seminars. So that engaged me on an intellectual level. We went back to Harvard, and by this point, I had a chance to teach a section with Erik Erikson. He started his class by showing the Bergman film “Wild Strawberries” about the life cycle. His thing was that you can’t understand life history apart from history. Life history and history are intertwined. And I could relate to that. He showed me a way of working in psychology that, to me, had integrity, and the questions he was asking and so forth. Then I had a chance to work with Larry Kohlberg. I was hired as a research assistant for him. He said after the Holocaust that “Social sciences can’t take a stand of moral neutrality. We can’t say values are relative to your culture. So, Germans like to kill Jews. That’s what Germans like to do, [Laughs] to each his own.” This was the time of Martin Luther King [Jr.], and injustice anywhere is injustice everywhere, and that kind of thing. And all of those issues, which I was so involved with in terms of activism, were suddenly being talked about. So, I was a teaching assistant for him [Kohlberg]. Then I thought, “The last thing I wanted was a tenure job in psychology” - right?

LG – Right.

CG – I was teaching, I had these really interesting part-time teaching jobs, I had three young children, and so I had complete freedom. I was fortunate in the sense that my husband was making his way slowly now through residency, and I was a single mother supporting three children. To me, tenure would have been like a prison sentence because I had just barely escaped graduate school. So I was in a completely free space. I thought, “you *can’t* identity study and morality” (that’s what interested me; people’s sense of self and how they think about what they’re going to do and what they should do) by asking people, by making a mass questionnaire or hypothetical dilemmas, anybody can do that. You have to think about real situations, turning points in people’s lives, when this sense

of self comes and people say “What am I going to do? Who’s the ‘I?’” and “What should I do?” That kind of thing. So, I’m teaching a section of Kohlberg’s course and everybody’s talking about the Vietnam War; is it just, is it unjust, everything else. I notice that in my section that when we talk about the draft, [i.e.] should you resist the draft, the men in my section become silent because they know that they’re thinking about the draft, not only about the justness or unjustness of the war, but how it would affect their relationships and people they care about. And if they say that, they will sound like women, and be scored at a lower stage on Kohlberg’s scale.

{16:26}

LG – Right.

CG – So they don’t want to talk about it. So I think, “Ok [laughs], I’m going to start interviewing students about their actual experiences of moral conflict and choice. So I interview the students from that class, that’s the college student study from “A Different Voice,” and I’m planning to interview them again as they’re seniors at graduation when the men will be facing the draft. That’s what I’m interested in; what are they going to do? Then Nixon ends the draft. And that’s ’73, and the Supreme Court legalizes abortion, so I’m completely blind to gender. I think, “Oh, I can resume my study because here is another decision that you need to go this way or this way, like the draft...”

LG – Yeah.

CG – “...and people come to a public place in a finite period of time, and so I will interview people about whether to continue or abort a pregnancy”. My study of men has now turned into a study of women, but I don’t even think about this. I’m interviewing women saying “How did you get pregnant and how have you been thinking about it so far? I want to know what they see. Do they see a moral problem? If so, what is it? How would you describe yourself to yourself? I’m always looking for the internal reference.

LG – Right.

CG – And thinking about the decision; who is involved, what is involved? I’m hearing a voice that is completely dissonant from the public abortion debate. I understand that if women say what they, in fact, are feeling and thinking, they’ll either be heard as murderers or they will be heard as being upset about nothing, “What’s the problem? A fetus has no rights.”

LG – Right, right.

CG – Kohlberg had his class vote if abortion was a moral dilemma and they voted it wasn’t, and he told me that. I thought, “So, women are talking about nothing?” It was just amazing. I remember I’d interviewed a woman on Kohlberg dilemmas when I was a research assistant for him. She looked at me and she said, “Would you like to know what I think? Or would you like to know what I really think?” If women said what they really

thought, it was hard to be heard and understood. If men said what they really thought, they would sound like women and they wouldn't be at these high stages [on Kohlberg's scale].

{19:12}

LG – Yeah.

CG – That was the ground for... I sat down, and I was staying home for a year because we had moved from one suburb of Boston to another, which, for my children, was from one end of the world to another. I sat down, and my friend Dora came over and I said, "Dora, this is really interesting. I'm reading these interviews with these pregnant women. I understand how these psychologists, Freud, Erikson, Piaget, Kohlberg, why they don't understand women, because women are talking and starting from a different premise of connectedness, not separateness."

LG – Right, right.

CG – She [Dora] said, "That's really interesting. Why don't you write about it?" So I sat down and I wrote at my kitchen table, for myself, "In a Different Voice, [about] women's conception of morality, about the difference between women's voices and the voice of psychological theory. But it's important to know that I had started with an observation, that men weren't saying what they were really thinking and feeling either, and that psychology was out of touch with the human world"

LG – Yeah.

CG – That's how I started doing a feminist psychology. I was so blown away. First of all, that [we needed to listen to women's real voices] just made sense of all kinds of things for me, in terms of my own experience, too. Then I recognized something which had been right in front of me all along that I had never seen: Kohlberg's study was of 84 white boys.

LG – Right.

CG – In Piaget's moral judgment of a child, you look up "girl" and there are four entries. You look up "boy" and there's nothing, because the child is assumed to be male. Erikson and Freud wrote from and assumed a male perspective.

LG – Yeah.

CG – So, you see, I didn't start with a feminist ideology to do this. I discovered this feminist problem was absolutely in the centre of psychology. These psychologists had been selecting subjects on the basis on gender. It was so consonant with the culture. What I was doing was writing about the obvious.

{21:25}

LG – Yeah.

CG - ... and fascinated because I respected Erikson and Kohlberg. They were smart men. Nobody was seeing it; men were not seeing the omission of women as significant, and women were not seeing the omission of ourselves as significant. So there you go. That's it.

LG – That sounds like a major shift.

CG – It was an epiphany! It was a moment. “In a Different Voice,” in my book... I'm an English major, so I'm a writer. I think about language. It's called “In a Different Voice.” If I had wanted to write a book about women's voices, I would have called it “In a Woman's Voice.”

LG – Right.

CG – It was about bringing women's voices into what was called “the human conversation” - changes the voice of the conversation. That's the whole book.

LG – Yeah. How did you take that paradigm shift then into the work you did on psychoanalysis that came a little bit later? What do you think is the intersection between feminism and psychoanalysis?

CG – Oh! You have to read my latest book!

LG – Okay! I would actually very much like to read your latest book.

CG – I'll give you a copy [laughs]. Actually, in the late '70s, the height of the women's movement, at that time in Boston, those of us who were doing this work, we started meeting. There were various seminars, including at the psychoanalytic institute [Boston Psychoanalytic Institute], and we all would say that we were all doing a piece of one work. It was an incredible moment because to find another woman who was seeing this, it was like, “So I'm not crazy.” It was really that sense. If there's a meaning to the word 'sisterhood', that was it. A moment of really deep sisterhood, in Boston. A friend of mine, **Barbara Rozencranz** and her husband, Paul, became the Masters of Currier House at Radcliffe, one of the Harvard houses. They have a thing called 'house seminars,' so they asked if I would teach one of the house seminars for the undergraduates. Remember, I have no aspirations to rise in psychology, to be in the psychology department. But I loved teaching.

LG – Yeah.

CG – And I had a very free space because my family was not dependent on my income, and because I was in clinical psych., that's always an option for me. So I don't feel like,

you know, the rent collector will come... [laughs]. So this is very key. Of course, this is the time when everyone's running around wearing buttons that say "question authority," the students are shot at Kent State in the '70s, final exams are cancelled at Harvard, there's no graduation. I think it's very important to say that - because it is almost unbelievable that at this moment, a university would cancel final exams and graduation and say that we have to talk about the foundations of knowledge here. What's going on in this country? Anyway, I get asked to teach a seminar at Currier House. So I say I'm going to teach a seminar on Freud on women. I was always interested in psychoanalysis. In my days, in the desultory days of my graduate education, when we were reading these journal articles about, you know, "Would you like a little candy bar now or a candy bar later?"

{25:16}

I was lying in my dorm room, and remember, I'd come from Swarthmore. I was in English lit., so we would read Anna Karenina in a week and write a paper on it. So to read a few little articles and take blue book exams was not terribly challenging to me at the time. I lay in my bed a lot and read all of Freud, all of Chekhov, all of Ibsen. I was hungry for people who really engaged with psychological questions, and Freud, that was the dynamic psychology, and of course he's a wonderful writer. So I'd always been interested in psychoanalysis. I thought, "Ok, I'll teach a seminar on Freud on women". This was the height of the feminist movement. I teach it with **Stephanie Engell**. She had done her undergraduate thesis with me on psychoanalysis. We decided we were going to read chronologically, so we start with *Studies on Hysteria* and we think, "Well, wait a minute. This is not the Freud that feminists hate." This is the Freud who says, "Women are my teachers," and it's working with women that lead to all these breakthroughs. So it was a revelation. The question was, what happened in psychoanalysis?

LG – Yeah.

CG – I always thought you have to have a psychoanalytic understanding, a psychodynamic understanding, of the psyche because somebody can say, "I'm not angry," and you can't score that 'not angry' [laughs]. Do you know what I mean? You don't even quite know what it is! So you have to have some understanding of dissociation. Somebody can know something and not know what they know – how do you do research methods if you would assume that people can hold parts of their experiences outside of their conscious awareness?

LG – Yeah.

CG - That the relationship will affect not only what they tell you but what they even can know in your presence? There was a certain point where, suddenly, therapists started hearing all about incest and abuse, and how come they had never heard about it five times a week on a couch?

{27:38}

LG – Right.

CG – So it was all of these issues, but I’ve always had a psychodynamic psychology.

LG – Yeah. Was there contention around that time when you were teaching that because Freud was not popular among feminists around that time?

CG – No, it wasn’t contention, it was fascinating! That chapter in ‘[The] Deepening Darkness’ on psychology is that story of that seminar basically...

LG – Okay.

CG - ...because we watched Freud from 1892 in the Elizabeth case, the Studies on Hysteria, 1895-6. Then 1905, we see the misogyny come into psychoanalysis with the Oedipus Theory.

LG – That’s such an interesting trajectory.

CG – We watched Freud become... you’ll see in ‘[The] Deepening Darkness,’ we line up those statements which are extraordinary, given where we starts. So the question became, not one of a sort of Freud bashing or hating him, but what happened here? How did someone whose entrée into these amazing discoveries about how psychic pain could be conferred into physical pain, and dissociation, and the power of association and relationship to undue dissociation is just stunning. It was all with women and he, all through his life, you know, “Dear Frau...you are the most...” He’s very close to women. How does this person write that women have no sense of self, women can’t love, women have no sense of morality? This is the most dissociated and weird.

LG – Yeah.

CG – It became interesting in that sense.

LG – Okay.

CG – That just furthered my sense of - there is a serious problem in psychology that’s being flagged by how psychologists are writing about women and gender, and also men. And that’s “In a Different Voice.’

LG – Okay. Can you talk a little bit about the work you’ve done on boy’s development and the culture of masculinity?

CG – Well, I finished ‘In a Different Voice’ in 1980, and the single girl’s voice in that book, sometimes people talk about it as a book about children’s moral development. There are two children in the book.

{30:00}

LG – Yeah.

CG – It’s a book filled with women’s voices. Women struggle against the moral injunction to be selfless and, therefore, not speak in relationships, and the dissonance between women’s voices and the voice of psychology. There are two children, Amy and Jake. The most disturbing voice for many women, with readers especially, was Amy’s voice, the one 11-year-old girl. There’s one girl in the book because what she said women recognized. It made sense. But it’s a voice that women have often learned to call ‘stupid.’

LG – Right.

CG – I’m in clinical and developmental psychology. I couldn’t trace what happened from Amy to the adult women in the book because the idea that you would silence yourself to have relationships, Amy would not have thought of that. It wouldn’t have even entered her mind. It’s very sophisticated in one way, although for her, it was an ordinary response. She was asked, “Have you ever had to make a decision and you weren’t sure which was the right thing to do?” She says “Yes. My question is whether to go to camp this summer because if I go to camp and I have a terrible time I’ll never know if I would have had a worse time if I had stayed at home.” [Laughs]

LG – Well, fair enough.

CG – All life choices, right? She says, “So you’ve got to choose and you’ll never know”. She’s 11.

LG – Yeah.

CG – We were going, “How does she know this?” Then you think, “Well, wait a minute. It’s obvious.” Then it is like, “How come I don’t know this?” Do you see what I’m saying? It just turned around the developmental question.

LG – Yeah.

CG – Then I read the *Handbook of Adolescent Psychology* by Joseph Adelson in 1980. He asks a leading scholar of adolescence to write a chapter in his handbook on female adolescent development. So you think, “Wait a minute. What is the rest of the book about?” **Anne Petersen** is the woman, the scholar, and she comes back and says there is not enough material for even one chapter. [The female] adolescent hadn’t been studied. I thought, “Wow” because Bettelheim said that in the ‘60s. He said [that the] psychology of adolescence is the psychology of the male youngster at large. Novelists had been writing about girls coming of age, and playwrights. Psychologists, for the most part, had not really. The process of coming of age was traced through boys coming of age.

LG – Right.

{32:43}

CG – I thought, “‘In a Different Voice’ had been sort of controversial. I’m going to do a straight-forward piece of developmental research. I’m going to fill in this missing gap of psychological history. I’m going to trace development, but now with girls as my guides.” I start with my graduate students and we start with adolescent girls. The first thing we hear is this gap. It’s like there’s one level of conversation and then it will open, and suddenly the whole thing drops down to another level. There’s an underground.

LG – Yeah.

CG – Then we would do a separate workshop. Somebody comes and says, “Would you come to our school and use your research as an intervention?” First of all, only girls’ schools would support this work initially. The girls who we’d selected by a random number table ended up in leadership positions in the school. So was our research interview an intervention itself because we ask folks about themselves?

LG – Right.

CG – Then we were invited to do a study at this school that started with kindergarten. We did this study, this is ‘Meeting at the Crossroads,’ with 6 to 17 year olds. We catch the moment where there is a tension between psychological development and cultural adaptation, and girls name it. Suddenly we hear this thing that had been in the psychology literature since the mid-19<sup>th</sup>-century within the psychiatry literature, that girls’ resilience is at heightened risk at adolescence. We say that there is an initiation that is compromising psychological health. But for girls to stay present in their relationships and speak from their experiences and say what they feel and think and know, is challenging the way we “talk about things.”

LG – Right.

CG – That, to me, was the most radical research I did. The usual question of ‘Was it nature or was it nurture’ leaves out voice. It leaves out resistance. In a sense, it assimilates psychology to biology or to sociology. It was like bringing psychology back into the centre, and bringing psychoanalysis in. That is, “psycho” analysis, not a genetic analysis or a cultural analysis, but a psychoanalysis. We saw a healthy resistance in girls, like the healthy body resists disease, turning into political resistance because girls were speaking truth to power.

{35:29}

LG – Yeah.

CG – “Mommy, when you and daddy disagree, why do you always give in?” That kind of thing. Then we thought that the comparable time in boys’ development where their resilience is at heightened risk is right at the end of early childhood, at the transition into elementary school when boys are policed to adopt whatever the sanctioned constructions of masculinity [are], in [that] boys that don’t look like real boys are fags or girls or mama’s boys.

{36:09}

LG – Yeah, yeah.

CG – So, with my graduate **Judy Chu**, we started observing in a preschool. We watched the same thing. We’d see boys before they become “boys.” We’d notice that these gender stereotypes (norms, values, assumptions) that are floating around, including in psychology, are misrepresenting boys and girls. They’re taking an adaptation and reading it as nature. A five year old boy says to his mother, “Mommy, why do you smile when you’re sad?” They’re reading the world.

LG – Yeah, very accurately.

CG – Very accurately!

LG – Yeah.

CG – Their emotional sensitivity, their tenderness... so I start the study of boys that is in ‘The Birth of Pleasure.’ Then I think, “I have a developmental map now that shows when the capacity for genuine relationships is at risk and where people dissociate from vital parts of themselves. Men, from their tenderness, women, from their honest voices. The tender voice gets called the ‘baby-ish’ voice by boys, and the honest voice gets called the ‘stupid voice’ by girls. I’m going to pair up with a couple’s therapist. I’m interested in impasses in intimate relationships between adult men and women. My co-therapist **Terry Reel**, her ear was attuned to trauma, but I was listening in women for the voice of the 11-year-old girl, and in men for the voice of the four-year-old boy. I was carrying from my research what boys at four sounded like and what girls at 11 sounded like before there was this shift, this dissociation. I found it was a huge guide through the impasse. It opened up the impasse. But it was hard to sustain often in a world where that dissociation was basically built into the notion of what it meant to be a real man or a masculine man or a good woman, and so forth.

LG – Yeah.

CG – So, that’s how that happened. Then I felt I’d come to the end of my project. It started with ‘In a Different Voice,’ then I wrote ‘The Birth of Pleasure,’ which is really saying to look at the paradigm shift from repeating a tragic story, which is basically a trauma story. Look at all the foundation stories, Oedipus, [38:59], Abraham and Isaac. We’re living on a bedrock of trauma and repeating it over and over. But there has always

been a resistance because the healthy psyche resists dissociation. What if we founded our psychology or our society on the birth of pleasure rather than the birth of tragedy, and resist losing these parts of our human nature? The radical nature of psychology, both its theory and its research, become evident to me at this point, that in psychology, through an associative method you can break through dissociation. You can't argue your way out of dissociation

{39:48}

LG – Yeah. You're embodied in it, it sounds like, as opposed to it being intellectual.

CG – Yeah. Well, you don't split mind and body. You don't split thought and emotion. You don't split self and relationship. That's "In a Different Voice," of course.

LG– Yeah.

CG – I feel like now I see the full implications of where I began, now that I have this developmental understanding.

LG – Yeah. My next question is touching on some of the things which I think I might already know the answer to from what you just said. I'm going to ask you to speak a little bit about the critiques of your work by other feminist psychologists who say that it essentializes female nature.

CG – I think they are working in a patriarchal paradigm, meaning that it is a paradigm that says that either women are essentially different or everybody is just like men. Insofar as women show different qualities from men, it's because women are dupes of socialization, that ideal human qualities are exemplified by men, such as independence, autonomy, and so forth. The thing that's interesting to me about that is if you look at signs of feminism in the academy, psychology is never there.

LG – Yeah.

CG - It is so interesting because there is no psychology. There is no psychology! We are either victims of our genes or of our society. I think that is a recipe for fascism. I don't think these people are fascists.

LG – No, I understand.

CG – It's just astonishing to me. Then if they import psychoanalysis, they are importing the psychoanalysis of the Oedipal theory. I think, given my developmental work, what's brilliant about Freud's Oedipal theory is that it is a description of the initiation into patriarchy, into its gender binary and its gender hierarchy.

LG – Right.

CG – The gender binary and the gender hierarchy are the DNA of patriarchy, where being a man means not being a woman. Human qualities gendered masculine are not feminine, and those feminine are unmanly, and everything that is gendered masculine is elevated over. So, development is measured by breaking with one's intimate relationship with a woman and internalizing. The thing is, it's so explicit; taking into oneself the voice or the law of the father. That's patriarchy.

{42:29}

LG – Yeah, yeah.

CG – What I feel is that because they're not psychologists, and, therefore, they don't have an empirical ground, to critique these psychological theories it's easy for them to fall into what I think psychologists have done in adapting to the culture, which is to read culture's nature.

LG – Right.

CG – In a sense, to naturalize patriarchy, which is what I think psychoanalysis did. Misogyny enters it because patriarchy basically is misogynistic. It denigrates any quality gendered feminine. Then both women and men want to be men, and it either idealizes or denigrates, or both, the feminine qualities. This essentialism and social constructionism, I feel like saying to the people who do it, "Are you listening to what you are saying? People have no voice, no capacity for resistance, there's no psychology?" Then if you read me the psychology of psychoanalysis with its Oedipal theory, I'd say, "Do you see how this naturalizes...?" Freud's right. That's the foundation for neurosis, where people split off parts of themselves in order to adapt to a civilization that has absorbed and is perpetuating patriarchal practices and institutions, like the nuclear family, and more. Do you know what I'm saying?

LG – Yeah, I do.

CG – I feel like psychology has a huge contribution to feminism, and, at the same time, for the same reason girls are pressured to not say what they're thinking, scholars in the academy who are feminists quoting [44:18] Lacan Derrida, Foucault, whose work is fascinating work, but [they] don't have the time of day for women.

LG – Yeah. It's true. It's an interesting paradox.

CG – And Freud, who says women have no sense of self, women can't love, and so on. So it's like, "Well he said it, but does he really mean it?" Then the construction of mothers as objects in object relations theory and all of the developmental theories that give no voice to the mother. The key thing I can say for myself is that I was sort of always on the edge of the academic world. The only time I wanted tenure, and then I really did want it, was after I published "In a Different Voice," because otherwise my

work was going to be reviewed every three years by exactly those people who, if, in fact, what they said was what they had done, my work wouldn't have existed.

LG – Yeah.

{45:22}

CG – They had made the biggest methodological error, which was leaving out half the sample. Yet, what was interesting was not that they had done it, because they were not stupid or bigoted people. It was that it showed you the power of culture to blind up to the obvious. So there was a huge error, and I felt that the discussion in psychology was taking me back over and over again to demonstrating the first step of my work, which was showing that this was a problem. I thought, “This is not productive for me. If you don't see that this is a problem, then you don't see that this is a problem! But I'm not going to present my work to you every three years and convince you, yet again, that it's a problem.” There is an incredible book supported by huge grants from NICHD by Daniel Offer and his wife, Judith Offer. It's very important to say that women were involved in this, the psychological world of the teenager is a study of 175 boys. Or Dan Levinson, written with his wife, wrote ‘The Seasons of a Man's Life’ and ‘Stages of Adult Development’. Is there a problem with this?

So at this point I thought that I can't stay in the academy now because I had now gotten very engaged in my work. I was doing my girl's project. It was incredibly illuminating. It was another epiphany that affected me personally. After interviewing, I wanted to do more in-depth work with girls, in terms of having an ongoing relationship. With my colleagues and my students, we did a writing theatre workshop in a strengthening healthy resistance encouragement project.

LG – I was just about to ask you about that, so I'm glad you brought it up.

CG – I've lost my train of thought at this moment.

LG – Okay. I can ask you another question. What do you think has been your most significant or valuable contribution to psychology?

CG – I know what I was saying before!

LG – Okay.

CG - It's because I was going back to dissociation. There's dissociation in your presence, right at that moment! So I was doing [48:14] theatre groups with girls and I'm hanging out with girls in these afterschool programs in public schools, in Boston area, Cambridge, and Boston. I hear this voice in girls and I was like, “I know this voice,” and it's like I have forgotten this voice. This was my voice. It was like a pristine moment, and I start hearing myself speaking in a different way, without double-thinking what I'm saying. It's like my voice just comes out of my body. This sense of undoing dissociation, that the

voice is familiar and surprising, was the incredible thing. For myself, and the others, mostly women, who were doing this work, it changed all of our lives because a voice that we recognized was not what we had heard as our voice. In the university world, 'voice' is metaphorical, the concept of voice or the metaphor of voice. I thought, "No, voice is physical!" I could hear the shifts in girls' voices as they moved from 9, 10, 11 to 12, 13 14. I then thought that I have to work with people who work with voice in the theatre who understand the physical voice because something was happening in girls' bodies to impact this dissociation. And if you started afterward, history would be rewritten. So that led me to take a month-long actor training theatre voice workshop.

{50:16}

LG – That's so neat.

CG – I started bringing that work into my teaching.

LG – Yeah. And into playwriting and the novel.

CG – I was also an analyst during the time of doing this girls work, intensive analysis. As I was listening to girls, I was also going back and recovering my own experience which was an amazing convergence, for me to do that personal exploration at the same time of having actual girls' voices. It was amazing.

LG – It sounds amazing.

CG – Amazing, amazing.

LG – I can feel like it was amazing.

CG – And it changed my work and my life. It affected everything. Not only me, but everyone involved in the project. What do I think was the most important piece of work I did? That piece of work because it exposed how what had been taken as development was, in fact, an initiation that the psyche resisted. There was a real tension between psychological health and the reinstitution of patriarchy because this initiation was driven by gender

LG – Right.

CG – It was enforced and it was no joke. You can ask almost every woman, "Do you remember seventh grade?", and everybody goes.... [shudders]. The cliques, the exclusion the nastiness, girls start doing that to one another. It's the re-enacting of a patriarchal script. I felt that it exposed something that was both tremendously illuminating and very hopeful because if you could see how it happened, you could see how it could not have happened.

LG – Right.

CG – Then I thought, “If you want to promote psychological development and psychological health in children, and if you want to promote the functioning of a democratic society, then what you would do is place your tent with girls ages 9, 10, 11, and boys ages 4 and 5, and join what was a healthy resistance in these children to losing or dissociating themselves from human qualities that are vital to the human capacity to love and to live in a democratic society. I was just stunned that my work had led me to this place.

{52:58}

LG – Yeah. Can you talk about the move into the more art-spaced areas with the novel?

CG – First of all, one thing I saw is that, and again this goes back to psychoanalysis. In fact, I’m giving a talk in San Francisco in March called ‘The Psychological Equivalent to Discovering Fire: The Radical Potential of Psychotherapy’. The associated method - dissociation.

LG – What a great title.

CG – I saw something that Freud noticed, that artists are often the best psychologists. That is my ‘from college to graduate school’ idea. How come artists know so much? It’s because they’re using an associative method.

LG – Right.

CG – So, I’d come to the point where, after “The Birth of Pleasure” you can see that I’m writing about dissociation, so I’m writing in an associative voice. I thought that if I could encourage people to accompany me where I have gone, then perhaps I could evoke for them the experience that I had, like when I had learned that Anne Frank had edited her diary, and most of us didn’t recognize that we were reading an edited diary.

LG – Yeah, I didn’t know.

CG – And that the cold, harsh voice toward the mother is the voice not from the actual diary, but the edited diary.

LG – That’s so interesting.

CG – At the end of that, I had two questions. I also should say that I started writing fiction during my analysis. One question was about love, about why, when people have experienced loss or trauma, and this struck me that we had collectively done that all throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century with the loss of belief that civilization was any kind of bulwark against horror. It’s like Heart of Darkness with the Holocaust and everything. The second question was about relationships between men and women. I didn’t want to position myself as an expert on love and on men-women relationships. I don’t think of

myself as that. But I wanted to explore certain problems, and I felt I could explore them in a novel. That's how 'Kyra' came about, and why history has played such a large role in that book.

LG – Yeah.

{55:45}

CG – It was two people have really suffered through history tremendous personal losses. What allows them to take the risk of loving again? This seemed to me as a sort of general question that I was interested in.

LG – A wonderful question.

CG – Then also questions about therapy. I thought, "I'm not a practical therapist. I don't have to figure out how to deal with all of those issues." But I was fascinated when Kyra confronts Greta with the question "Isn't this therapy repeating the very trauma that brought me into therapy, inviting love only to build in this ending?" I thought, "How is Greta was going to respond?" It was really great to do it that way. It was the same for 'Scarlet Letter,' writing a play. At that point, the mix of methods just seemed to me that I was very fortunate in the sense that, I would say to give myself agency in this, but I sought out places that would give me freedom to work outside the box. So when I went back to teaching at Harvard with Erikson and Kohlberg, and I joined the faculty, I was in a position in which I felt very fortunate in that I'd had a certain kind of economic freedom and psychological freedom. I wouldn't have done the research I did if I had been trying to get tenure. Of course, ironically, I got tenure because of the research I did. Then I came to NYU to get a different kind of freedom, to expand the range of my work, and to write a novel and plays, to create a space where I would be able to do that. It was also a place where I could join with David Richards who is a constitutional law scholar and moral philosopher. Something I'd always admired in Erikson, when he wrote his book 'Young Man Luther,' he really opens it by this deep discussion of the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance. But you can't understand Luther unless you really understand the world he was living in.

LG – Yeah.

CG – Also I needed to understand the normative, ethical world. I was writing about voice and resistance and otherwise resistance to what? Resistance to your mother? [Laughs] It sort of trivializes it. That's basically it.

LG – Okay.

CG – Then I came to my deepest understanding of feminism because feminism for me had never been a question of men versus women or women versus men, or an issue only

of women or only of men. Any of that SO didn't fit my experience. Remember I'm a mother of three sons, I live with all men.

LG – It's just a wrong question.

CG – It's a wrong question. I realized again, now as I was teaching with David [Richards] and I had this developmental understanding based on the empirical work. I thought, "Feminism is one of the great liberation movements in human history. It is the movement to free democracy from patriarchy. In that sense, it's a movement to free everyone from the gender binary and the hierarchy of patriarchy in the interest of women and men, in the interest of love. It is a way of dealing with human conflicts other than through the use of force and the imposition of hierarchy. It seemed to me, then, to say, "If you think you can explain the perpetuation of systemic patterns of injustice that is the repetition of a history of violence without a psychological or dynamic understanding... Psychology is integral to a feminism that is defined in those terms. That brought everything together for me.

{1:00:17}

LG – Yeah.

CG – This was why this work in psychology was both so crucial, why my work always resonated so strongly with individuals. It's like, "You're describing my marriage, my 11-year-old, my 4-year-old", and so forth. At the same time, why it was contended within the paradigm of the academy.

LG – Yeah.

CG – Do you see what I'm saying?

LG – Yeah, it's just so integrated.

CG – And it really came together. I wrote a paper, which I'll give you, which I just gave in Paris in May because Flammarion, the French publisher, revised their original translation of 'In a Different Voice' and the Japanese are doing the same things now. I address in this paper the misunderstandings and the mistranslations of my work. I used to think my work had the effect on the people it had because I was basically a writer. But I don't think so. It think it's because it is experience-near, to use the Clifford Geertz term or whoever's term it is, and then I know why it gets turned on, because it does challenge the paradigm.

LG – Yeah.

CG – I think that's where the fight is.

LG – Yeah, I was just about to say, it hits the right frequency but it can also be threatening because it hits the right frequency?

CG – That’s right, yeah.

LG – What time is it?

CG – We have half an hour.

{1:01:50}

LG – Great, I’ve got so many questions. Okay, here’s one. Can you speak about the ways in which your own values, religion, or spirituality may have influenced your work? You spoke about values a little bit in the beginning when you talked about social justice.

CG – I just have to say, I grew up in New York during the time of the Holocaust. My parents were very liberal democrats. My grandfather who lived with us was a socialist. I grew up with liberal Jewish values, [laughs] what can I say? I was part of that intellectual, artistic, bohemian culture of the late 1950’s of Joan Baez, where we didn’t give so much credence to institutional status and so forth.

LG – Yeah.

CG – I came of age with the Civil Rights Movement, the Anti-War Movement, and so on. Those were my 20’s.

LG – Yeah. Okay, so it was just in the era.

CG – What I’m having a hard time understanding is people who don’t endorse these things. We’re living in a constitutional democracy, come on! [Laughs]

LG – Yeah. I think I heard you say that in the beginning when I asked you what drew you to these movements, and you told me, but I don’t know if that’s obvious to everybody necessarily.

CG – Exactly, exactly. I had a very interesting time in the course of the girls work. My colleagues and I ran these retreats because the women teachers that were working with girls, this was both in Boston public schools and girl schools, were very drawn in by the work on girls. You know how when you do work at a school you have to come in and give a little talk? So I went and I gave a talk at this school that was run by an honour code. We had interviewed the girls, and the girls weren’t obeying the honour code. They voted for it, and they weren’t obeying it. They were dealing with their friends with all these issues. So, the school was, in fact, a place where you could leave your purse and everything else. I said in my talk, “If you want to educate girls to be citizens of a democratic society, it would be important to educate them to voice their disagreements openly, not to vote for something then do something else. Also to recognize what they, in

fact, are doing, because the school is a little bit like a perfectly run household where it's as if nobody is doing anything, but suddenly there is dinner on the table every night. Look at what's going on here.

LG – Yeah.

CG – This teacher at the front row raises her hand and asks, “How can we encourage girls to disagree openly when we can't disagree openly ourselves?” Then it turned to how many teachers were suffering from migraines, depression, stomach problems, and so on. They said, “We want to go on a retreat with you,” so then we started the retreats with women teaching girls and girls teaching women.

{1:05:05}

LG – Yeah.

CG – They were amazing because it brought the women teachers back to a voice that they had suppressed, and it changed their teaching. It was astonishing. Then when we went to the Boston public schools we also did a series of retreats called, ‘Women and Race Retreats’ which asked, “How do I as a Black/White/Hispanic woman relate to Black/White/Hispanic girls. Am I going to perpetuate these divisions upon women?”

LG – Yeah.

CG – I remember this moment where one of the African American women in the group was speaking about women of colour and women of your colour. I said that when I grew up, the world was divided into two groups, Jews and non-Jews [laughs]. I said that it took me a long time to hear that describing people as non-Jews was a problem. So I said, “To you, I'm a woman of no colour. To me, you're a non-Jew” [laughs]. Historically, these were categories that were matters of life and death. They were not trivial categories.

LG – Right. And still are sometimes.

CG – And still are. So, how are we going to be with each other? That is where I come from with these divided questions.

LG – Yeah. Okay, what would you like to see happening in the field of psychology in terms of the research that you do?

CG – I'd like to see psychology free itself, both in theory and in methods, from the gender binary and the gender hierarchy. That is, to me, the Chi squared table is almost like a magnet for the gender binary. All it does is it reifies and gives statistical [credence] to the extent to which we perpetuate patriarchal gender norms and values.

LG – Yeah.

CG – It's so easy to do separate and connected [as] 'masculine' and 'feminine.' I used to present interviews to my classes of somebody who is talking about a very connected sense of being in the world, and they would always assume that it's a woman and it wasn't necessarily.

LG – Yeah.

CG – Then the gender hierarchy is privileging masculine qualities, qualities that are gendered male; autonomy, reason, separation, and so on.

{1:07:38}

LG – How do you think that can be disrupted?

CG – To recognize what we're doing. That's the paper I'll give you. I just wrote about that. If we see that that's what we're doing. So, that's what the justice/care debate is about. That's what I'd like to see. Otherwise, I think psychology, in its assimilation to the intellectual frameworks that are basically institutionalized and prevalent, is, in fact, providing a rationalization and justification for those frameworks by seemingly naturalizing it, by reading it as nature, as part of us, part of our psychology. When, in fact, it is a disruption of our psychology and our neurobiology. It is a splitting of qualities that are actually joined, like self and relationship; you can't have a relationship if you have no self. Mind and body, the splitting of reason and emotion is Descartes' error.

LG – Yeah.

CG – So anyway, that's what I would like to see.

LG – Okay.

CG – I think it implies a change in theory and it implies a change in method. And probably the field of psychology, it just occurs to me in the moment, is dealing with the same dilemma. It's like when I was doing my girls work. If you are invested in girls, you want the best for them, or if you were invested in the boys, then you want the best for them. Let's give people a simple motive.

LG – Yeah.

CG – You have a real dilemma. I asked the fathers of boys, this is in 'The Birth of Pleasure,' "What do you see in your boy that leads you to say to yourself, 'I hope he never loses that'?" They said, "His emotional 'out there' quality, his spunk, his real joy."

LG – Yeah.

CG – And those were the very qualities that then led them to worry that their boys would not be perceived as real boys, and would be beaten up, and would be shamed. The boys are cry babies....

LG – Yeah.

CG – Or if you said, and you can ask fathers or mothers, “What are those qualities in girls, in your daughters?” They would say her honest voice. Well, that’s going to lead her to be called not the kind of girl we’d like to have.

LG – Yeah.

{1:10:22}

CG – I think the field has the same problem, which is its desire to adapt itself to an intellectual culture that has incorporated these gender binaries and hierarchies and values the masculine qualities. So in some sense, everybody wants to be like a boy or a man, and nobody wants to do things that are gendered feminine. It’s very hard because in the process, psychology is, what you see is exactly what’s happening, it is turning into either biology or sociology.

LG – Right.

CG – People are seen to be either genetically determined, that is evolutionary psychology or so-called essentialism, or they are seen as socially constructed. I had never actually made the connection between the developmental work and what’s going on. It’s interesting.

LG – Good. Okay, I’m going to shift a little bit. What kind of barriers or obstacles or discrimination have you experienced because of your feminism or because of being a woman?

CG – Oh yeah, as Hannah Arendt used to say “I’m not an exceptional Jew and I’m not an exceptional woman.” The minute somebody says, “She’s a feminist,” that, therefore, she’s not a psychologist, her work is unscientific, and her work is “political.”

LG – It’s like a dismissal.

CG – Oh yeah. If the work addresses feminist issues, it is seen as not psychology. The other thing I’ve experienced is my work being consistently assimilated to the very framework that I questioned, that is to the gender binary and hierarchies, and that my work was, in fact, perpetuating them. I’ll give you that paper. As a woman, I think it’s been an advantage and a disadvantage.

LG – Okay.

CG – I came into the academy when there were almost no women, certainly at Harvard. It is a very patriarchal institution with no women faculty. I was sort of an exception, and in some ways I could make up my own position and rules and things like that. That was a

huge advantage. The other thing was something I used to say to my women students. I would say, “Listen, a good role to play here is of a slightly rebellious daughter. Every father likes his slightly rebellious daughter. What’s a disastrous mother?” To be a sort of attractive woman, men like to be with you. A lot of the time they had no idea what my work really was. It was like, “Yeah, she’s smart”, “We like her” and “She’s nice” “She’s whatever...”[laughs]. I think it was easier for things like, when concepts like emotional intelligence and relational self came out, it was touted as, “These are very important human qualities as Ted Goldman and Mitchell and Greenberg said.” It was like, “Excuse me, have you read, ‘In a Different Voice’?” That’s what that was about. It was about joining self and relationship.

{1:14:11}

LG – Yeah, that’s a thread that has come up in a lot of the interviews with some of the feminist psychologists feeling like the work has been co-opted.

CG – Well, when it gets accepted, it gets divorced from women.

LG – Exactly.

CG – And history is rewritten. Now it’s human qualities because we’re still in a sufficiently patriarchal society that you can’t value a human quality. If you look at those phrases, it is fascinating that with emotional development, relational self, feeling brain (that’s Damasio), what’s the adjective? Feminine is now modifying the masculine, but the noun is still masculine.

LG – Right.

CG – Intelligence, self, brain.

LG – Right. Interesting.

CG – It’s like having a decorative woman sit next to you at dinner [laughs]. To really be seen as not just a helpmate. “Oh, your work on boy’s and girl’s moral development was so...”. Excuse me, I think ‘In a Different Voice’ was not about boy’s and girl’s moral development. It was so funny. I gave a talk at MIT last spring at the ethics centre and I was introduced by this person. I think he was a minister who had been in the counselling centre at MIT for a long time. He said, “I’m so happy to introduce Carol Gilligan, the author of the famous book ‘In Another Voice’. And we have still not forgiven her for leaving Cambridge.” I thought, “First of all, you don’t even know the title of my book. Secondly, you don’t know any work I’ve done since that time.” But as a woman, if I were to say, “Excuse me”, that would just...

LG – ...not fly.

CG – No. Then it would be like, “We had Carol Gilligan speaking. Do you know what she did?” [laughs]

LG – Yeah, yeah.

CG – “We were so happy to have her and introduce her. She’s really very unpleasant” [laughs].

{1:16:14}

LG – Okay. How have you balanced the demands of your personal life with your professional life, you said you have three boys?

CG – Well I’ll tell you - at my own expense, literally, I would say that I always thought having three children was great because it was an excuse. When my children grew up and left home, it was really bad because I had no more excuses that I could use.

LG – Excuse for what?

CG – Not having my life completely taken over and having a life apart [from academia]. I used to go with my children in the summer as soon as school was out. We lived in Boston so we went to Martha’s Vineyard, and I spent the whole summer on the vineyard with them, for June, July, and August, and we’d come back in September. I just said that I had to because I had my children. At that time you could do that. This was a different time from now.

LG – Yeah, it is.

CG – I felt it kept me sane. It kept me grounded. It kept me from being too caught up in the constructed reality of the academic world. It kept things in perspective; I had to make dinner, things like that. I loved hanging out with my kids. Compared to graduate school, it was so much fun.

LG – So much better [laughs].

CG – So much better [laughs]. The way I also made it work was every third year I got a fellowship, a Bunting Fellowship, a Fellowship at the Wellesley Centre for Research on Women, so that I could write. That really worked. Also, because women students in the academy, in particular, there were very few of us, students felt we should be very available to them, and I think we were responsive. I certainly loved teaching and working with students. But I needed to draw back into myself in order to write and have that time, so I got fellowships. What happened was when I left Harvard, or when I was ready to leave, as one of the people in the finance office said to me, “You have the pension of a bag lady” because that meant every third year there was no contribution to my pension.

LG – Right. Yeah.

CG – So that was huge. I went to the provost and I said, “You have held me up as a model of a woman who you wanted to have on your faculty, who had both raised children and was very productive as a scholar. But now look at what the cost was, and fortunately, I can deal with this because I’m not retiring and my husband earns money. But if I’d had to live on my pension, I would have been like a bag lady after having holding an endowed chair at Harvard.

LG – Yeah. What was the response to that?

{1:19:32}

CG – “Oh gee” [laughs].

LG – There was no compensation or anything?

CG – I said, “It would be a really important gesture if you would...” But it was like, “I don’t think so.” I don’t think those issues are taken seriously.

LG – Well, yeah.

CG – I think that’s the interesting thing about feminism, including feminism in the academy, which is that it has enforced the institution to really deal with the question of how anyone, woman or man, in any serious way, can really raise a family. I think the demands on young scholars are horrendous.

LG – Immense, yeah. What advice could you give to a feminist woman working in psychology now and what do you think remains to be accomplished or changed in the field?

CG – I’d say to a feminist woman working in psychology that your choice to work in psychology is absolutely integral to the success of feminism. You see, I’m writing a book now with my colleague David [Richards] and our next book will be called, ‘Hiding in Democracy: The Invisible Hand of Patriarchy.’ These patriarchal categories get incorporated into the self, they become part of our psyche, and they become invisible as if it were nature or part of our psychology. Only a psychologist can actually deconstruct this and really address the question of how to break a cycle of tragedy and trauma. We are learning more and more about trauma. Do you know what I’m saying?

LG – Yeah, yeah.

CG – It’s a key position, and use it, that’s what I would say.

LG – So stay in the field?

CG – Stay in the field, don't be alone and join with other feminists. It's crucial, otherwise you'll keep thinking you're crazy.

LG – Yeah, yeah.

CG – I remember right after 'In a Different Voice' came out, I was called up and they said, "It's really important for you to discuss your book publicly because the problem that Maccoby and Jacklin had is that they didn't defend their book on sex differences ['The Psychology of Sex Differences']. We're going to have a symposium at SRCD [Society for Research on Child Development] on 'In a Different Voice.'" I thought, 'That's very nice', and when I looked and I saw the schedule for the ballroom, and everybody was there. I was really young at the time. I was an assistant professor. I had no tenure or anything.

{1:22:29}

LG – Yeah.

CG – There were three women, all of whom said that there is no problem with gender in the field. One of them started - Eleanor Maccoby, she tells this story so I feel free to tell it too.

LG – Yeah.

CG – On the way to the panel, a colleague stopped her and said, "I'll see you at the shootout at the O.K. Corral." She said, [he was] male, of course. She proceeded to give her paper on there are no gender differences, no sex differences.

LG – Wow.

CG – It's like you could go crazy at that point.

LG – Who was on the panel, do you remember?

CG – Eleanor Maccoby, who subsequently wrote about it and recanted publicly, which was very interesting. She apologized to me. Also, **Zeller Luri**, defending Kohlberg, and **Catherine Snow** who, bless her, as a linguist said, "If you're writing a book called, 'In a Different Voice', all you need is one voice to make your point", which, of course, is true. The most moving thing for me was my students who had no money, but came to Toronto where this meeting was on their own time. I walked into the ballroom and there were a group of students, my women students, and they said, "We didn't think you should be alone here", and I thought, "This work is really about something."

LG – Yeah. What year was that in?

CG – '83/84. Then I wrote the *Signs* [article] [1:24:08] 'Reply to Critics'.

LG – Yeah.

CG – That was the talk I gave there. My students had worked with me on the talk, but so had Bernie Kaplan from Clark [University]. I remember he came up to my hotel room beforehand to prepare and stay with me. I say this because men were with me too. And my husband gave me the opening for the talk, which was the quote from William James.

LG – Yeah. So I didn't actually ask you about any mentors that you may have had.

{1:24:36}

CG – For mentors, I had Erik Erikson. Not in a very direct sense, but in the sense of inspiring me. You could say all of my work is about connecting life history and history.

LG – Yeah.

CG - What Erikson never imagined is how radical that is when the life history is a woman's life history.

LG – Right, right.

CG – It transforms both life history and history.

LG – Yeah.

CG – So, he was a mentor. I have teachers from Swarthmore. **Sam Heinz** was a mentor for me. He taught a Shakespeare seminar, and he would come to seminar every year and he'd say, "This year when I read 'Antony and Cleopatra' what struck me..." The idea is that you read differently every year. I remember I would read with my students every year. I just reread the Elizabeth van R case because I taught it yesterday. But every year it's different because you're in a different place. It's like 'read and response'.

LG – Yeah.

CG – They were mentors for me. They were the only people who I think of as "mentors." Then there was the sisterhood of women in Boston; Jean Baker Miller, **Janet Gilley** from Brandeis, **Malkah Notman**, **Cara Nadelson**. Jean Miller, though, particularly. Nancy Chodorow - at that time, in the sense that we were all seeing the same thing. Judith Herman, and father-daughter incest comes out at just about the same time.

LG – Right.

CG – That was all that's so, "I'm not crazy".

LG – Yeah.

CG – This is really happening. The sisterhood was extremely important. A mentorship implies a hierarchy. That was a real sisterhood. That was extremely important for me.

LG – Yeah. It sounds like you were mentoring each other in some ways, too.

CG – Yes. But really we were affirming each other's sense of reality.

LG – Yeah, yeah.

CG – Then when I worked with my students, we worked in a very democratic way. We mentored each other in terms of giving each other the courage to listen to what we were hearing and to see what we were seeing, rather than to say what we were supposed to say and hear what we were supposed to hear.

{1:27:14}

LG – Right, right.

CG – We used to say, “None of us could do this work alone because we were going against such a prevailing construction of reality”.

LG – Right.

CG – And then, in the women's movement. That was very, very important. And the button “question authority” [laughs]. If authority is unjust! David Halperstam's book ‘The Best and the Brightest’, that's what I had thought; the best and the brightest had made this egregious error in the field of psychology. If it's the best and the brightest, it's not because of one benighted individual, it's this promise that something is really wrong here.

LG – Yeah, yeah. I want to respect your time.

CG – I'm okay if you have a couple more questions.

LG – Well, I do have a couple more questions, but before I ask, I just want to open it up to you, first just to make sure that you get a chance for if there is anything else you want to add or expand on.

CG – I want to say that my husband always really encouraged what I think of as my boldest work and most radical work. That was extremely important, to feel that kind of...

LG – Support.

CG – Yeah.

LG – So is there anything else that I haven't asked you about that's important for this archive about feminism, about psychology, about your work, the intersections of all these things, or anything that you want to expand on?

CG – No, but I am just really glad that you're archiving this because I think this history is really not being carried forward.

LG – No, and I think one of the things that you were talking about with getting frustrated with the fact that these concepts get taken up and the source is ignored, this archive is trying to correct that.

CG – Yeah, history is being rewritten.

{1:29:13}

LG – Yes, it is hopefully.

CG – Let me tell you one other thing, I love what I'm doing now, which is that I'm teaching a class. I've now, here at NYU, regained what I most love, which is what I think of as my position on the edge.

LG – Yeah.

CG – So I teach an Advanced Theory and Methods course for PhD Psychology students, and it's called 'The Listening Guide Method,' which is the method that my students and I systematized. It was the method I'd used in 'In a Different Voice.' What I love is the free space of teaching. What happens otherwise is I get into an argument with the field of psychology about methods and so on, which I basically don't want to be in. In the first week, I said to my students, "The contract of this course is really very straightforward. In the next 14 weeks, I am going to teach you a method of working. Method means 'way', so it is a way of working."

LG – Yeah.

CG – "At the end of the 14 weeks, if I am successful, you will have learned the method and you will all get A's. If this is useful to you, that's great. If not, you've learned another method."

LG – Yeah.

CG – In teaching a way of working, you also teach a theory of psychology of how you conduct psychological inquiry, and what assumptions you make about the psyche and so forth. The students and I, we had all felt we had gotten to a point where we now had second order questions about the method, that, in some ways, we didn't want to stop. So the students petitioned the department so that they could turn this one-semester course into a two-semester course and they would get methods credit for it, which they did.

LG – That’s great.

CG – We come back in the fall, and we do the check-in for the fall and they all sign up for the second time. One after another they said, “This class ruined my life.” What they meant is they could no longer work in the way that they had been trained to work in psychology.

LG – Right.

CG – Then what happened was really nice for me, which is that one of the students who worked with the major quantitative researchers in the department brought his work from the class to his professor. They work with HIV and how to prevent it from spreading. The professor was really impressed by what was learned from this method, so he incorporated it into his application for a large New York City grant on HIV/AIDS prevention among Hispanic and African American men. Their grant application was singled out because of this method.

{1:32:37}

LG – Wow.

CG – They got the grant, which was a huge grant.

LG – Yeah.

CG – I feel that instead of arguing with psychology, I stand on the demonstration of what you can learn about psychology if you work in this way.

LG – Right.

CG – Then I’ll talk with my students on how to navigate, how to publish, and so forth. So that’s where I am in relationship to the field.

LG – Yeah, yeah. What you’re saying is making me think about something else that you said that was off script in terms of the questions, but I think it was relevant, because I’ve heard you talk about this throughout the interview a few times in different ways. You’re talking about navigating the system and also going this critical route, or having the parents concerned about these traits and their roles. But the reality is that when the boys do go out there, they may be called these names. There is the reality and there’s the theory, right?

CG – It’s acknowledging the reality, like how do you preserve that part of yourself, or that creative voice in your work, and how do you navigate the system without losing that? That is my message

LG – It seems like such a central thread in all of this.

CG – Yeah, it is. It is a central thread. Yeah, exactly.

LG – Okay, well this was so great. Thank you so very much.

CG – Thank you. I think this is so great what you're doing.

LG – I really enjoyed this interview so much. Thank you.

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