Psychology's Feminist Voices Oral History Project

Interview with Esther Greenglass

Interviewed by Alexandra Rutherford
Toronto, ON
March 1, 2005

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Interviewed by Alexandra Rutherford
York University, Toronto, Ontario
March 1st, 2005

E: Esther Greenglass, Interview participant

A: Alexandra Rutherford, Interviewer

A- An interview with Esther Greenglass, at York University, on March 1st, 2005. What I'll have you do to start is say your full name, and place and date of birth for the record.

E- Ok. And date?

A- If you feel comfortable with that…(laughs)

E- Ok, so my name is Esther Greenglass and I was born in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, on Nov. 27th 1940. There I said it, it didn't hurt at all!

A- Nope!

A- Esther, I absolutely had a wonderful time reading through the material that you gave me, especially about your feminist activism in the early 1970's. But before I get there, and I want to get there pretty quickly, because you did some pretty amazing, amazing things…I want to ask you first just to set the stage for us in terms of when you came to York. You came in 1967 as a post-doctoral fellow, and the University had opened, the Keele campus had opened only two years before, so what was York like when you arrived?

E- It was very different. I was a graduate of the University of Toronto, and I really didn't like it very much because it really didn't give students in psychology an opportunity to work on the areas that we were interested in, such as applied psychology. It was very narrow - verbal learning, memory, rat-running, things like that, and I had gotten quite a substantial background in experimental psychology. But my interests were starting to branch out, and I was interested in the feminist movement that actually hadn't hit Canada yet, it was still in the States. And of course it's really difficult to comprehend how different things were in the 60's, I know students hear a lot of things about, oh, free love and liberation in the 60's, but the bottom line was that at that time women didn't have a lot of rights. At the University of Toronto for instance, Hart House was closed to women, women were not allowed to go there. And there were certain bars and pubs that women were not allowed to go into without an escort. So there were things like that that actually

made full participation of women in everyday life very difficult. And also in Psychology there were very few women getting PhDs, it was basically a male field, male-dominated, most of the students were male and so it was the kind of field where you felt excluded. And I was the only woman in my PhD class as well.

A- And you worked with Vello Sermat?

E- I worked with Vello Sermat, he was my Master's thesis supervisor, and then I did my PhD in Social Psychology with Harry Kaufman, who's a professor in New York. And so I did a post-doc here with Kurt Danziger on, ah, he was doing cross-cultural Psychology then, and I was studying Italian mothers and Canadian mothers and actually looking at their differences and similarities in terms of how they socialize their children in the morality area. And I designed a trailer that was outside BSB for many years, and we used to take the trailer to various separate schools and have the mothers come into our trailer and we would interview the mothers and the children, and then have a little task where we actually observe the children and the potential for cheating and lying through a one way mirror. No one had to sign a consent form in those days.

A- No!

E- You just did what you wanted!

A- And the mobile laboratories must have been…

E- The mobile laboratories….(inaudible)

A- In terms of getting you right into…(inaudible)

E- Exactly yes, and I had an Italian interpreter because my Italian mothers didn't speak English. So I did that with Kurt for awhile, he wasn't into history yet, he was into cross cultural. And then I was offered a job in 1968. I was 28 years old. I was the youngest professor here, Norm Endler and Lou Bellow were here, and Kathy Koenig, ah, was a social psychology professor. So it was a very small department and you could count the number of women in the University on one hand, it was a very, very small number.

A- At that point, was there a Graduate program in Social Psychology at the University?

E- There was. And they were admitting 3-4 graduate students at the time. They didn't have a history and theory section there was clinical psychology, and social psychology and there was experimental psychology and I think Ono came later.
Ian Howard came later. So within the next 10 years we acquired a lot of faculty members, particularly in Social Psychology - Clarry Lay, Mike Ziegler, Dave Wiesenthal came later, and so the Social area grew very, very quickly. The Clinical area was small but it also grew very quickly. Joan Stewart was in the Clinical area, then it acquired Laura Rice, and Sandra Pyke was in the Clinical area.

A- In your recollection was the social psych. Program - was there an overt attempt to make it more applied at that point, or was that something that something that you kind of wanted to do but it wasn't necessary…..

E- The applied word was a dirty word. Everything was theoretical and experimental and even my thesis was published in the Journal of Personality, JPSP. It was highly experimental, but the atmosphere at York was very different from U of T. York grew out of, York was an outgrowth of U of T. It was started by Murray Ross who was the vice President of U of T who became disillusioned with U of T for the same reasons that I did. It's a very stuffy traditional place that doesn't tolerate very much deviation. I think it's still like that, and so when Murray Ross went to Glendon and started York University he brought with him people like Lionel Rubinoff, and Jack Saywell, people who were, um, more creative in wanting to um, branch out in new fields, who were challenging tradition and that's what York was at that time. That's why York was very, very receptive to my work on women and gender and women's right affirmative action. But when we first came here I mean, there was nothing here at all and it was, it had only started in the States a few years before.

A- Ok. Can you describe for us the physicality of the place. I mean, what did it look like?

E- Well we didn't have the Ross building, um BSB was the main, the main building really, and it was brand new, and it was beautiful. And um, the roof wasn't leaking in those days!

A –mmmhmm!

E- And there were the colleges, Murray Ross was very big on the college system. He thought university was such a big place he wanted students to have a smaller sort of community, college community, where they could identify with the…and that was why the colleges were here at the time, but um, there wasn't very much else.

A- And what were the students like, I mean when you arrived and you became assistant professor, and teaching…

E- Well yeah, the students were terrific, um, we were all, all of us were engaged in a new and exciting venture. We were kind of rebelling against U of T and..

A- Ok, so it was palpable even in the 60's…

E. Yeah, oh yeah, absolutely…..

E- There was the belief that students who came to York were rejected at U of T, but that wasn't the truth. They actually chose to be here because of the reputation of York as being a brand new young university, receptive to new ideas. I know when the Faculty of Environmental Studies was, ah, formed there was a lot of excitement because nothing

like this had existed at U of T.

A- So it provided a real alternative.

E- Yes, exactly. Yeah that's a really good way of putting it.

A- And also of course this was a really exciting time in terms of the social and political context right?

E- Yeah.

A- the Civil Rights movement, the growing emergence of the women's movement here in Canada. So that, that too was part of the context of this being a new university, ah, responsive to….

E- Exactly. And there was no women's movement in Canada. There was no women's rights, and there was no maternity leave, and there was no day-care, there was nothing for women. Women were still in the home, and those of us who were getting PhD's were anomalies, anomalies – "And what's wrong with her, how come she isn't married? Why is she getting a PhD? I guess nobody wants her" and ah, and my own family you know um, they were proud that their daughter had a PhD, but the big question is, why aren't you getting married? So that, that was the mentality then, that women's only true calling was marriage and children. And that women who pursued higher education were odd somehow, they were out of step.

So all of this of course changed when the women's movement arrived here, but there was this tremendous excitement in the air that you were in on the ground floor of a new movement, and of course it was Trudeau mania, which I was, um, quite involved in. Trudeau was a perfect Prime Minister for the time because he was young, he was ah, he was totally non-deferential to, to tradition, he believed in participatory democracy, so I got involved in the liberal party. I was able through my politics in the liberal party and my, ah, activism in the women's movement and my scholarship - I was able to bring all of these together in a way which was very meaningful for me.

Because in the early 70's, late 60's early 70's, the Royal Commission Report on the Status of Women came out and had 168 recommendations on how to change the laws to improve the status of women, and it was just too overwhelming for the government of the day. So Trudeau appointed a three-woman task force of the liberal party to travel across Canada from St John's, Newfoundland to Victoria and hold town meetings in every major centre in Canada and find out what recommendations people wanted. And the day he announced this three-woman task force was the day before he married Margaret. And I danced with him the night before his wedding, and quite frankly I mean, I was single, I found him very attractive! (Laughs) And um, he, he was a big flirt, and he invited me to come to Ottawa to analyze him and oh, I was so excited! The Prime Minister of Canada…and then, then came the downer the next morning. I got a phone call at 6 in the morning from the Globe and Mail saying, "is that professor Greenglass?" and I said yes,

"we have some news for you, the Prime Minister of Canada has eloped" and I said What?! (Laughter) that's impossible! (Laughter) I had just danced with him! Anyways I just thought I'd throw that in!

A- That is wonderful!

E- It's a wonderful story and of course we were, p.s, we were invited to his home for lunch, and we met Margaret and (laughter) so the rest is history!

A- Well tell us, tell us a little bit more about your involvement in the Task Force on the Status of Women Report and then the traveling that you did.

E- Well there were a lot of issues, you know they were recommending day care and they were recommending maternity leave, all of the things the kids today just take for granted! We had none of it! And pension for housewives, which we still don't have. But as I mentioned to you earlier, one of the things that really impressed me was that no matter where we went in Canada all people wanted to talk about was abortion. So at that time the abortion law was you could only get an abortion if the mother's health was, ah, life was at risk. And we wanted the grounds for abortion to be broadened to include many social reasons. Mainly we wanted the abortion decision to be the woman's decisions.

But, everywhere we went, they were organized. You had the pros and the cons and that's all we heard. And it got very, very repetitive. They didn't want to talk about day care, they didn't want to talk about equal pay for work of equal value, that came later. They wanted to talk about abortion. So it's very interesting that today they're still debating that and now it's come out in other ways, in the stem cell research.

So that for me personally led to, ah, my first book which is called *After Abortion* which was the first study of the psychological effects of abortion on women. And I have to say you know that with all my problems and my sort of negativity about the University of Toronto the one thing I will say is that I got a really good solid background in experimental psychology. So when I did my research on the psychological effects of abortion it was a very well controlled study and I published several papers in psychological, and psychiatric journals and my book had an impact at that time. It was published in the early 70's. And that's a perfect example of how my political involvement impacted on my work in psychology. I don't think I could have written that book at U of T. I got SSHRC grants to support it and so on, but York was just so receptive to this you know, to anything new and different and it was the first of its kind. I've always liked to be on the cusp - I don't like doing research that everyone else tried, I don't like tried and true. Even now, I'm always looking for [something] new. I did research on SARS in Canada and it's because I'm, I'm a high sensation seeker and I get bored easily, so once I wrote my book on abortion I was ready to move on to something else.

A- Ok. Well let me, let me go back a little bit again to the Task Force, and just ask you to tell us a little bit about the ultimate outcome of the Task Force.

E- Ok. The mandate of the Task Force was to make a report to present to the Prime Minister of Canada and the cabinet of that time on our analysis of the feelings of Canadians of the day; what, how they felt about the implementation of the Royal Commission Report. Which recommendations they wanted implemented, and basically I wrote it because I was the academic the way they set it up. There was the academic, and then there was Jan Steele, who was I think president of the liberal party of Ontario, and Marie Chibault, who was a French Canadian, she was a, a mayor, or she had been a mayor in Hull. So we represented women of various backgrounds, but I was the academic so I got to write the report, and basically it was very, very short and it basically talked about the country being divided on the issue of abortion. And that was essentially…

A- Were there regionally different stories? Or?

E- No. No.

A- It was always just a split no matter where…

E- Yes. And they were very well organized politically, they had their pros and their cons and they got their bodies out and there was a competition, to see which side could yell the loudest. It got to be kind of ah, boring after awhile because it was so predictable. We were shocked, they didn't want to talk about any other issue.

A- And your role in the, ah, town hall meetings was to, to listen?

E- Yes. Yes. We were not there as advocates. But when you mention the concept of advocacy um, one of the things that the women in academia had to come to terms with was the role of advocacy versus scholarship. For example, around that time I was invited to give a keynote address to CPA, which I did and I gave some talks here in the department of psychology, and one of the areas of research that I was interested into in the 70's was social psychology of marriage. And I gave a talk in this department in the early 70's to our colleagues, a colloquium, on the social psychology of marriage from a feminist perspective. And by the way, the word feminist wasn't really coined yet, it was just in the process of crystallizing, because it took about 10 years to actually crystallize a feminist consciousness in Canada that was distinctly Canada as opposed to the States. You can't import it, you have to modify it, to the, to the social and political milieu of the day.

In any event, I gave my talk and it was hard data because I'm first and foremost a data scientist, U of T made sure of that! And I dotted my I's and crossed my T's and at the end of my talk, everyone clapped politely, and then one of our colleagues raised his hand and (you have to recall the audience was mainly men, there were only a couple women professors and they were very, very quiet, they never opened their mouths) and he said that it was an interesting talk, it was certainly different, (rolling his eyes), but you make an assumption that you're assuming everybody agrees with it. I said, "What assumption is that?" He said, "You're assuming that women should be equal to men." And that just

blew me away, cause I realized, what, what, you know, I realized yet again that you are preaching to the converted, that at that time, there was a real questioning: What are these feminists doing, and why are they treading here? And women aren't equal to men, women have their roles and men have their roles. And so the idea of appropriate gender role behaviour was seen as synonymous with justifying the status quo.

A- Were you able to find other feminists at York? How did that work?

E- Yes. In other departments, and that lead to the first course in women's studies at this University. I found Anne-Marie Henschel who's now Anne-Marie Ambert in sociology, and Shelly Romalis in anthropology. And Johanna Stuckey in Humanities. So we kind of, in those days, consciousness-raising groups were where we got together, and we talked about you know, our feelings, about being a woman and aspirations, and were you going to get married (I wasn't married at the time). Should we get married, will it compromise us, this kind of thing. And then we decided to do um, a course, and of course my department was totally against it. They said there's no, no need for it, there's no demand for it, then if you want to do it you do it overtime. So I did the first course on women with my feminist colleagues through the division of social science, but I wasn't paid for it.

A- And then the departmental response was simply "There's no demand"?

E- We don't need it. They said that "Psychology is Psychology, of men and women." So I didn't give up. That's the other thing when you're a pioneer you can't give up, you, you have to persist and I had the support from feminists in other departments. So we gave a course in social science and 25 students enrolled and um, it was highly successful it was written up in all the media as the first of its kind. And then the next year 140 students applied to take the course! So we offered it in social science but it was only, you know, about 5 or 6 years later that I was allowed to give a course here in Psych, but they wouldn't allow me to call it psychology of women it had to be gender.

A- Now what kinds of materials did you use?

E- There was a lot of material from the United.States. There wasn't a lot of scholarly stuff but there was, there was a book called *Sisterhood is Powerful* which was a series of readings which we used, and it was, um, it was a collection of papers from various fields of psychology, sociology, anthropology, political science.

A- What was that like for you teaching in that kind of interdisciplinary environment?

E- Oh it was great, I loved it. Murray Ross's vision for York was that in first year, all students had to take a social science, a humanities, a, a language. So his vision for York, and he's actually written books on this, a University was supposed to be a real a, community, where you don't just get submerged in your field immediately, students should have a broad liberal arts education. So, all of us in social psychology, I think Clarry Lay, and Norm Endler and Mike Ziegler. All of us at the time were seconded to

social science, Kathy Koenig as well. We all had to do 5 hours of our teaching or something like that within the social science division. One year I did a course on suicide, and um, I think it was called Society and the Deviant, so I did the section on suicide, and then this particular year we did women, um sort of an interdisciplinary approach, so I did the psychology, someone else did the sociology, so we just took different perspectives.

A- So they really put their money where their mouth was in terms of delivering an interdisciplinary education.

E- Yeah, Yeah. There wasn't a lot of literature at the time but there was a book by Carol Tavris, called the war of, something about the war of the sexes, and it was very popular, I used that as a textbook. We didn't have any choice, there was one book. So I used…

A- Right, right, so you were there at the beginning. So there was…

E- Yeah, there's a lot now, I mean those shelves are just all psychology of women.

A- Yeah, I mean Psych of Women Quarterly didn't get going until, like a couple of years later.

E- Yeah, there was nothing really. We were pretty, we were kind of blazing away. My own book *A World of Difference*, on social psychology and gender differences, I didn't get published until '82.

A- Well let me now go back. You've already touched on this, but I think, I think it's an important part of your career, your work on abortion. You mentioned earlier that it came, at least in part, came out of your work on the task force when abortion kept coming up over and over. But how did you approach, how did you approach it?

E- I was a scientist really, I mean I had my own views that you know women should have their own, should do what they want because they raise the children. But as a scientist, the question I raised was how do women react to abortion? Because there was a lot of polemics at the time that women go crazy after an abortion, that they suffer huge amounts of depression and all this kind of thing, and I just wanted to know. So we designed, my students and I designed a questionnaire and we used Doug Jackson's PRF which was a very popular personality inventory at the time, and one of the subscales was depression, so we measured self reported depression and I found two main things.

First of all, the average scores of the sample were within the normal range, they were not outside two standard deviations above the mean. And secondly, the depression was somewhat reactive to the circumstances. So for instance, young women who had an abortion, and whose relationship with the male partner broke up at the same time, and who didn't have any children, they had the highest scores. Married women who already had kids, who had a lot of support from their husbands, their depression was significantly lower. So that led me to interpret it as reactive, and also that the depression was a reaction not only to the abortion but also to the circumstances of the woman at the time.

So if you're breaking up with your boyfriend at the same time as the abortion, it's very difficult to say that the depression is due to one factor and not the other, it's kind of a combination. Plus the fact that if the woman didn't have any children at the time, they felt this affected them more so than if they already had kids.

A- Now how did you find your participants, the subjects as they would have been called?

E- There were a lot of doctors who were doing abortions at the time, who were - it was a very big political…that's the time that Henry Morgentaler was jailed, and he had a heart attack in jail, and a group of us, ah, Doris Anderson who was editor of Chatelaine at the time, and Jane Calwood and some liberal MP'S, and we got Henry Morgentaler released from jail, he would have died otherwise, I believe. So ah, politically and medically I had a lot of connections, people who helped me find women who had abortions, and the study was based on close to 200. There was no, no difficulty finding them, they were very happy to talk about it, as long as they remained anonymous.

A- Ok, ok. And how did your colleagues here in psychology react to some of that work?

E- Lukewarm. The psychology journals in Canada were not receptive, I had to publish in the States, in psychiatric journals, and I published in Canadian medical journals, but psychology journals were too conservative. Psychology in Canada seemed at the time to be very conservative and very resistant to change.

A- And have you in response to that found yourself seeking out other communities?

E- Oh, yeah I'm very international. Yeah I don't, I don't restrict myself to Canada.

A- Yeah, and I want to get to that a little bit later cause it's obvious that you're really involved internationally.

E- Yeah, yeah even in the States the community, and I know it, it's probably ridiculous to make these broad-based generalizations, but they're very egocentric in the States, they don't really appreciate the different investigative techniques and trends in other parts of the world.

A- Well let me ask you now around the same time, so were still talking early 1970s, I know that you were also involved in what came to be known as the underground symposium, at

E- CPA in Montreal

A- In Montreal. Can you tell us a little bit about that experience, kind of why there was a symposium, your involvement in it and so on?

E- Well, that was 1972 I believe, yeah. Um, up until that time I mean, they didn't think there was any need for psychology of women; they said psychology of human beings.

They did not show any acknowledgement or appreciation that there was a difference and that there was a need for it, and that was around the time that we were giving a course here interdisciplinarily, but not in psychology. I still didn't have a course here because they wouldn't let me do it. And the men pretty well called the shots when they told you, you can't do it, you just, you don't do it. So you go elsewhere… So at that time a group of us - Mary Stewart was here, she was a young assistant professor, we were all assistant professors. Sandra Pyke was an assistant professor, myself, Norma Bowen at Guelph, we were all just brand new professors. And remember, if you rock the boat too much at the University, you don't get promoted, you really have to tow the line, that hasn't changed much. And so we were actually threatened, so we, we had to keep a low profile.

A- Threatened by your colleagues?

E- Yeah by our superior. You know, "Stop rocking the boat you're new, just do your job and shut up, be good girls." Yeah, yeah and they'd pat you on the bottom then and the term sexual harassment didn't exist, you just expected it. You know, it was demeaning but you didn't say anything because you'd lose your job. It's a totally different atmosphere.

So a group of us were doing research. Sandra Pyke was doing socialization, and I had done research on discrimination against women faculty here. I believe I mentioned to you that when I said I was going to publish it they somewhat threatened not to have me promoted. So (Laughs) unbelievable, anyway we organized a symposium and sent it into the CPA program for 1972, which was going to be held in June 1972 in Montreal. And we got back a rejection letter, saying um, there's no, there wouldn't be any interest in this and we're wasting our time, why don't we do traditional psychology. And one of us has the letter, somewhere, it's unbelievable, the letter exists. So, we were supposed to just go away, like good little girls, and you know, do our knitting or, (laughs) work for our senior professors in their lab, which is what they want. And I won't mention names. But anyway um, we decided that Canada was ready for this symposium, it was sound research, we were all good scientists, and we decided to present it anyway. So we, ah, hired a room in the basement of the Bonaventure Hotel, and, which is where the CPA was. CPA was smaller then, so I think everything was in one hotel. And um, we advertised, it was 2 o'clock in the afternoon, and we got placards, and we walked around the lobby "underground symposium on women at 2 o'clock in the basement" and needless to say it was a runaway success! I mean, the room was just packed with people, there was no place to sit. The media was there, all the newspapers from all across Canada, I think we even got coverage in the States. Pictures of all of us on the front page! How (inaudible) is that? Go figure, right!? And it was…

A- People were more interested, it turned out.

E- And next year they invited us to organize the symposium (laughs). But CPA is very traditional.

A- Yeah, yeah, and what did you, I noticed too, from reading some of the newspaper

coverage that not only did the newspapers cover the event, but they talked about your research too.

E- Yes they did. Yeah, and it was a really big deal at that time you know that boys and girls were socialized differently, ha ha surprise! Its not all biological!(laughs) And just all kinds of things that we take for granted. There was a cute little magazine called *Homemakers Digest*, that got delivered to all the houses free, and basically it was just an outlet for advertisers you know for all the things that women need, you know spray for your pots so your food won't stick, and the latest cleaning fluids and whatever for the home, you know, all the things that women are interested in. So this little magazine the editor was a feminist, and she was quite influenced by this little event, it had a lot of spin-offs for all of us. And she called me up, and she said, "Can I interview you for my magazine?" and I thought, "Oh, this is a homemakers magazine what does she want me for?" And I said sure, so she interviewed me and the title of the article was "Scratch any woman and you'll find a feminist." But the irony is, you read the article, and it's got, Esther Greenglass, feminist, 1972, or something and then after page one you have to go through about 60 pages of recipes to get to the next page of the article! (Laughter)

A- Oh Gosh! (laughs)

E- It was so funny! But, a lot of women read it and really liked it you know? Many of them were homemakers and wondering, "There's gotta be more to life than washing the floors!"

A- Right, right. Well you mentioned that there were spin-offs for you in terms of these events, and your increasing kind of publicity and so on. How was that for you, to become kind of a public figure?

E- I didn't really like it. Um, no, I'm basically an academic, and um it put me in a… When we interview, they very often drop out the context, so they'll take one statement and then make it a sub-headliner, or something, and I think it, I felt it affected my credibility as a, as a scientist. Eventually I stopped talking to the press, you have to be careful with the press. They were interested in selling copy, and they'll take whatever they can, that looks good, and they'll blow it up, take it out of context, and you look at it and say "I never said that," but you don't have much control over it.

A – So it made you a bit cautious?

E- Yeah, yeah.

A- Well Esther, I wanted to ask, and I hope you feel comfortable talking about this, but it just seems so relevant. Sometime in this period, and I'm not sure when, you did decide to get married.

E- Yep, yeah 1974.

A- Ok, and you mentioned consciousness raising groups, here in the academic context and that was a topic of discussion, so on and so forth for your female colleagues and yourself. Can you share with us what it was like to then begin to have to balance a professional life with marriage?

E- It was hard. It was very hard. Especially when the children came. For instance, I nursed my first child for 18 months. And I worked full-time, we had no maternity leave so a lot of us - Shaké Toukmanian, Sandra Pyke, and I - we all had our babies in the summer so we could be back in the classroom in September. And that's difficult to do, I mean you know you have to take your temperature, and you have to organize a lot of things so that you're right on. And so we did that, and it shows the lengths women will go to when they have too.

With my second child, already there was maternity leave. But I didn't know how to breast feed, and I started breastfeeding my first child in the hospital, and I couldn't get the baby off the nipple. And none of the nurses could help me because none of them had had babies. I didn't know how to break the suction - and that's one thing about newborns they suck very hard, it seems that all their strength is in that sucking reflex, and it was really scary. The baby had fallen asleep and it just wouldn't release. And so finally we found a nurse who had had a child and told me what to do, but I realized that even though breast feeding is a normal natural part of having a baby, there is a learning process there.

So I went to a place called La Leche (the Breast Feeding Society), and Grace Kelly was actually the honorary president for the international group. I went to the one in Toronto and North York, and a bunch of us just sat around like this in a living room nursing our babies, and that's when they taught me to get the baby off the nipple you have to break the suction. So you put your finger between the, the baby's lips and the nipple and it gently breaks the suction. And you don't have to hit the baby, you don't have to wake it up, you don't have to do surgery! (laughter) to remove them, you just gently break the suction, but nobody in the hospital knew that. So and my mother um, conveniently forgot, so I, I don't think, with nursing, you know it goes through stages, some years it's in fashion, some it isn't. I notice today they have Breast Feeding specialists who come to the hospital rooms of new mothers to teach them how to do it! When I was nursing, nobody nursed, and , I remember, I used, I was always ahead of my time, I used to always nurse my baby wherever I went because she was hungry, she wasn't eating anything else. And so at Friday night dinners or something and I'd be sitting there and my baby would be nursing, my father would get very embarrassed and annoyed, and he'd say in a very deep voice "put away the dairy!" (Laughter) and , I mean its not as if anyone could see the breast, you know you see women discreetly nursing in shopping malls now, you have a little blanket covering your breast, so its, I was very modest, but he didn't like the idea that I was nursing in public. And now you see it everywhere, I notice people do it everywhere now.

So I went to La Leche, and they disapproved of my working, cause I was a full-time professor- I was an assistant professor working full time, and so the women in La Leche were very judgmental of me, and saying how can you go to work when you have a new

baby? What are you doing with the milk? I said well, because when you're not with the baby the milk builds up, I said I'm flushing it down the toilet. Gasp! They thought that was terrible. By the way, the baby took a bottle from her caregiver while I was at work.

A- Interesting, interesting. Yeah, since you brought it up, let me ask you a little bit more about your family. Because you mention your dad's response. Where did your feminist, how did your feminist identity kind of emerge? Where did that come from?

E- I don't know. Cause I come from a very traditional family. And I was raised by two very traditional parents from eastern Europe, who had very strong views about women's place, you know Jewish family, woman gets married and has children. I don't know.

A- And yet, you say when you got your PhD, what was their reaction?

E- They were proud but they would rather I got my MRS.

A- Uh-huh, done something more traditional. Yeah.

E- Absolutely

A- Yeah, yeah, interesting.

E- I don't really know I guess I'll have to save that for my analyst.

A- Yeah, yeah, yeah, so you found yourself having to juggle the roles of…

E- It was very hard, because there was a lot of societal disapproval. And I had a nanny at the time, and left the baby alone all day with the nanny. And now the baby is a physician at Sick Kids specializing in Rheumatology. So she seems to have survived, although on her bad days, she can remind me about all the bad things I did. But if I was that bad I don't think she would be so successful.

A- Do you think it had any negative impact on your professional life?

E- Oh absolutely.

A- Yeah? In what ways?

E- Well time-wise you lose a lot of years, because mothers usually, in my home anyway I was the primary caregiver, and um, your career suffers.

A- Mmmhmmm, slows you down in some ways…

E- Slows you down a lot.

A- Compared to your….

E- Yes, yes, and ah, I knew that, but I wanted the experience of being a mother and having children. But in retrospect, I had a lot of difficult days.

A- Yeah, yeah, did it have any impact on your ah, sort of, identity as a feminist? That is, how other people saw you as a feminist?

E- Oh yeah. The feminists. I was discredited by both sides because at that time, a lot of feminists hated men, they didn't have babies. And the traditional women thought I was betraying their cause, I couldn't, I never really fit in anywhere, and I've always kind of liked that, but at that time of your life you're very vulnerable when you have little kids, it's hard. And when they went to school, the teachers were somewhat judgmental as well.

A- I see, I see. They thought you were unprofessional, per se?

E- Yes, that your work was so important to you.

A- I see, ok. Well tell me now - You worked here at the University on a report about salary and equity. Can you tell me how that, what the impetus was for that work?

E- It was around the time, ah, I guess in the early 70's. Around the time of the Montreal, underground symposium. Well there were 2 things that I was reacting to there, one was the paucity of women not only in psychology but in the University, and also the fact that women weren't, women students weren't encouraged to the same extent as male students. I could never have done this at U of T, but York was seen as more forward looking, more interested in um, moving forward in terms, you know, socially. The feminist movement had caught on in society, and so there was a committee struck that did a report on the status of women throughout the whole University. I did it, I was chairing it with Johanna Stuckey, so we looked at the status of women students, we looked at staff, secretaries, we looked at faculty, we looked at the cleaning staff. So our mandate was to examine the status of women in every area of the University. And my particular task was to look into the salary and equities of men and women. So I did it, I designed a regression analysis, where the dependent variable was salary and I had 14 predictors, and the predictors were years at York, number of publications, number of grants, age, all this kind of thing. And then the end result was that men were being paid $500 more than women and that the discrepancy increased the higher the status. And so I took the report to the University, and then um, the University got a grant for a million dollars from the government, and then a committee was set up the next year to correct the anomalies. So every single woman at York University, I think there were about um, 600 at the time, I can't remember, but every single woman was invited to present her CV, name of male matching peer, and then, they would compare. Igor Kusyszyn was my peer, (laughter) and they decided I wasn't being paid less than Igor!

A- I think that letter was actually in one of the files you gave me…

E- Yeah I was shocked. So I got nothing for it. Actually I spent a whole sabbatical just

doing this study, and a lot of my colleagues didn't talk to me, a lot of my male colleagues didn't talk to me after I did that study, they thought I was a real shit disturber. And that's when I was threatened, I was told, because I wanted to publish it, it was a good study, and they said well if you publish it just forget about being promoted to associated professor. So I didn't.

A-Wow. So simply that they didn't like the fact that you were...stirring up dust.

E- A lot of my colleagues in this department told me to lay low. Norm Endler being one of them. Norm was a very traditional man. Yeah.

A- Yeah. despite the fact that the University at large, the senate, and so on supported that…

E- Yep, that came later.

A- Ok

E- This all happened before that. York is one of the leading universities in Canada in terms of status of women programs. You know we have the office of affirmative action, advisor of the status of women under the president, um, and we have sexual harassment. I mean, we have procedures in place to cover just about every area regarding women. Women students, women faculty, women cleaners, and in a way we're a model, not only for North America but for the rest of the world because I have colleagues in Sweden who actually come here to study our school of women's studies.

A- Interesting, to see how it's set up so they can implement it.

E- Yes, it's a model for the rest of the world, it's just fantastic. And psychology is one of the few disciplines that does not carry its weight when it comes to women's studies. Cause psychology is very traditional, and deep down, according to the men in this department, this is not needed, that attitude hasn't changed.

A- So in your view, psychology remains a discipline that is dominated by the male scientific point of view, yeah, so it makes it hard for psychology to have inroads?

E- Yes. And that's why I mean, if you look at how many courses are cross-listed with woman's studies, psychology is one of the least represented, they just don't see that's its necessary.

A- Can you describe, um I mean you were involved in establishing the first women's studies course, how did that all, how did that develop, where did that go from there. You mention the next year there were like 120 or 140 students. In terms of your involvement with that kind of curriculum where did that…..

E- Well once it got established I lost interest. Uh, because my interests were in

Psychology, not in social science, I only used social science to present the course. The next year um, I may or may not have taught in it, it was now part of the curriculum. Next my goal was to get a psychology of women's course here. But the most they would let me do was a seminar, but they didn't let me call it anything. If it was an advanced seminar in social psychology and I was allowed to teach a course in gender, but I was not allowed to have the word woman in it.

A- Cause that would be exclusive of men?

E- Yes. And it wasn't until 10 years later that I gave the first psychology of women class here. I was the only one teaching it. And then Sandra Pyke got involved.

A- So in that 10 year period there was pretty much nothing in psychology?

E- Just my seminar, and I was turning away students in droves because the limit was only 25 students, cause you, it was a seminar so you were just sitting, it wasn't a lecture course.

A- Yeah. Well tell me a little bit about your work with graduate students, and what kinds of experiences you have working with graduate students, what kinds of students you attract and what they've done that kind of thing. And sort of your own role in mentoring them and so on.

E- Well, I think particularly in those early years having a woman professor was pretty neat for women students. And by then psychology was moving towards a predominance of women students, it wasn't always like that. Um, in the past when I first got my PhD it was mainly men, so that changed. And then psychology became pretty well female dominated in terms of the students, but for most of them the only role models they had were male, so yeah, I think I, and Shake and Sandra Pyke, a lot of us were sought out because we were women. And because we were more, um, well I don't like speaking for other people, but for me I was more receptive to topics maybe outside the mainstream of psychology. Because of my own interests.

A- Would you say that those are topics that would appeal more to women? Or somehow attracted …

E- Yeah, yeah. A lot of interpersonal stuff, um, may or may not to do with marriage. But I've done lots of work in social support, and a lot of my students have done their dissertations in that area.

A- So you mention that after your abortion book, "On Abortion," um, you kind of lost direct interest in that topic. How did your research, where did your research move after that?

E- I did research on birth control, and I got a few SSHRC grants on motivation for birth control. But it was the time that the oral contraceptive came out so, um, my very first

study, my dependent variable was washed all to hell, because 80% of the students were on the pill (laughter) so, there goes the project! Cause everyone- it was the 60's and the 70's - everyone was getting on the bandwagon. So then I um, gradually got into the, I started working with Ron Burke in the area of high stress, I wrote my book *A World of Difference*, yeah, and that kind of brought together a lot of my interests in the work force and my work on the task force, and my work on abortion and of course the stuff on socialization, so I was able to kind of put that all down, and then I was ready to move on. And I got very interested in stress and social support, so that was the thread there. And we did some major studies on teachers, gender differences, stress and coping and teachers.

A- Yeah, I noticed that along that line of work still, there was still a gender thread, though a lot of that.

E- Yeah, well he was kind of a traditional organizational psychologist and I brought my interests in gender to it. And a lot of women in teaching, so I was able to get some nice, nice large Ns to do my analysis.

A- Can you describe how you started becoming more interested in the international psychological field?

E- Yeah I started going to meetings, and I realized that the psychology abroad was very different from Canadian psychology.

A- In what ways did you, would you characterize these differences?

E- Well, there were a lot of different methods of inquiry, qualitative data was seen as important, different, more history, more theory in Europe, there was more emphasis on theory as opposed to just data. I came from a heavily empirical background, you know, lots of control, and it just opened my eyes to the depths of psychology, and the possibilities that exist in terms of journals outside of JPSP, and American psychologists and Canadian psychologists and, and, and watching or telling graduate students lies and then debriefing them after. I mean that to me it became totally trivial, it didn't become important for me to publish in JPSP anymore.

A- Did it change your orientation to research?

E- Well I always march to my own drummer, obviously, and it really just confirms, here I found some support for the views that I had always had. I didn't feel I had much of a network here, so I have some very good friends in Australia, in Europe, in Germany in the far East, all over. People who, who have, who tend to be attracted to people with similar views. The Canadian scene didn't really appeal to me because it was so narrow…

A- Yeah, yeah…

E- So I needed, I needed a network that was broader than what I had here.

A- So beyond the underground symposium, had you been involved, did you continue to be involved with CPA at all after that time?

E- No.

A- No, okay. Um, alright does, at this point does anyone have anything that they want to ask more about?

Audience- Yeah.

A- Okay, you, you will ask the question and I'll jump back in.

E- (laughter)

Audience- Okay first of all, I think you're so cool, amazing…

E- (laughter) Thank you.

Audience- Like, wow.

E- It's an amazing life (laughter), my life in ten minutes.

Audience- I have a few questions about things that you said from the very beginning…

E- sure.

Audience- it's just something that I'm curious about. When you came from U of T to York, umm, just for my own curiosity, I was doing some research on anti-Semitism at U of T and what was happening at York at the time, so was there any of that, that was any part of your decision to move?

E- Well, um, yes and no. There was anti-Semitism when I was growing up, that was just part of my world. My brother had both legs broken by an anti-Semitic gang when we were children. We were called every name in the book. Um, U of T was highly anti-Semitic at the time, yeah, but, um, it didn't affect me directly because I stayed with, within psychology I didn't feel it, it might have been there but I didn't feel it. A lot of my professors were Jewish. When I came here I started hearing things about U of T that I wasn't aware of, but it was not a big issue at the time. I experienced more when I was growing up during the war, Canada was very anti-Semitic at the time. But, um, no, the thing that I felt was the anti-women thing, I-I it actually prevented me from living my life the way I wanted to.

Audience- Ok… I had a whole list of things in my head that I was trying to write messily. Oh, oh you said something about the man that responded to your talk, who said "you are assuming that men and women…"

E- should be, should be equal…

Audience- should be equal.

E- Mmmhmm.

Audience- Um, do you think, that, that mentality still exists…

E- Yes.

Audience- …today but is more implicit in some ways?

E- Yes and no. I think people are still struggling with the fact that women are so tremendously accomplished. The pendulum has shifted, so that now more women are in university than men, and more women are graduating with professional degrees than men, and there's a lot of people who are blaming feminists for this.

Audience- And do you see that in the department in some ways?

E- Oh yeah.

Audience- So how would you say, it was expressed?

E- Well because there's so many women in the department and so many feminists it's pretty guarded, but if you get them on a bad day it will come out.

Audience- Okay.

A- Some people talk about the um, feminization of psychology.

E- Yeah, which is really a discriminatory statement, what about the masculinization of psychology? I mean all of those books there say masculinization of psychology it's all pre-60's.

A- That's right, that's right, yeah.

E- I mean, in my book I talk about transcendence of gender roles. It would be nice if we could get away from those terms and talk about humanitarianism. There doesn't seem to be a lot of humanity in the world anymore, it's um, got lost, you know with all the violence and the lack of respect. I don't know - is it the masculine way that's done? Or is it just the selfish brutal lifestyle. You know when you read the papers and you realize that the values of love and compassion which we traditionally associate with women.

Those are the kind of values that make for, you know, self actualization, fulfillment, and yet, doesn't exist anywhere.

Audience- Would you say in your interviews, sorry for interrupting, um, you chose to go into psychology. How would you assess that choice?

E- Oh, I love my work. For me there's no line between work and pleasure. Because I just, I would rather be in psychology than do anything else. And I love going to meetings where all we talk about is psychology. Day in and day out. I remember once I went to a meeting in Israel, in Jerusalem in the 80's, before the uprising, and a group of us hired a plane and about 10 of us went up to a resort, I think, on the Black Sea, and ah, near Egypt. And we swam, and we ate and we talked and I remember we were talking psychology till 10 o'clock at night on the beach and it was still light out, and I remember thinking, this is really fun! (laughter) You know other people would think well going out and getting drunk at a club or whatever would be, but sitting there and sitting on a rock and looking out at the sea and talking about psychology with a bunch of international colleagues was just so neat. I remember it well.

A- So personally it's been a very good…

E- Yeah, because psychology is something that you can share with people all over the world. And it's just so interesting to meet people from other cultures who are doing what you're doing because it's different for them. There culture puts a different spin on it.

A- Well it seems that another one of the threads though your research has been cross-cultural. I mean you start off your post-doc with a cross-cultural study in communication, and you've become increasingly oriented around international organizations and so on and so forth. It seems like another strong theme for you would you say that was, that was the case?

E- Absolutely. And I think um, I think I mentioned to you, I'm president-elect of Health Psychology International, which is a division of the international association of applied psychology, which is the largest international organization of psychologists. And I really have aspirations to be president of that organization someday. Because I think, um, on a personal level it's very satisfying, but I also think this is one of the ways of increasing understanding among different countries. If sub-disciplines, you know, can co-operate, people from all different cultures can get together and agree we're going to do this at our meeting were gonna do that, we're gonna discuss this. It promotes some type of international understanding, plus it's very satisfying personally.

Audience- And I was going to, part of my earlier question was, in a way ah, I had kind of a hidden agenda which was to ask this question which is, what's your assessment of how psychology as a discipline has responded to certain major social issues? Do you think it's been effective…

E- No, not at all. No, I'm sorry to say, I think we've really been dragging our heels and I think if you compare us to other disciplines like sociology we have really, we've got a lot to learn and, um, I don't know why this is the case but we're very, very slow to respond. And I think it's, it's going to hurt us in the long run because the world is getting smaller. Ah, people want us to apply our knowledge and we're very reluctant to do so, which means other people are doing it and these people are typically untrained.

Audience- Right, right. So what would it take for psychologists and for psychology do you think, for it to become more responsive? Do you think there would have to be a shift in, at a theoretical level, a logical level?

E- Well, a lot of the way we do business and think has to do with the fact that we're so close to the States. So, Canadian psychology has always been modeling itself after the States, and the States is very narrow in terms of its approach. But I think, I think as a professor you can influence your students, and I think there are more and more of us who are opening other doors for our students, saying look, there is more to psychology than JPSP, that's one, one way to go, but it's not the be all and end all. We have these wonderful tools that we can apply to just about any problem, don't be afraid to do it because other people are doing it and they are not nearly as well trained as you. So I think professors, we are in a perfect position to influence our students.

A- Now you also have served recently here in the department as chair…

E- Yes.

A- How did that change or affect your perspective on, on York as a University, on the department, did it?

E- Oh, oh yes, this is a fantastic department. I think as chair you really come to realize how rich it is, how diverse, what an impact we have and what a potential impact we can have on the rest of the University by our sheer numbers and, I think, in terms of our contributions, our teaching contributions. We have more students, more classes than any other department. In terms of our research, we bring in hundreds of thousands of dollars in research and we also provide essential services, as in the two clinical areas. So I think we are vastly under-appreciated by the University. The Dean of Arts treats us just like another department within the Faculty of Arts, which isn't true because we contribute an awful lot more than most and we get back an awful lot less. And I don't think going the health root is necessarily the way to go. I think psychology is capable of being a faculty on its own.

A- Oh, okay. So that would be, would that be one of your recommendations on the future of the department?

E- Absolutely.

A- Yeah, yeah. So what are you seeing as some of the major, um, um, disadvantages to working here at York?

E- As a professor you mean or…

A- Yes, as a professor.

E- At York…

A- We've talked a lot about the advantages, now I want to see if, if, if you have any perceptions of there having been disadvantages, or, I don't know.

E- I think York is always in the shadow of U of T, that's probably hurt us and, you know most of us have had ties with U of T, for instance Lorna, Lorna Marsden our President um, comes from U of T, a lot of professors here are graduates of U of T. I think despite all our complaints with them we cannot help but be affected by their huge presence in the city and um, well Murray Ross wanted us to be separate and different in fact we're becoming more and more like them. And I think if we were ever to get a medical school it would severely hurt us in terms of the social sciences, because then we would be competing directly with U of T on their turf, and that would hurt us.

A- What do you see as having been the major or the most obvious changes? Let's talk first about the University level. What have been the biggest changes in the University since, since you've arrived?

E- Well obviously the size, it's grown enormously in a very, very short time but I think the way York sees itself has changed quite a bit and I think originally we were the new kid on the block, that was exciting, we were a real alternative to U of T because it was interdisciplinary, and I think we've lost that vision in the size. I think it's become bureaucratized, there are too many administrators, everyone is telling everyone else what to do. Enormous amounts of money are going to their salaries with the result that we're losing resources. We need full time people to replace out retirees, we're not getting them. It's a dangerous trend to have a department where more than fifty percent of your faculty are part-timers, because they don't have the sense of um, loyalty and responsibility that you have with full-time faculty members, that's hurting us. And um, also more and more of the administration are becoming more like um, just business executives and not academics, so the issues of the day that are really important to us, such as teaching and research are becoming less important.

Productivity, um, people that are evaluated by counting the number of publications that they do, which is really gross in many ways, and yet it's fast and you can quantify it and you can throw it in the computer. I think it's hurting us, cause what happened to the idea of scholarliness. And those are things that happen as you get big, you know when size becomes your priority and bringing in big bucks, so we're creating a two-tiered system in our department, those who bring in the big bucks and those who teach. Students lose out because the people bringing in the big bucks don't have to teach.

A- And what about changes in the student body. Have you noticed in the past thirty years…the changes in the student body?

E- Well the student body typically has been pretty consistent, in, in the undergraduates anyway, how they've been around the University, they tend to be first generation children of immigrants. For many of them going to University is really a big deal because they're the first ones in their family to go, and that makes York special. U of T has more generations of people going to U of T, so as a result we have less alumni, less wealthy alumni contributing to the University, which is why U of T has more money, one of the reasons. Um, but I think that has remained the same. I think generally speaking University education is not valued to the same extent as it was, because things have become so monetarily valued and so a lot of students who might have come to University are going into business, because they can make more money, and let's face it even a University professor on the best of days isn't going to be able to compete with a successful business person.

A- So in some ways the mentalities of the students coming in have changed to, to honor sort of more practical degrees…

E- Exactly, and they're reflecting the values of the day.

A- Right, right. What have you seen as the biggest changes within the Psychology Department?

E- Well there's more women and I think the diversity of interests, we have probably one of the most exciting departments in North America, certainly the largest. We're the largest psychology department in Canada, if not North America. I'm not going to say the world, but when I tell people in China how big our department is they gasp, and China has a billion people, so maybe we are the largest department in the world, I don't know, that's why I say we're large enough to be a faculty. We are larger than some Universities in Eastern Canada.

A- Wow, the department alone.

E- (laughing) The department alone, it really blows your mind, because we have, what, over a hundred full-time faculty, over two hundred and twenty five graduate students, you know it's incredible. So the size, the diversity, um, it's a pretty impressive, just about every area of psychology is represented here.

A- Yeah, yeah. Do you see any disadvantages to being so big as a department?

E- Yeah of course, I don't think we're all interested in the same thing. I think that's why we need a faculty, where we can actually have resources devoted to specific areas. You know, I think you as history and theory would have different needs and want different resources than maybe I, as a health psychologist. I don't see how a Health Faculty is

going to help us, if anything I see it's going to divide our department because neither one fits into health. So, as I see it down the road there is going to be a two-tiered system, those who do health and those who don't and the ones who do health are going to get more resources because of the Health Faculty. I'm also worried about the kind of students we attract, when they see health, what about those who are interested in history and theory, they won't even know that we're… I don't know why it's being forced down our throats actually.

A- Yeah, yeah. Well you mentioned this two-tiered system and the possibility or some would even say probability that this will develop. Um, when you started at York, um, what was the attitude towards the appropriate balance between teaching and research, for faculty members? Do you remember?

E- Oh, of course, um, teaching was seen as most important and then you got a big shock when you came up for promotion, because nobody really cared that you were the best teacher in the department, if you hadn't published enough. That has been part of psychology for years, research is basically valued much more than teaching, it always has been. It expresses itself in different ways.

A- So you got mixed messages actually when you started out?

E- Yes, and I have colleagues who were excellent teachers who never got promoted, who to this day are very, very bitter because they were superb teachers, but that won't get you promoted, not in psychology. Well actually it goes beyond the department, it's in the Senate document. To be a full professor you have to be acknowledged internationally as contributing to your field beyond the University.

A- Right, right and teaching won't get you that.

E- No.

A- Okay, um, I have some sort of winding up questions, but before I do that, does anybody else want to jump in?

Audience- Yes, just out of curiosity like what do you think if there's um, an area of feminist psychology, if there's a psychology of women course, which I've TA'ed several times now, but the course that I TA'ed, it was some issues that dealt with psychology and women but it wasn't feminist…

E- Right…

Audience- in such a department, such a big department like ours, and then in a University like York, it was just so women-forward, it was such a strong feminist um, energy, why isn't there this area….

E- Well I think that's an excellent question, I think it gets back to the question of advocacy vs. scholarship and I think psychology has always prided itself in not being "biased" in quotation marks and I've written some papers on this, but psychology basically doesn't recognize its own bias, or alternatively they don't acknowledge that its bias is in fact a bias, but rather a given, and so they would argue that feminism is a bias and it's a bias against men. And that's why they feel that you know, research should be scientific and of course we all know that no scientific research is totally unbiased, that when you're stating your hypothesis you're stating your bias. But, because of psychology's hang up, and I call it physics envy, their hang up on being scientific, they discredit the feminist perspective and they say well it's not just the feminist perspective, it's any perspective that doesn't see the data objectively and that's part of, that's not a York thing, that's a discipline thing.

And in fact I've seen women not be promoted because they were known as feminist psychologists, not only in Canada but in other parts of the world, they were seen as a threat to the establishment. The word feminism is very scary to some people, to women as well as men. To men it's hairy broads that want to take over the world; ball breakers and to women it's, oh she's just a lesbian, so I mean it's, the word feminism it's had a lot of negative connotations. So the majority of women today don't want to be called feminists although they believe in equality, they believe in equal rights for men and women, they believe, you know in all of that but just don't call them feminists.

Audience- So after having said that what kind of advice would you give to a young feminist psychologist who's doing her research in feminist psychology for example?

A- As she tries to make her way through the psychology kind of system, yeah.

E- I hope you're strong, because you will be constantly called on to defend yourself. Now you know you can go two ways. You can try to get your degree based on your views, or you can wait to get your degree and then express your views. What I would worry about is to what extent it's going to slow you down or turn people against you because of their suspiciousness of your lack of scientific rigor, so that's the only advice I would give you. Be certain of what you are doing. I don't think things have changed that much over the years, this, this suspicion of feminism, not so much in other departments, but in psychology and then, you know to be the devil's advocate you might say well I guess any bias in psychology that detracts from the scientific would be regarded with suspicion. But I don't happen to believe that, I think feminism in particular is very suspect and I've experienced it in many, many ways. I've sent articles in where I've used words and I've been, and I've had papers rejected because I've used feminist jargon, that was far beyond York University, it's part of our discipline sort of a conservative, suspicious attitude that, you know, you have to been a scientist through and through, a male scientist (laughing).

A- Right, a particular kind of scientist too.

E- Yeah, exactly.

A- Yeah, yeah, yeah.

E- So in that way I don't think things have changed very much, watch your back (laughter).

A- Would you consider the psychology of women to be feminist at this point? The field?

E- Definitely! Well because it's saying women are different from men and that women have different interests, different concerns, different socialization, um, context is different for women in that you cannot understand women's behaviour outside of context.

A- Right, right. I see that as one of the most important contributions of feminist psychologists.

E- The context thing

A- The re-emphasis, refocus or just focus or concentration on context.

E- Yeah, because modern psychology sees context as noise and in psychology of women we see context as defining, you know that there is an interplay between the context and the individual.

A- Well Esther let me ask you, um, first of all in terms of, for the purposes of establishing a departmental oral history, is there anything that I haven't asked you about, in terms of the history of the department, that would be important to have.

E- Well I think the um, important thing for a faculty member is to feel welcome, and when I was first hired at York my colleagues went off to have lunch together and I had lunch with the secretaries and I enjoyed the secretaries company very much, but what I didn't enjoy was being demoted in their eyes.

A- And this is, I assume along gender lines?

E- Yes, yes. And a lot of the secretaries, the staff here feel underappreciated, they feel that they are not appreciated firstly because they are women and secondly because they don't have PhDs. So when I was chair I made a special effort to honor the staff in a lot of ways and they loved it. They are very important to this University, but I think if you're a female academic and professor and a PhD, you want to be accepted into the group. I think we've moved in that and maybe that's not so much an issue now.

A- That actually reminds me, we should definitely get an oral history with Ann Pestano for her perception on the department and the development over the years.

E- Oh yeah, that's an excellent idea, yeah and Connie [Scalzullo] too.

A- Well just finally, on the up and up, what do you see as the major challenges facing psychology in the next ah, in the next little while?

E- Well I think that this department is at a really important crossroads and I would really like to see more thought and planning going into the next step and, and that if we do go into the Health Faculty that a lot of the issues we discussed are on the table and psychology makes sure it gets its share of the resources. Because we have a fantastic department, but unless we have the resources to, to keep things going, to replace people as we lose retirees, I'm afraid all the work that's been done might be, might unravel, so I'm hoping that will be part of the planning in the future.

A-Alright, well thank you very much.

E- Thank you, it's a pleasure talking to you.

A- We really appreciate your time…

E- Oh, I appreciate talking to you…