Psychology's Feminist Voices Oral History Project

Interview with Lisa Serbin

Interviewed by Laura Ball & Kelli Vaughn-Blount
Montreal, QC
June 13, 2009

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LS – Lisa Serbin, interview participant
LB – Laura Ball, interviewer
KVB – Kelli Vaughn-Blount, interviewer

LS - My name is Lisa Serbin, and I was born in New York City, September 18, 1946.

LB – Wonderful. Thank you. This is the first question we ask everybody: tell me about the emergence or development of your feminist identity [and] how that came about for you. It's a very broad question.

LS - I thought you were going to ask me about something more psychological [laughing]. Feminist identity. Okay. Well, I can and it doesn't have all that much to do with psychology, although I wish I could say that it does. The first feminist psychologist that I ever…actually, there are two, three actually that I ran into before I really knew anything about feminism but I read their work and it wasn't until a little bit later that I put two and two together, when I had also learned something about feminism. The first was Leta S. Hollingworth. She was just this brilliant woman who studied gender and gender roles and all kinds of contexts, among other things, and it's kind of forgotten. I happened to read some of her pieces as an undergraduate in a readings collection and I thought that it was just brilliant. The piece that I read that made a huge impression on me before, as I said, I even got into this field, was called something like Leta S. Hollingworth, published in the '30s I believe, and it was something like "Social forces that lead to gender segregation among the feebleminded" or something like that.

The whole idea was that social roles made a difference [in that] there are far more men than women in institutions, specifically for the retarded at that time. [This is in] residential institutions, [and we're] talking about the 1930s. She was guessing that that was because, this was her hypothesis (and she proved it pretty well with an awful a lot of data and very little statistics at that time; means and correlations were all she had), that, in fact, it was roles that made the difference for a lot of people that women of low IQ. [They] were able to sort of blend into society in ways [such] as nurse maids, scullery maids, as whatever menial kinds of things, but domestic kinds of activities, or [were] married, [and] men didn't have [these] options. There was much more pressure on men to be working out in the world, and that was much harder for "feebleminded" individuals to do. So the men ended up being complete failures and the women just kind of blended in. That was her hypothesis and she showed it with all kinds of data about who was where, and where these people came from and what the ratios were in different

institutions and she just documented this thing. Now of course we know now, and I think she certainly suspected that some of this sex ratio among the retarded had to with genetic kinds of things because there's that issue of two X chromosomes versus one X chromosome that makes a difference and we know that men outnumbered women in a lot of these genetic deficiency syndromes. When it comes to this, sort of, mild to moderate mental retardation, there's no clear genetic link. I think her hypothesis still holds, so I thought she was absolutely brilliant when I read this paper and I never heard of her before or after. I looked her up not too long ago and she also published on the gifted and that's the work that is much better known but this particular paper on gender made such an impact on me. [I thought] "Oh, so that's how social roles can influence something so important as to whether you get labelled feebleminded and institutionalized or not." That just made a huge impact on me. So I was like this junior in college or something when I read that and that really did have a great impact.

About the same thing I read Eleanor Maccoby's first book called "Psychology of Sex Differences," and that made a big impression on me too. I read all the chapters and stuff. I never thought I would ever work in that area because the conclusion I came to after reading that book was that there are lots of sex difference in almost anything you could mention, but they're small and [have] small mean differences with huge standard deviations and lots of overlap, and besides they're probably all genetic so why should anybody care about that stuff? So that was maybe in 1966 when I read that. So anyway, I read it, I was interested in reading it, but I came away saying, "I don't know why anybody would want to study that; they must be obsessional or something."

KVB - We just emailed Eleanor two weeks ago. She didn't think that was where she was going either.

LS - I am delighted that she answered you and was able to…that's wonderful.

KVB - She participated on a panel actually with us and Alexandra Rutherford and Anne Treisman at APS [Association for Psychological Science] a couple weeks ago and she was fabulous .

LS - I bet she was.

KVB - We recorded it.

LS - I want to see that.

KVB - She's still spunky, she's still going.

LS - She is well into her 90s.

KVB – Yeah, she's 93. I have an audio recording coming that I will send you a copy of. We've got an interview with her as well that will be on the website. She's fabulous but she didn't really know where she was going with that either.

LS - Well she kind of thought, "Done that, been there, go onto something else," was what she told me. You know, she left that. I have several friends who studied with her right after that book came out, or even while that book was being published, who did not really know that Eleanor was involved in gender or sex differences or anything. They were doing other things. One of them was Sally Sternglanz and she was doing infant ethology with Eleanor and the other is Anna Beth Doyle who works with me at Concordia. She was another Maccoby graduate and what the heck did she do? [I think she did] parent-child relations or something. So Eleanor worked in so many fields she kind of went "Oh been there, done that. I have written the book on that subject so let's move on to something else." Then of course the feminist movement hit and people were trying to get her to talk about gender and she was like "Oh I have done that." So she got back into it, and of course started working with Carol Jacklin and that was the stage at which I met both of them.

KVB - Interesting.

LS - Yeah. I met them at an AAAS meeting which not something I normally go to, American Association of the Advancement of Science. I was a graduate student and I had just finished writing my dissertation. I hadn't published it yet and I saw that they were going to do a panel on sex differences in children's behaviour. This was like, "Really? Somebody's going to talk about that? I want to go." So I drove down to Washington and went just for the conference. It was a three hour, full morning panel that they had organized and it was brilliant. That was where I introduced myself to Eleanor Maccoby. Of course, she asked me about what I was doing and I told her about my dissertation and she told me "I want a copy of that." [I told her,] "I have not submitted it yet, you want a copy of my dissertation?" So she was probably the first person I sent a copy of it to.

The fun thing was, Sally Sternglanz was her student [and] was on my committee at Stony Brook. So I started to get repeated requests for copies of it from people at Stanford and I said, "You know they have Xerox machines at Stanford. What is going on?" She said, "Well, it's good sign! It's good sign! So just tell them you are delighted there's so much interest." Because I think that study was one of the few, was probably the first observational study on differential treatment of boys and girls in classroom settings. I know there had been others with parents, but I chose to use classroom settings. Eleanor was very interested in that. Of course, she totally disagreed with my interpretation of the data. [She] completely [disagreed]. So I was, kind of, not on her good side for a while, though she wanted everything I could send her [in terms] of data. We reconciled because I was coming from a very behaviourist point of view and of course she was definitely not.

But we sorted all that out eventually and we became very, very good friends. I sort of regard her as my academic grandmother or something. Eleanor, if you don't know this about her, she has students, and students of students, and people she has kind of taken on because she likes them, all over the world that she just stays in touch with and mentors and she is just amazing. She has got this extended family. Some of the people are really well known and nobody realizes that they were Eleanor's students at this point. Tiffany Field is one, the infancy person, **Marian Sigmam,** also infancy, is a Maccoby student. Who are some of the really famous ones? Oh, there are people in daycare, people in communications, you name it and they are really high profile. Oh! Mary Rothbart, on attachment, is an Eleanor Maccoby student. So this is her legacy, really. I'm not officially part of her legacy, but she certainly helped me in terms of understanding strategies, issues and things and invited me to do things. I am not one of her former students but I count myself as one of her extended family.

LB – If you don't mind, I'd just like to turn it back to you for a bit. So what was it that actually attracted you to going into psychology?

LS - Oh, psychology? Well, it was a very good undergraduate course. I really had no intention [of going into it]. I was a history major, [which is] why I am interested in your project. It wasn't until my second year (it was a four year American program) that I actually took a psychology course and I took it to meet my science requirement as it was offered in the physical science category because it was a lab course and I loved it! And I said, "Oh the hell with it. This is great stuff. I am going into psychology." But it had nothing to do with gender. As I said, my response to Eleanor's book was "Oh well that's fine. Who would ever want to study that?" So that was how I got [into it]. I just loved the course. I am still in touch with the course instructor. He is retired now. His name is Bill Wiest and this was at Reed College. And he just gave a brilliant course with his colleagues. The whole department staffed that course, and it was just wonderful. I had a terrific time exploring all this stuff. It was just because I liked it, [and there was] no other reason. The history courses were fine but they were exactly what I expected. This stuff was really exciting. It was all new, laboratory based and it was very behavioural so we were right in beginning of the development of the behaviour therapy and behaviour modification stuff. They had all these case studies that we would read about, taking these incredibly damaged children and getting [them] to be functional so they wouldn't bang their heads on the walls and stuff. That's what was going on at that time, and that's what we were reading. It was just very exciting, the idea that you could actually use psychological principles to intervene and change people's lives in such an obvious, immediate and documented way, especially kids who were so incredibly disabled. It was just a really powerful, powerful idea.

KVB - Could you say a little bit, because you were talking about this time at Reed, because you were there at a very interesting point. Reed also has a little bit of reputation of being very women friendly. Would like to tell us a little bit about what the environment was like during those years?

LS - I think that was after my time because I left Reed in ‘68 and that was before things kind of heated up. I will tell you this about Reed College: In the mid ‘70s, I was contacted by the NOVA series at PBS [Public Broadcasting Service]. They were going to do a documentary on sex roles and kids and where they come from. NOVA being NOVA, they wanted to interview all different labs. Within an hour they visited 6 labs and different parts of the country and interviewed anybody who could follow this. I think there were 6 groups that they interviewed and among those groups, there was one that I was working in with Jane Connor at that time. There was Eleanor Maccoby and Carol Jacklin, and there was Jeanne Block and Jack Block. There are on that film, in fact, half the film was devoted to a case study of one of their families. It happens that Eleanor, Jeanne and I are all Reed’s alums and all in different eras. We didn’t overlap at all. There was first Eleanor, then Jeanne, then me. It was a pure coincidence that of this film, three of the six people they focused on were Reed graduates. When I saw that I thought, “You know, that is amazing!” So it does say something about Reed College. I am not sure what it says about Reed. It wasn’t really a feminist environment because feminism was not really an active force. I think it attracts people who are very inquisitive and outspoken maybe. The word that the college uses and doesn’t like is quirky and I think they have nastier words that they use. It is sort of unconventional and so forth. So it has always had that reputation.

I don’t know how Jeanne Block got there because she died just shortly after I met her. I know Eleanor got there purely by coincidence. She was married to somebody and she was from the Portland area. They were stuck there for a while. When Nate Maccoby graduated from Reed, he went on to do graduate work at Harvard, so she tagged along with him to graduate school at Harvard. So, it was not because she wanted to go to Reed. But I think for Jeanne and myself, it was very much a choice. Eleanor still loves to talk about herself as Reed Alum. She has done all kinds of graduation speeches for them and she’s still very attached to the place. So I think it’s just that the students are treated as junior colleagues by the faculty and not as whatever else. And it is very appealing to a lot of women. The ratio was actually more men to women because they had very heavy science concentration and the hard sciences were attracting more men. I think they still do. But I don’t know what the gender balance at Reed is, it might be more like 50-50 now. I don’t think it’s more women than men, though. I don’t think it’s ever tipped in that direction because they have the heavy chemistry, physics and math specialities and again those draw more men than women. It does get a lot of women and it does get a lot of outspoken people and strong political opinions. It was not feminism when I was there. The anti-Vietnam movement was very, very strong and we had all kinds of incidents and women were always in the forefront of that. The feminist stuff didn’t really explode until after I had left Reed. Reed almost tanked at that point, not because of feminism but there were a lot divisions, particularly racial issues: the issue of a black studies curriculum split the faculty, and there were boycotts and riots and flooding of the registrar’s office. I couldn’t get my transcript for years. That was more the issue of the black studies program and when that settled down, which it eventually did, they did introduced black studies.

LB - You were at Stony Brook when all this started happening?

LS - That's right. I was at Stony Brook when the Vietnam riots really peaked and then the feminist movement began.

LB - So what was that like, being at Stony Brook while this was happening?

LS - Well, Kent State happened my first year at Stony Brook and like everywhere else, classes were cancelled and there were endless meetings of the faculty senate and students were boycotting classes and stuff like that. We barely got our grades in. I mean, we almost lost our first year. It would not have unusual if we had. Eventually there was some compromise between the students and the faculty. There was no violence on our campus. They had already been shaken up, they had all kinds of drug scandals and raids two years earlier, before I got there. They were very wary. Even the students knew that if it got too much out of hand their education would be in jeopardy. So there were no riots at Stony Brook. It was relatively peaceful on campuses. Columbia shut down, all kinds of places shut up but Stony Brook continued to limp along. There were all these public meetings and I think they did, in fact, dump our grades for the first year. The students were all saying, "We've been in all these meetings and we've got these bad grades so just give us pass/fail." The faculty said, "Alright! We'll give you pass/fail if that's what you want!" But that's about as far as it went at Stony Brook.

KVB - What was it like for you coming in? We have to forewarn [you], were talking to Ian last night...

LS - Ian was there at the same time. He was a class ahead of me.

KVB - You were only in third year coming in? [You were the] third group coming in, in the psychology department? What was it like walking into that, not only being a female scholar going into graduate school…

LS - Oh you want to hear about that!

KVB - Yeah! I want to hear because it sounded like it was very interesting.

LS - It was, but Ian could probably give you the hottest part of the story because he was always on the barricades and I was not. I was just trying to get my work done. But there are two things I'll mention about Stony Brook. The first one being interactions with the faculty my first year, (about this issue of women in the department and so forth) and the second being the revived feminist movement. I am not talking about the voting rights but the 1960s and 1970s happened sort of during my third year there. So before that, there were no women on the faculty, let's start with that. [There was] not one when I arrived, and there were, like, twenty faculty. That was a little weird but my class had a lot of women in it because of the change in the draft laws that year. So the graduate school exemption from the draft was lifted and everybody, all males, were put into the lottery. The result was that males stopped applying to graduate schools. They

flooded the medical, dental, and religious schools [with applications]. They did not know what to do with it and they didn't apply in the traditional PhD areas. So for the first time, Stony Brook, like many other places, had an overwhelming number of female applicants and they did not know what to do with this. They hadn't a clue.

So my class had 9 students in it - 4 men and 5 women - and this was unheard of. The other classes previously had 1 or 2 women in them. That was just in clinical and I think outside of clinical I don't really know what the ratios were. I heard stories from the one or two women in classes ahead of us. When they had come for their interviews, (they were interviewing everybody at that time, and they still do), she was asked all kinds of questions about whether she was planning a family or expecting to have children. What they were looking for of course whether she was going to drop out of school or whether she was going to get her degree and never work because it's a professional degree. I think it mirrored the things that went on in medical schools at that time, at law schools or any of the other professional schools. Women were just grilled about what their future plans were. All that became illegal a few years later. In fact, it was probably illegal then but they weren't enforcing that law. So it was probably already illegal but it wasn't enforced that you couldn't do that. So they were interviewing, asking every woman who came into the faculty or graduate student applicant about what their future plans were. And if she said, "Well, I plan to marry and have four children!" then they would say, "Well, that's nice! Have a nice life! Bye!" And they would actually try to infer this and there was some stress interviewing, [and they were] going, "Well, you are married and you are going to graduate school. How are you going to balance that? What are your plans?" There was a lot of that and I heard more advanced students. I never experienced that, probably because that year, they were overwhelmed with female applicants or possibly because I had a very strong record and they clearly wanted me to come and probably knew that these kinds of questions were not going to be welcomed. For whatever reason, I didn't experience that.

The first year, I was driving with some of my classmates and the course instructor to an assessment practicum to a local hospital. We testing kids and this man, who I will not name (I think he's still on faculty), went off on a big thing about admission strategies and how classes had been composed and he said, "Well, you know, you all really deserve to be here- the women and the men. You know, even though there are more women in this class than men, that's just a reflection of the ratio of applications but we were extremely hard on the female applicants. They had to be much better than the male applicants before we'd admit them! We know that life is much harder for the women in the professions. They have two roles that they have to balance and it's very hard for them. Therefore, we know that they have to be much more motivated and much smarter and have much higher grades in order to pull it off. It's easier for men, who have a wife at home to support them. Women are never going have that kind of support."

He thought he was making, from his view, a feminist statement. I don't think he thought there was anything bad about what he was saying. You know in the car we were all sitting there, I don't think there were any men in the car with us, we were just three women and this instructor,

we were sitting there with our jaws dropped and he was just rattling on about this admissions things and how we have to cope with this fact that we have this overwhelming number of women applying because of the draft laws and we were just shocked. I mean it had never occurred to any of us that we had to meet a higher bar than men did to get admitted and he was just totally open about it and didn't see anything wrong with it. As I said, it was already illegal but it wasn't being enforced. So that sort of was the first thing that [made me think], "Oh my God!" I certainly had never experienced anything like that at Reed. This wouldn't have been conceivable.

Then it kind of all came out in maybe 1970s, I think they started to organize, the women's movement began. There was consciousness raising groups on campus and some friends were involved and then I got involved. It was really very important to me and we went to weekly meetings for a while, with people from different departments. I got to meet women from the chemistry department, physics department and it was great. Some of them are still friends. So, we all gave each other a lot of support and I think our respective spouses, boyfriends, etcetera (that many of us had), were quite threatened by this activity because once a week we'd go off to some meeting that they weren't invited to or it might be, God forbid, in our house and they have to clear out tonight as the consciousness raising group is coming! "Go bowling dear! Go play poker!" [Everyone laughs].

So that was really quite a supportive and eye-opening thing. It was in that context that I decided to work in this field because I was working on a very conventional sort of a problem in terms of Motivational Developmental Theory and reward systems with kids. I was working with **Helly Rackland** who is quite a prominent person in this area - sort of human motivation economics and development perspective and it was interesting stuff. But I was sitting in a nursery school, waiting for kids to be free from whatever activities they were doing so I could some testing with this paradigm on motivational stuff. It was all very esoteric and kind of mathematical but you could do it with little kids. We used a pinball machine and the number of balls of course had to do with reinforcement and future versus present. The kids loved it. I had no ethical qualms about it and kids had a blast on this paradigm so this was no hardship. But I am waiting for the kids to be free from some group activity and I am watching and they are in the classroom. I think I did the keynote for the gender development conference last year, which was really quite a treat to be asked to do that, the one in San Francisco in April. I told this story and it got quite a response from the audience. [Anyway], I'm watching the kids and it's Easter time and the teacher is playing the piano and because there were forty kids in the room and they didn't want a riot, they divided the group in half so that one group could get up and dance while the other group sat and watched. Of course gender was the way they divided the groups as each kids knew what sex they were so it was easier to get half of them up and keep the other half sitting. So the boys went first and the teacher played 'Here comes Peter Cottontail' and they were suppose to hop and they did. They were hopping around the room and they had great old time and when they finished they sat down. Then it was the girls' turn to get up and the teacher starts to play 'In your Easter Bonnet,' you know the Easter parade song? [laughs] They were supposed to have an Easter parade in their

hats and their white gloves. So they got up there and they are skipping along singing 'Easter Bonnet' and they are all really happy. Then the teacher stops them and says, "Ladies, is that the way we have an Easter parade? You are supposed to be lady-like and elegant and you are not suppose to make huge amounts of noise stomping your feet!" They were being very noisy, I have to say, it always is, twenty little girls dancing around a room on a wooden floor. That's going to be noisy! So they all went, "Oh, Okay!" So she starts again and goes through the whole song again. And this time they are tiptoeing around and pretending they are at a tea-party. So this ends and the girls sit down and a little boy raises his hand and goes, "Teacher, this isn't fair!" and the teacher goes, "What isn't fair?" He says, "The girls got to go twice!" [Everyone laughs] So she says, "Okay, it wasn't fair. You guys get to go twice too." So the boys get and sure enough she plays 'Here Comes Peter Cottontail' again, and they hop around the room, making a perfect riot and having a blast and then they sit down and that's kind of the end of the incident. I just went home and I was knocked out by this. I said, "What the hell are they teaching these kids?!" You know it's really extraordinary and nobody even commented on it or protested or anything. It was just the way it was and the teachers clearly thought they were doing what was their job. Turns out now that daycare and nursery schools are a real hotbed of gender socialization. I discovered that, and I just thought about that incident for weeks afterwards, while I was collecting my data from the pinball machines and I thought this is more exciting than pinball machines. Something was going on here.

LB - So with this all male faculty, what was the reception to your dissertation proposal to examine these roles?

LS - First of all, the idea of doing something naturalistic in a classroom was alien. It was all experimental paradigms. I should tell you that my dissertation was published in I think 1973 in *Child Development*. It was quarterly at that time and I think there were 80 articles over the course of the year or something. I think it was one of three articles that was done in naturalistic settings and the only one in that quarterly volume. Everything else was questionnaire or lab paradigm.

KVB - Wow.

LS - So that just changed. I mean within 5 years, that had completely changed in the discipline. Everybody was doing observational studies. But that was the first in this field, certainly, and it was quantitative. I used the behaviourist methodology. You were in classrooms studying how many times a kid hits other people or jumped out of their seats and stuff. I did all that. So I could use that quantitative methodology, but I could apply it to the real contingencies going on in children's lives. It was kind of a breakthrough, I thought. The fact [is] that they first of all had a real problem with the methodology, more than the topic. They had no problem with the idea that we could demonstrate how teachers were reinforcing aggressive behaviour in boys and reducing it in girls, or encouraging girls to be dependant. They had no trouble with that. What they had a problem with was that I wasn't manipulating anything. I was just going in and recording.

Dan O'Leary was my advisor, and I had known him more personally than my clinical supervisor, and he knew all this methodology about recording behaviour in classrooms, so that's why I asked him. He's a pretty open minded person, so he said oh boy, if we could nail where this aggressive behaviour that continues in classrooms is coming from, that would be really kind of exciting. He didn't care much about boys and girls, but he though that idea was neat. So he was my advisor, and Sally Sternglanz (the Eleanor Maccoby student who was the ethologist), was just interested in the topic, so she encouraged me. So really, the two of them were my co-supervisors. And that's how it happened, and that's how I got introduced to Eleanor.

Once I started doing that stuff, they just seemed to be so many things. At first, I just thought of myself as just documenting what was happening to children, so the first few studies were just that. We had the teachers, then the second study that I did with Sally was a documentation of gender roles in kid's television shows. We got the top ten most popular kiddy shows, and we videotaped them. We just had gotten the videotape methodology. We used the old reel to reel things, and we taped them right off the television set through the airwaves at that time. [There were] no cables. [On] Saturday mornings, Sally and I would get up at 6 am to tape these programs, which is when they showed them. We would get five episodes of each show and we would score the character's behaviours if they were children. And we of course found huge sex differences and the scripting they were doing for male and female characters, and we published that in Developmental Psychology. Again, I think it was probably one of the first naturalistic studies of kids television that they ever published, but there had been other naturalistic studies, and those papers had already appeared on classrooms and so forth at that time.

That's kind of how I got into it and how I stayed into it. We did the kids TV, its always been an interest of mine, and still is. In fact, I got asked this morning, just before we met here, to work on the CPA media statement that's going to be a release for the public policy committee that's going to be on advertising to children, so I feel like I'm back in old-home week. The original impetus was going to be on obesity and nutrition, like junk food, which is very familiar of course. But, the committee just voted to expand that to violence, so we're going to be going after stuff aimed at adolescents, [such as] video games, violent video games, and action movies and stuff like that, advertising. [Things] pitched not just at the little kids, but also at the teenagers, and I think that we will see if the CPA board agrees to go forward with it. I gather it's controversial, but I got handed the job of putting that together, apparently because I published in the area of kid's television thirty years ago. They say that you have the expertise, Lisa, and nobody else has worked on children's television. I said, "Alright, [but] it's a little rusty."

It's been a lifelong, and career long interest for me, and then we also started getting into experimental studies because you could demonstrate that something was going on, but you never knew what was causing what. We started doing, essentially, classroom management studies using behavioural techniques to try to reverse some of the things that we were seeing. So one of the patterns we had observed was that there was very little cross-sex cooperative play or very little cross-sex play of any sort. It was gender segregated, but what there was, was more parallel

play. Of course, developmentalists think cooperative play is a higher level for pre-schoolers. So, we started a very simple study where we had the teachers comment on and reinforce with praise, boys and girls working together. Then the rates would go sky-high. We did it [in] classroom after classroom, and then we would take the manipulation out and tell the teacher to start ignoring it, and sure enough, they would go back. So Eleanor Maccoby thought this study was really interesting and she used it in all of her slide presentations after we published it in Child Development. She thought it proved that gender segregation is genetically based and natural law, or whatever is maintaining it, learning at home, social learning, whatever it is, its not easy to change. You can change it, but it goes right back as soon as you stop putting these artificial constraints on it. And of course, we had the opposite interpretation which was that this is perfect data that shows that when a contingency is in place, children respond to it, and when a different contingency is in place, when you take that out, they stop. So the phenomenon is totally under social reinforcement control. We could go back and forth with these kids; it was very easy to do. Kids are so responsive. You know, all the teachers has to say is, "Oh, John and Cathy and building a beautiful tower and the terrific tower with the blocks over there", and suddenly everybody is over there building towers with blocks. So, it's so powerful, but you can interpret it in two opposite ways and Eleanor and I were really at odds in the press actually, about what this meant for a while. We still argue about it for fun, but I think we've reconciled that.

KVB - I'm curious, because you obviously had a passion for the children studies at the time, and you had sort of this lead-in with Eleanor in the few years before the bits of success in the field, but at the period that you're coming out of school, around '73…

LS - My degree is, I think '72 officially. But that's a little misleading because I defended and submitted in November or December of '72, and then the graduation was in '73, so it was, I think a year ahead in terms of what was happening historically.

KVB – Well, in that year, you're in kind of an interesting place historically in that, because you've got the second wave of feminist movements sort of rolling up, but you've also got within psychology, and APA and division 35 forms the year you're graduating or that you're really coming into it…

LS - I think I was really kind of the charter members of division 35, I may have been. I wasn't their first fellow, but I was in the first group, I think.

KVB - It's such an interesting place, yet here you are, as they are arguing against some of these psychologies pushed women into these traditional parts, and you've studied under clinical, developmental work, and you studied children.

LS - That's right.

KVB - How did you feel embraced by the psychology community during this period of time, [or

by] the females of the psychology community?

LS - Oh ok, that's a complicated question, and you'd do better to ask Eleanor about that because she was right in the academic forefront. I was just a lowly graduate student, so I wasn't all that aware of it, but she very much was. I think there was a radical change because there had always been women in academia and psychology. But Eleanor will talk about this, I'm not talking about her personally, but she'll say, "Well we all know about the queen bee syndrome." Women used to be on faculties, but they were expected to be more sexist than the men. [They were expected to be] more critical of other women, more hard-nosed about the quality of the research. They weren't supposed to be all gushy and love little kids and stuff like that If anything, they had to be more severe and stern and stay away from infancy research just to prove that they were real scientists. The men could do infancy research, [but] the women weren't supposed to. She remembers all that, and I don't know if she talked to you about that, but she will if you ask her because she's told me all about what that was like. She fought a lot of that because they didn't want women with children on their faculty, and this really was some very nasty stuff. But it wasn't just psychology, I mean my own mother in the '50s was a school teacher, and at that time, when you got married, you were expected to resign from being a school teacher. Of course, if you didn't then, you were supposed to resign when you had children. So she didn't do that, she had to lie. She never told the school board about her marriage. I remember her working under her maiden name because the board didn't know she was married. She would have been fired. So that's the atmosphere in the '50s, and that's when Eleanor was being hired at Stanford. It was many years before they gave her a regular appointment, many, many years. That's her story. What do I remember from the 70s?

KVB - I'm just wondering if you ever felt that the environment, when you were coming into it, you were an early career professional at that point, did you feel like you were getting that community as well, that you've been getting from Stony Brook?

LS - Stony Brook was fabulous because we had women studies just introduced, we had Sally Sternglanz, my friend, [who] was teaching in women studies. It was really a very strong community and they loved the idea that we could lead, the idea that we could be so multidisciplinary. We would have people from the arts in there, along with people from the sciences, it was just great. We actually could communicate and we had things to offer each other and I wanted to teach in women studies. Sally advised me against it because she said, "Look, you can get a job in psychology and you're going to have a lot more career security. Plus, I think you'll have more impact on the mainstream if you stay in psychology." And she was probably right in terms of who was going to read the stuff and react to it. So I stayed in psychology and I was trained as a psychologist. I couldn't see being thrown out of my discipline because I was interested in this topic.

I started applying for jobs and I certainly ran into some very strange things. I won't tell you too many of those stories. But the job I ended up taking was at State University of New York (now

called Binghamton University so they could get more money from their alumni. I believe that's the reason). I think I was the first woman that they hired, or I think they hired two women that year out of the faculty of twenty. So myself and Jane Connor were hired at the same time. They were very leery about hiring women, but they were committed to getting the best candidates. Jane and I both had extraordinary CV issues from the University of Wisconsin. I was at Stony Brook and I had published a few papers, which at that point it was pretty unusual for applicants in clinical psychology department. I won't say it still is, but at that time, the modal number of publications for a clinical psychologist, post graduate or at any point in their careers, is zero. That's the APA statistic and I don't think it has changed much. So finding anyone who wanted to do research and teach a clinical program was unusual. So if you had already published, that was a huge thing. I got a lot of job offers and I am not quite sure why I chose Binghamton. I think it was because they had more lab space. They were just opening that department so they could offer me a lot of lab space and research money and I said, "Great! I'll do it!" There were other reasons too, more personal reasons I think. It was a very behavioural department, and I felt quite comfortable there.

[However], the chairman of the department, who was my host on the interview, was a very gruff kind of a guy. I didn't really warm up to him. I thought it was just the way he was, but after a colloquium, I think he was driving me back to the airport and he said, "You know, I would never believe anything that you published!" I said, "Really?" I was being on my best interview behaviour. I said, "Why?" He said, "Because you knew your hypotheses before hand and you are out prove something that you already know and this is very political stuff and it's got nothing to do with real science and even if it did have to do with real science, the fact that you are so obviously biased in a certain perspective means that we can't believe what you say. You are going to see what you want to see regardless of the methodology. We all know that the questions you ask determine the answer you get." Of course, [this] is true. So I said, "Really? That's interesting! You can't believe anything that I report? And you don't think I'd report something that was the reverse of what I expected to find?" He said, "No, I really don't think that you would. Why would you bother publishing that?" I said, "And in your field, do people have hypotheses?" "Of course, it is scientific method!" he said. I said, "Right, and do they have anything at stake in the way these hypotheses turn out in terms of the theory they are trying to demonstrate, or in terms of consistency with their previous work or something?" He said, "Well, of course. That's the way science proves it." So I said, "Ok, well, I don't think it's very different. Are they aware that they have these biases? Or are they completely objective?" and he said, "Oh, they're completely objective, of course." I said, "Well, I'm as subjective as they are!" [Everyone laughs]

So what I tried to push him on was that science is never objective. It's always value-based. This guy didn't buy it, but other people were willing to open up. The important thing is to be aware of your needs and preferences and predilections are, because that will determine what questions you ask. Questions that are never asked are never answered. So we got into philosophy of science

issues and the rest of the faculty was sort of nodding along. This guy was a bit of an outlier anyway. He was the chairman of the department and the fact that they hired me despite that lovely argument in the car was amazing to me. But I think he got outvoted.

LB - Have you had that sort of experience often, that people questioned your objectivity because of your feminist stance?

LS - That is the only time I can remember it happening. Although, I think there were other issues. I did a lot of interviewing that year because I had a strong CV and I was sort of willing to go anywhere and I wanted to learn what the interview process was about. I went quit a few places. I was kind of naive and I was presenting methodology exactly as it was and there was a glitch in my design that I was presenting which had to do with the fact that we were training observers. We had nine observers in the group and the reliability issue was always intense because the magic number was, like, seventy percent agreement and if you were below that the data were deemed unreliable. We now have ways around that by aggregating data but at that time, that was the magic number and you just couldn't publish if you didn't report that any two of the observers couldn't agree above that.

So we had one observer in the design who never did reach the criterion. She was, I think, very depressed. She was just not very alert and she couldn't agree with anybody else. Basically she was missing stuff. So I described how we had discovered this. Before we collected data, we had discovered that Mary couldn't reach criterion and what we had done was we excluded her data. Then somehow it came across in the talk as if I was saying that she didn't agree with the other observers, so we excluded her data, as in, she wasn't finding the same thing they were finding, so we threw her data out. No! It was because she couldn't agree technically because her findings were different. We never looked at what exactly she was finding! [Everyone laughs] We just looked at the fact that she didn't see what they saw. Basically she missed observations. She was distracted. So I got called on that and I learned how to change the colloquium very quickly so that it was clear I wasn't saying that I didn't agree in terms of what she reported, but that she didn't see things, that she missed things. So I changed that, but I had few run-ins with people about that. I explained to them, "Look here, if you had a counter on a Skinner box that was stuck, like a mechanical counter, and the thing didn't move every time the bar was pressed and you could see that it was stuck, would you use those data? Or would you throw them away?" They said, "Of course, we'd throw them away!" Well that's what this was. It was a stuck counter. But I kept having to explain things like that. They just assumed that what I was doing was biased.

KVB - It is interesting though, because even in that context, you have had successful publications, at this point. You were doing pretty well in the area, not only for female psychologists at the time but especially in the area that you are studying. You also have a really interesting history of funding, from the very beginning, of always finding funding. Can you talk a little bit about what that was like during that time? Why you started going there so soon? Because a lot of people didn't.

LS - Oh yeah. We were at NIH [National Institutes of Health] and NIH grabbed it and stayed with us until I left the States. But I switched to Canadian funding because I didn't need to keep going down to NIH at that point because I was being funded up here. NIH, frankly, was a lot more work to get money from. If I can money from the federal government and the province here, it's a less strenuous process. At NIH they shape every grant, it can take three years to get funding. It is still like that. In fact, it got worse after I left. Ronald Reagan hit and they stopped funding socially related research at NIH, so I wouldn't have been able to apply there even if I wanted to. Gender roles were definitely not on the Reagan list. I think that was the early 80s and that's when I stopped applying to NIH. So it was the Reagan years that had me completely switch over to Canadian funding.

But anyway, how did it start in the '70s? I think our first grant was probably funded in '74 or '75 from NIH. Who was on that with me? Jane Connor I think. How did we do there? Well, we had amazing numbers of publications so that was it. That's what they were looking for in a young investigator. But how did I learn the grantsmanship? I learnt it from Dan O'Leary, who was extremely successful. In fact, he was already serving on NIH panels. He sure taught me a lot. So he coached me. I think he actually pre-reviewed the first grant I sent in. So he was a fabulous mentor. It didn't matter what the topic was, he knew how to write a grant. He was doing classroom management stuff. So he helped and then I had a lot of contacts through Eleanor and other, kind of, feminist people who were interested in this stuff who were on NIH panels, not necessarily doing gender related research but who were very supportive of it. They gave me a lot of tips, too. I had an awful lot of support. Beverly Birns, I am thinking of, who was on the developmental panel, few people I knew were on the education panels in Washington. So it was that networking I think, the Division 35 people. All of them helped a tremendous amount. Also NIH asks you to put down who you want to have review it. So I can put down the names of these people who were on NIH panels, who had good credibility and I knew they were interested in this stuff. I wasn't in conflict of interest because they hadn't actually worked with me.

Also you have to know this was really radical and startling that we could apply behavioural methodology (which had been developed in classroom management studies, which was very mainstream at that point) to these rather naturalistic phenomena. It was a very exciting thing. I think that's why Child Development took that first article. They had never seen anything like it, not that it was unique by the time I was applying to NIH. I think it was the zeitgeist. I don't take any personal credit for any revolution there. Also, the social development revolution was happening at the same time. So this was a big thing. So it just filled a niche there, between the feminist movement being in forefront of the people's consciousness, the methodology was traditional, the way of using the methodology was innovative. I think it was this combination. Also, we hit a combination in those grants of naturalistic studies, and then we would test the theories with experimental manipulation. And people loved that we would go back and forth from the classroom or daycare to the really experimental chamber (because some of these were really tiny one on one studies that we did). Then we would go back, take those findings and see

if they worked with the manipulation in the classroom. So it was a three step process - observe it to see what you think is going on, test it in a small study, an experimental study, [then] apply it in classrooms to see if things change. So with those three steps, it was very compelling. Jane and I had set up (because Binghamton was a brand new place, and had the space) a lab right in the building. They didn't have a developmental program. They never expected to have that, but it was inspired by the lab school at Stanford that Eleanor had told me about. We were able to find the space and the program was self-sufficient. They used tuition to pay for the teacher. They liked that, and NIH, too, that we had this built in lab that we could use. They helped pay for that. They didn't pay for the teacher salary, but they paid for all the research cost around having that lab school. So the department of psychology paid zero for that. Everything else was either grant or tuition. So we organized that. I miss that. I did that for about five years, until I left that. I didn't want to start another one at Montreal because things were just too different up there.

[End of DVD 1]

LB - There are actually two questions that I want to tackle. So eventually you ended up moving on to Concordia. How do you think switching from the American school, the American context, into a Canadian environment had an impact on how you viewed your work, or the direction of your work?

LS - Oh, wow! I can't say [that] it was a deliberate thought, that now I want to move this work into Canadian context. It had nothing to do with that. It was more of a question of, "What are the opportunities here? What are the directions that I feel the work is going in, and what are the opportunities?" And they were very different - both being at Concordia, which was also a new program, it was still developing, [there was] a new space, and so it was very similar to what I had experienced setting up a clinical program. I had been through the whole issue of developing a program with APA accreditation twice and this was my third time. I got to do that [which] had nothing to do with feminism, I assure you. It's probably why they hired me, because I could do that. Anna-Beth Doyle actually is the one who did all the documentation. I won't take credit for it, but I had actually lived it a couple of times, so I was able to provide some context for a decision which had pretty well been made before I even got there. They wanted to do this. That's what I was more preoccupied with. But I did transfer the research over to what were the opportunities and you know it was very different- the school situation, the daycare situation, and the bilingualism. Fortunately, I had taken French in high school and college. So I could work, not comfortably, but I could work in French if I had to. Not as a clinician but certainly in terms of dealing with funding agencies. So I think the first year I was there, I was stuck on a funding committee for Quebec in French and that was a completely different context and language. I was exhausted. Just reading the grants in French. I could read French, but technical French? I mean I was used to reading literature and poetry but what is this? [Laughs] I guess I was just very young and thought, "Oh well, I can do that. Why not? I'll try." I'm much less adventurous now. But it was worth trying anything once.

KVB - What age were you around the time that you made the move?

LS - I was around thirty. My first job I actually started when I was twenty-five at Binghamton's. I just said, "Well, it is a four year program, then I'll just finish it in four years!" I had always been that way, without bothering to see that most people took around 6-7 years. I didn't know that. Why would they do that?! Naïveté, I think, a lot of it.

LB - Another thing that has been coming up through some of your responses is the impact of Division 35. Can you tell us a little bit about your involvement in that?

LS - Yeah, I heard about it in some APA publication and I just wanted to know more about that. I don't know that I was at the very first organizational meetings but I was pretty close after. I was actually on their executive committee for a while and I think they put me in charge of some lovely job like the "By-laws" or something. I learnt a lot about APA By-laws. So I really wasn't involved in any of the organizational stuff beyond that. I went to quite a few of their meetings for a while because I was doing it for about 3-5 years. I was going to their board meetings and stuff. So learned a lot and met a lot of new people. Those contacts were very, very important. I became a fellow of Division 35 before I was a fellow in Division 7, which is developmental. So that was kind of neat. I liked that. Division 7 happened around the same time, I guess. Developmental was also trying to raise its profile. They didn't succeed very well. [Everyone laughs] In part because SRCD [Society for Research in Child Development] is out there and dominates. But [Division] 7 is still very active. So I was made a fellow in both divisions about the same time. Interestingly, I was nominated a little bit after that for fellowship in [division] 12, which is clinical. I always identified as a clinical psychologist. My degree is clinical, I teach in clinical faculties. Sure I publish in developmental journals, but I am a clinical psychologist. They responded to that nomination. They took my CV and I was already a fellow of the organization in two divisions and they said, "No, we are not interested. Your work isn't clinical enough" [states this in a sarcastic tone] and I thought, "Oh my God!" [Laughs]. I thought that everything was relevant to clinical psychology but they apparently didn't agree. It is funny because twenty years later they wrote to me and said, "We really would like you to become a fellow. Could you please fill out his piece of paper and we'll do this!" I couldn't resist. I wrote back saying "That's really neat, because the last time I was nominated twenty years ago, you guys thought my work wasn't clinical enough." They wrote back a huge apology that was very funny. So I am now a fellow of the Society for Clinical Psychology, which is division 12. That's fairly recent.

KVB - That's kind of interesting because you are in the really strange group of the clinical that came out in the deregulation in the US. Now you leave during the part of it. It didn't surprise me that you were saying that you were involved in those different groups. I'm curious because we have not interviewed anyone for this particular subject yet, but what was it like for you, being a female clinician coming out with the deregulation and kind of the after effects of it, especially for that first five year period you were there?

LS - I have to say, I wasn't all that aware of what was going on. I mean we are setting up the clinical program at Binghamton, we've got to get accreditation. I had to get licensed, so [my focus] was very narrow. So I was not really involved in those issues. I probably would have been if I had hung around but I left the States in '78.

KVB - When you came up here [Canada], did you feel like, personally not just professionally, that it was a different place to be a professional female, with your life and the kind of feminist you were at that time?

LS - I felt that people were very welcoming and that they were open minded, that they were curious, that they were collegial. I imagine some of these things were happening. I remember we once interviewed a job candidate in clinical who studied marital violence. It was a man. I thought his CV was good and his colloquium was strong- it was treatment study with control group and random assignment, all kinds of stuff. I didn't see any problem with the research. So I thought it was pretty neat and effective. They were treating the women who were victims and they also had a program for batterers. So I thought it was kind of interesting. He was totally panned by the faculty at Concordia, which was about a third female at that time. That was more than most schools in Canada because Concordia has its own history. I had always felt very comfortable as a female on the faculty. It was wonderful after Binghamton because I had gone from being two of twenty to being a third of forty. It was great! There were some really fine female scholars on the faculty [like] Jane Stewart, Tannis Maag, Dolores Gold. All kinds of really good, prominent people who were publishing. And all [of them] were interested in gender; certainly Jane was but from a hormonal perspective. I thought this was great. So it was a very, very nice group. So here this guy comes in and he gives his talk on wife-battering and the treatment thereof and they just slammed it. I had rarely heard such negative comments at the search committee post-mortem meeting and I could not understand where this was coming from. They said, "Well, the research isn't very good and we don't know how he's going to publish in major journals and we're not sure how serious he is about scholarship. We just don't want to take a chance on this". And somebody called me aside because I didn't know these people very well yet and said, "You know the guy with the big mouth who was just talking about how bad he thought this work was? He's separated from his wife. He's divorced from his wife. He's a batterer!" I said, "Oh my God! I had no idea! How do you know that?" She said, "Well, it's kind of common knowledge, although he's never been charged with anything. But it was violence that caused his wife to leave him." This was the '70s, people didn't press charges. Then she said, "He's got issues with that. He's not going to be comfortable with having somebody studying this on the faculty." [Laughs]

KVB - [Laughing] Welcome to Canada!

LS - That was actually the time when the whole issue of "wife-battering" it was called, came up before Parliament. This was like the first or second year I was there. People were laughing in the Parliament, saying 'When did you stop beating your wife!?' jokes were being made. Parliament was [mostly] male. [They were] discussing "Should we really put this into Canadian law? Do we

really want to take it seriously that family violence is not just a private matter? Are we seriously going to go after people for this? Why should it be a part of the Canadian criminal code? Should it be something different from a general policy on assault?" Really at that time, you see, it was his word against her word. His word was as good as hers, he said he didn't do, she said he did and that was it! Similar with rape victims. This was a whole radical thing. So the general attitude was that you can't depend on a woman who says these things as she might say them for her own personal reasons. She accuses her husband of rape, and what validity does that have? Maybe she's trying to get a better divorce settlement or something. We can't believe people who do that.

LB – I think we still have the same attitude.

LS - Maybe. But that was actually front and centre in the newspaper when I came to Canada. It wasn't that different from the States. They say there's a five year lag between when social issues become prominent in the US and when they sort of seep into the Canadian consciousness, probably because the problems aren't quite as bad in Canada. Usually there is a bit of a cushion because of our social safety net. So we don't quite see quite the extremes that you see in the States. It takes a while for these things to sink in but anyway that was the atmosphere. So yeah, I did experience all that. I never felt it applied to me directly. Maybe it did behind closed doors. I don't know but I was publishing more than most of those people. And also, what were they going to say? It's not valid? "Oh no! it's only being published in the Flagship journals or whatever." They couldn't say much.

KVB - Again, you've got this interesting timing because you start your graduate studies and your publication period right as the States are starting to move in their stronghold for the feminist push forward in psychology. Then you move to Canada right before the Canadian feminist psychology is about to go forward. Did you get involved in that at all, in the early years?

LS - I was just so busy with stuff in Montreal and of course, the feminist movement in Montreal was largely Francophone. Although I could speak French, I didn't really identify [with it] that much. There was a lot of segregation between the campuses there, in Montreal. We don't have that much contact with Université de Montréal. We do more now but at time we really didn't. So I would have to say I wasn't very involved in that. I maintained a lot of these contacts in the States and I still kind of identified that way. [It wasn't] that I wasn't interested.

I think I got called to testify in the big CN trial on the equivalency of men and women, you know the huge Civil Rights trial in the '80s. I forget who was mounting the challenge to the CN rules, but it was a big deal. Of course, I think CN was requiring you to have certain height and weight in order to work on the railroad. The argument was that maybe physical strength wasn't the only thing that was relevant. You know, it was all these arguments. It was a very famous case. My daughter is now in law school and she read this case. She said, "Wasn't that what you were interested in mom?" and I said, "Yeah!" I did get called to provide background research and I did that for them, for the briefs. [I] basically put them in touch with the literature, first of all on

gender roles and then on gender differences and the whole notion of assessments [and] tests to be fair and not biased. They were putting women on police forces, fire fighting forces, ambulance drivers and so forth and it was all part of that same change. So I think I did give them references and stuff. But they wanted me to testify as an expert and I just felt, "I am new here, I don't know the context. I'm not a Canadian citizen yet" (I am now, but I wasn't then). "I don't know if I want to stand up in front of the Parliamentary commission and make strong statements. I'm in the woods without the context and I'm scared. They're going to come at me with the stuff that I just don't know about in terms of Canadian laws, contexts and experience and I think I might do more harm than good." They don't want to hear what's going on in the U.S. So they were disappointed and I was disappointed but I just didn't have the courage to get up and make statements about a situation that I wasn't very familiar with. I've always regretted that actually. That's one of my big regrets but they didn't need me obviously. Everything sailed right through, so it didn't matter in terms of history of the women's movement in Canada. But I am sorry now that I wasn't a little braver but I honestly felt out of my depth. I just didn't know the relevant statistics, laws or anything. I was afraid they'd ask me questions and I'd just have to say "Well, duh, in the U.S., it's like this," and I didn't want to do that. I didn't think that would help them.

KVB - I do want to ask you about teaching. You have been described by someone as having a factory of students going out into the world.

LS - Who said that? One of my students? I hope not! [Laughs]

KVB - But in a good way!

LS - Yeah, we just churn 'em out! It's like a cookie cutter; it's an assembly line!

KVB - No, no, no! It was more in the amount of [students], and that they were well connected to each other which is always a sign of good mentoring. And you had kind of implied earlier that you had a really strong and powerful mentoring system coming from your own school. I wonder if you can talk a little bit about how you see yourself as a mentor and what you think is important about mentoring and teaching for yourself being not only a feminist psychologist but just a woman in psychology.

LS - Well, I think that's the most important part of my job. It is also the least defined. I know what I have to teach, I know what administrative work I have to do, I know what grant applications are, I know how to write up an article, I know how to analyse data. But nobody gives you a guideline for mentoring students. So you sort of do what feels comfortable. I am very excited about working with my students. It is always my favourite part of the work. Just watching them develop their interests and it's always been, "Of course you can! Oh, you are interested in that? You want to study that? Well, why not? Let's find a way that you can follow your interests in this field that you have chosen! So how can we put together what you are passionate about with the conceptual, methodological, contextual stuff that you are going to get from psychology. How can you use psychology to pursue your own interests?" My belief is that

if they aren't really, really interested in the subject, and I don't just mean that it's the hottest thing in the literature, it will never be a career for them. It will just be a dissertation and then that'll be it! They will be darn sick of it by the time they finish. So I don't want them to get sick of the topic before they finish their dissertation, or at least the field of the topic. So that means they have to be following stuff that they are interested in. So I try to work with them- so this is our data set, this is what is available. Especially recently, where we're working with a huge longitudinal data set, and we've turned that into a gender research factory. It was never intended as such but because when the project was set up, there were an equal number of boys and girls in the samples which was really radical for studying aggression. So because of that we can do all kinds of stuff that we couldn't do in any other longitudinal data set on aggression, which had very few women in it. So the fact that we had all these women means that I could get very involved in the whole setting up of this area of girlhood aggression. That's a whole other thing that we haven't talked about. That was a little bit later, and I certainly didn't found that. That I kind of just got drawn into because it was happening, but I had this data set so we could address it. So we let the students have access to that and we talk about what's possible within that and a lot of them were interested in gender issues. So I let them study gender issues within longitudinal developmental psychopathology context. These students that we are talking about, that is where a lot of them came through. I'm thinking of people I just saw at the conference. Patty Peters was there and she worked on, sort of, mating in aggressive girls for her dissertation. That was her interest, I sure didn't suggest it to her. So with most of them, I hope that's what happened. Whether it was a gender related issue or not, we managed to sneak gender in because we had these beautiful samples of men and women who were children and are now men and women, so it was natural to see if the processes are the same and then to pull in social factors and why they might be different. So it's a given, the kinds of designs that we do. Personally, I think that that's what the field is about. It is about people.

I almost regard psychology as a tool to accomplish scientific investigations of issues that are personally important. I think that's why that gentleman at my interview didn't like my work. "I can't believe you. You're going about it ass-backwards," is effectively what he was saying. "You're using psychology to study what you want to study. You're supposed to study what psychology is interested in and forget all the rest of it." That's not how I view the field. So it's worked pretty well in terms of issues coming up in the context of psychology. I try to teach that to the students. I also try to teach them that if you're working on something, other people can help you, but really, the bottom line is that if you want to get it done, you do it yourself. That sounds like my father's sayings from the army.

So there is a lot of that kind of motivational stuff that I try to teach them. I also try to teach them things like, "Murphy's law runs this laboratory." Research is an unnatural enterprise in terms of the universe, being run by entropy. You really need to buck those natural tendencies towards chaos, and trying to get control is just ridiculous. So you have to work hard, know that anything that can possibly go wrong, will. You have to be proactive, try to anticipate anything that can go

wrong to prevent it. Another one I teach them is that when you're trying to estimate timeframe on a project, regardless of what it is, think about anything that could possibly go wrong, add that into your timeframe, and that you multiply that number by four. That's how long it's going to take you to finish this project. So plan that from the beginning. Not that I want it to take longer than it needs to but if you anticipate that, then you'll only be pleasantly surprised by how long it takes, otherwise you're just going to give up. This is common sense, but for every problem, there's a solution, or several solutions, and you just have to find the best one. It's not unique to psychology, any of this. At one point, we had those things up on the wall, and the kids would laugh at it but it's all true. I think that they learn that and I'm really proud of what they've accomplished. [It's one of those] academic grand parenting things. Usually when I give a talk, when I gave the keynote talk last year at the Gender Conference, you know I love to start with the pictures of the students presenting their posters and then I give the pictures of their children that they have sent us. They love to send me gender stuff. So you know, I'll find somebody's two year old boy cooking and I'll put his picture up.

LB - If you had any advice to give to a young feminist psychologist entering the field, what kind of advice would you give them?

LS - Well, I think I just gave it to you. I mean that's the pep talk I give to my students over and over and over again. [Laughs] Do it! I mean why not?! If anything, the tools that we can give you conceptually and methodologically, and in terms of the literature behind you in psychology today are so much stronger than they were thirty years ago. I mean, my goodness, we were analyzing our data with t-tests! ANOVA's, maybe. So it's just amazing how much more powerful all the methods are: the observational methodology, the testing methodology! My goodness! We can now look at neuroendocrine correlates. The tools are just fabulous! So is the conceptual advance so you can be a puppy on the ranch! You can just take your stuff and run with it. So I would say the openings are fabulous and are much broader than they were thirty years ago so go for it. That's what I try to tell them when they come into the lab.

KVB - You did something that I think is a little unique, that I would normally describe as third wave.

LS - As what?

KVB - As a third wave feminist move. Sometimes the difference between third wave and second wave were categorized as standing outside or standing inside. Standing outside in a group, or standing inside alone. You seem to have been a little different than your generation. You are part of it but your feminism seems to be in who you are in the world, who you are [as] existing in the world.

LS - Oh, it's totally a personal identity. Absolutely!

KVB - When you're advising your students, when you're mentoring your students, how do you help them settle whether it will be this development internally or this move externally to go political through the work?

LS - I don't really address it very often with them unless they raise it with me. I hadn't thought about it in those terms. I'm not really a 'stick my neck out' sort of a person. I love to hedge my bets, so I tell them they have to go both ways. If it's not a personal thing, they won't care about it enough to do it. Be iconoclast, I don't care. But talk to the people who are organizing, work with them to the extent that it merges with your own goals, because it's going to get you farther, and God knows, it's going to help them too. It means that your work is going to have an impact mare than just your individual publications. So be part of that. Although I haven't been that active in Division 35 in years, I do try to get involved in public policy around the work. I don't do policy research. Although, frankly, I do right now [as] I have a policy that I finished for the department of education which isn't really about gender but their huge concern is that boys' drop out rates are double the girls' [rate]. I am trying to help them with that. So that's a gender issue. Not that the girls aren't being disadvantaged. They drop out too. So I do do some policy research but that's never been the focus of my research. But you can get involved in other ways, like you can get involved in issues that you're interested in from a psychology perspective even if they're not your research area. I encourage that. I don't usually thing to myself, "I'm a feminist psychologist, that's my main identity!" Well, it's not. I'm a psychologist, but feminism is a very important part of the way I look at the world and the design and choose research projects and so forth. If they want to join the feminist branch then that's great, that's fine! If they don't want to do that, if they'd rather work through some other field, they can still do feminist work as a part of their own identity. I hope that answers your question.

KVB - That was amazing!

LS - Oh yeah?

LB - Before we finish, is there anything that you'd like to add that we have not addressed yet?

LS - Well, not really. We could go on and on about other things that I've done, but if this is what has interested you, I'm happy to talk about it. If there are other things you want to ask me, you can get in touch with me later. I don't mind. I am delighted that somebody is interested in all this old stuff. My students never ask about it. [Laughingly] That's before they were born, why would they be interested. It's as historical as when women got to vote, I mean, it's history to them.

KVB - Anything you want to add to transcript that you didn't get to, we'd be more than happy to.