Psychology's Feminist Voices Oral History Project

Interview with Marion Rudin Frank

Interviewed by Alexandra Rutherford
Philadelphia, PA
October 24th, 2007

When citing this interview, please use the following citation:

Frank, M. (2007, October 24). Interview by A. Rutherford [Video Recording]. Psychology's Feminist Voices Oral History and Online Archive Project. Philadelphia, PA.

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Interviewer: Alex Rutherford
Interviewee: Marion Frank

MF: My name is Marion Rudin Frank and I was born June 1st, 1942. And I was actually from Philadelphia originally.

AR: Okay great. Well, I'll start by asking a question I always start with which is can you tell me a little bit about the development of your feminist identity.

MF: Sure. Well I was very much a product of the Fifties initially and got married like I was supposed to right out of college. My husband at the time went into the Air Force for four years because at that time there was a draft and you either enlisted or you took your chances of being drafted; the Vietnam War was just starting. So I did the normal things and went with him and followed him to where he was stationed. In my second year of marriage he was killed in an airplane crash. So nothing was the way it was supposed to be and I couldn't imagine my life [without him in it]. All of a sudden, here I was a widow at the age of 23, and [I] really didn't know what to do with myself at the time. And [I] had no vision of how [to] be a single woman, let alone how [to] be a widow. So I guess in some ways I just went on a search for my identity. It was I, alone, basically, and just took a teaching job because that was what I was trained to do. I found myself very interested in the lives of the kids, rather than in the grammar that I was trying to teach them, so I knew that I was more interested in the counselling part, or the psychology part of that. And frankly, I was just sitting and reading one day, Betty Freidan's book, and it hit me like a ton of bricks and opened up my eyes a lot. I realized that there were a lot of barriers that I had to my own life and so I entered a doctoral program.

Actually, I had already had a Masters at that time, so I entered a doctoral program. And I think that in that program also it was a very exciting time where women were just starting to understand that in fact, there were no women who were newscasters, there were no women in positions of power basically, and that this was a sexist world. And so in my own career as a psychologist, my very first job, thanks to my mentor who was [Maddie Girschenfeld], she asked if I would do some work at this women's school at the time, which was a very exciting place in Philadelphia called The Institute of Awareness. And it was mostly women who were housewives and kind of had nothing to do during the day. And this school became very popular, hundreds of women went through this program and I became the leader of the consciousness raising groups.

AR: Wow, wow.

MF: So it was very exciting to work with women and see them change and develop and open up our eyes together. I mean it was a personal growth group, but the consciousness raising was a

major factor in it. And that was the beginning of my career. So it was very much grounded in feminism.

AR: Right. Well, tell me a little bit more about what in Betty Freidan's work really struck you, really struck at your kind of core?

MF: You know, I can remember, more than just the factual things, I just remember exactly where I was sitting! And I was reading it and thinking, "Well, you know, why do I put that kind of limit on myself?" Or, "Yes, that is true about the kinds of relationships I may have had with men". I think it was the [sense] empowerment [that struck me], that was the main piece of it, of empowering myself. And then I did have a second marriage, and my husband at the time had said to me…because another mentor had asked me to lead a group, a therapy group, which I was so excited about, my first therapy group. And he said, "They asked *you*?" And that was the beginning of the end of my marriage, because I knew that I needed some self-esteem to be able to do the work I really wanted to do and I realized that I wasn't going to be an equal partner in this relationship. And there were other issues, but that was really a main thing. And even at the time, I liked being a single parent and really sensing that I could do that and I had my own identity with it. And very much I think the idea with Betty Freidan's book was that [it made me realize that women's self-empowerment] was a movement, that I wasn't alone with this and that the personal is political and that it was really a social issue. And it wasn't just my own unconscious, or whatever Freudian theories were around at the time that were hurting me, but that it was also the society.

AR: Right. Well, consciousness raising groups were a huge part of the feminist movement. Did you have other involvements with the second wave of the women's movement?

MF: I had lots of them. Well, first I have to say that what was also very powerful to me [were] the women's groups where I was a participant. I had a group of friends, colleagues that were students in my program. And actually we're still friends thirty years later, we still have our group. I mean we don't meet so much as a women's group, but we still meet a few times a year. And there were two of them, two groups that met at the time, and we've just been through a lot of changes through the years that we met; divorce, separation, raising children, all kinds of issues. And we had fun too, and we loved each other's company and I think that was a big part of it. But in terms of the projects we did in those days, there were lots of them. Of course we were involved with the National Organization for Women, and we went to the conferences, and we marched in Washington. I have lots of pictures I could show you actually.

AR: That would be wonderful.

MF: [It's pictures] of us marching in Washington in our (6:20) when I was much younger, and we did that lots of times. I remember during the ERA, trying to pass the Equal Rights Amendment, there was a bicentennial here in Philadelphia and a friend and I did some presentations and seminars for the women's part of that. There were so many, and most of my activities at that time I think, professionally, were really around the women's issues. And of course in my own practice, when I started my own therapy practice, what shocked me more than

anything was how many women had been victims of incest and rape and just the profound impact that that had. I was shocked at the numbers.

AR: I want to of course talk about the development of your practice and so on. But I want to go back a little bit to something you said earlier, which was that when you got married at a, what seems now like a fairly young age although I suppose it wasn't at the time, that you were doing kind of what was expected of you.

MF: Right.

AR: So when you became more engaged with feminism, how did your family, or how did that fit with where you came from?

MF: Well, this was like the late 60s, early 70s, so it's hard to kind of differentiate feminism from the rest of what was happening [in society] at the time, which was like a breaking of a lot of norms. So there was tension in my family, but I do remember I would have these conversations with my mother about feminism. When we had them, I was conscious at one point that we were having them usually in the kitchen where I was sitting there talking about it. And she would be interested in it, but she would always be cleaning when we had these conversations. My mother actually was very interested in it, very supportive. There were things that she had never thought about that we would talk about, so in that respect she was supportive. In terms of other things, like some of the experiments that were going on, or some of the ways that maybe I was more rebellious, I would say that there was some tension in my family for those. And even for my divorce, because I was the first person in my family, in my extended family, to ever get divorced and of course they were not happy about that. You know, [I] really didn't realize how unhappy I was in my marriage at the time, but eventually came around. But it was a tough time, it was a difficult time, and my support came mainly from my friends.

AR: Right. Well tell me a little bit more about your decision to go into psychology, into a doctorate.

MF: I had, after teaching, I had decided that I wanted to go into counselling, and I thought maybe I wanted to be a high school counsellor. And so I got my Masters, and that was at Columbia, and it was a time where...I got my Master in 1966, so it was a time where things were not quite changing yet. In fact, Columbia would refer to Harlem as our neighbours to the North, and there was a lot of racial tension and it was right before the Morningside Heights riots. So it was really a funny time where you could feel rumblings that society would change, but in a lot of ways it hadn't yet But then here I was with a Masters in psychology and wasn't sure really [if] I wanted to [be] a guidance counsellor in a school. [I] really didn't know what I wanted to do and had a two year old at the time. So I decided to take just a graduate course and one that interested me was [a course that looked at] religion and psychotherapy. That was the first course I ever took that had to do with psychotherapy really and that just made me think, "You know what, I think therapy is my area". I met some people in the field and then I went to Temple, and it was just a great experience for me. Even during the time that I was getting divorced, they were so supportive in terms of money. I was worried about being able to pay [for school but] they gave me fellowships and scholarships and I had a teaching assistantship there. I had such experience

with everything, so it wasn't just being a student. And the other thing for me was that the way the courses worked out, they were usually four to seven and I could juggle that with being a single parent. And it took me a long time to get my doctorate, you know doing it in bits and pieces at times. It was difficult also because they wanted you to do a year internship that was a full year and I couldn't do it with my daughter. At that time I needed more flexibility, so I kind of did a two-year part time one that we had to get accepted for APA. I think women do have different needs sometimes and so we need to fulfill requirements in other ways.

AR: Yeah, and it's a big issue now too.

MF: I'm sure.

AR: Well you've talked about having had quite a supportive doctoral experience. Did you have any sense during that time that the fact that you were a woman put up any barriers?

MF: In one area, absolutely, because one of the areas that I was interested in initially was organizational psychology which is very male-dominated. I was kind of treading organizational and adult psychology, and groups and in organizational psychology I definitely felt discriminated against. It was the men who were getting the experiences that I was coveting and I definitely felt that I wasn't taken as seriously just because I was a woman. I confronted a professor about that at the time. But in a way I feel like I really got vindicated because now I have my own private practice here but I also have a company that I started in 1980 that does organizational work and employee assistance work. So I feel that I've really used those skills as well as the other skills I have in clinical.

AR: Well, tell me now about starting up your own practice and how you have integrated your feminist values and your feminism with your practice as a clinical psychologist and psychotherapist.

MF: I think it's just one of the crucial therapy modalities that I use. I feel that mainly I'm cognitive, I feel that I'm Jungian actually and I feel that I'm feminist. And I don't know what else I bring to it, probably a whole bunch of things. You know, just after some years of experience you just blend all those things together. But I think those are probably the three primary orientations. And I do see some issues that women come with as women issues, in terms of empowering themselves. And part of my job then might be to really teach them some assertiveness skills, on a behavioural level even, or to change thinking about where they see their own limits. I've had men come to me and they come to me because they know I'm a feminist psychologist and they want to know more about women. [This] is what I've heard about why people come, which is kind of funny, but I see that and I certainly [agree], some of them, the way they relate to women, needs some education.

AR: Right.

MF: I mean I have one man who just feels guilty that he looks at women in the street, and I'll go, "Have a good time! I mean, as long as you're not acting on it, just enjoy looking. Women are beautiful, enjoy it!" So I think that though in my profession, I now do professional training, I

have trained many times in feminism as a therapy modality and have written about that. More in the past than now, I guess because it's not as hot now and I've moved on a little bit. And I think that's the beauty of our field; that you can just continually move on and reinvent yourself, and just get more and more of a rich experience. Now what I'm doing more of, what I'm really interested in and have been for the past ten years is Jungian analytic work. And it's really interesting the things that he said way back about women, the whole idea of the feminine and the masculine side of us. And also the whole idea of patriarchy, which I think is what we're all fighting these days and don't even realize it. With managed care, it's very much a part of what we're dealing with in our practice, which is the controlling us and in a way I think we should label that more, the control issue. It's all around society, and it kills the feminine; it's very hard to fight against that.

AR: Well I noticed of course from your CV this emphasis on Jungian analysis and your involvement in Jungian organizations and so on. I was going to ask you, and since it's come up now, is there a way that you think feminism, or feminist theory, and Jungian ideas are particularly well suited for each other?

MF: Well, I think Jung was a product certainly of his time, so he certainly wasn't as conscious of this as we might be today. But still, for his time, I think he was brilliant and some of his ideas are very useful today if we just carry them a little bit farther. Like he talked about the anima/animus. You know he did say that women can be animus (16:26) basically, which you know, but I think there are ways to think about it. And post-Jungians have talked about it I think in much more enlightened terms. And the fact that we have a lot inside of us and a woman can be very patriarchal, for example, and a man can be very much in touch with his feminine side. Of course these days, we're hoping that more men are in touch with their feminine side] and we're encouraging them to be, which is a nice thing as well. But I think that some of the initial concepts that Jung came up with, they were so much more enlightened than Freud's, and so that was helpful. I think that we can use them today to inform our own practice and our own theories as we go forward. I don't find them that out of sync.

AR: Yeah, it's just so funny because I recently spoke with some folks at a mothering conference and a lot of them, well the people I was speaking with, were Jungian and feminist. So this has come up a few times and I have to ask if there might be a natural synthesis there.

MF: Well I think part of it is also a reaction to Freud, which was, "Oh God, it's so repressive." And of course Freud said he doesn't really understand women, but I think that Jung took that farther and took it better. And his concepts, even today, people don't understand how much comes from Jung; the Imago therapies are totally from his concepts and his work, so I think he saw the feminine in a different way. Like he talked about it in mythological ways even, [for example], looking at the feminine in terms of the nourishing mother archetypes, or in terms of just the Aphrodite kind of woman. And I think that those are all images that are helpful to us because they're different parts of us that we can all relate to at different times in our lives. So just going there, on that collective level that he talked about, I think is really helpful and can speak to us as feminists.

AR: Going back to your doctoral training, when you were actually doing your doctorate, were you explicitly trained in any particular therapy modality, feminist therapy per se?

MF: No, no.

AR: It might have been too early for that.

MF: And Jungian neither, so no. Basically, I kind of crossed the border For me, it was some social psychology. A lot of the training I got was actually outside of academia, although I did have some humanistic psychology within it. The people that I was drawn to at the time were Carl Rogers, I was drawn to [Maslow as well], Maslow was about my dissertation, I had (19:28) Maslow's work. I think that some of the Gestalt therapy at the time [was included in my doctoral training], which was very interesting, and I really think that they're all still very viable, aside from some of the more traditional approaches. In a way, one of the things I think has happened today is that behaviourism and evidence-based therapy seems to be the thing that's really emphasized and I don't see therapy that way at all. I think it's much richer than that and I think it's as much of an art as a science. So I feel that the more you learn about it, in every area, probably the better you are. And feminism is certainly a part of that. I mean gender, when you do couples' work, it's really important and I think men need to understand, we all need to understand, that men can be feminists as well.

AR: Yeah.

MF: And I think Jung understood some of that way long ago on some level, so I just feel that this has been a great field. I was surprised that my daughter went into it but she did live and breathe it. I mean, I was studying and doing my dissertation [and so] it was all over the house when she was growing up, but I never particularly encouraged her to go into it but I guess she just felt really comfortable with it.

AR: You referred briefly to the juggling act of being a single parent and being a full time student and then professional. Can you talk a little bit more about that?

MF: I just look back on it and I don't know how I did it. I'm sure I didn't do anything as well as I would have had I been able to do just more of one thing at a time. But I was working part time, and I was going to school part time, and I guess I was parenting part time as well. [Recording interrupted by phone ringing].

Yeah, I didn't do any of it as well as I might have, and yet when I think of the energy, I look back on it and I go, "How did I get through?" But I did it and really valued all of the experiences and I think a lot of it was because it was such a nourishing environment in a lot of ways. And I saw other people doing it and the people that I was meeting, and [my] mentors weren't just people who were older. I think you got as much in those days [from other female students] because there weren't many mentors [who were accomplished in the field]. How many women were in the field? There weren't that many. So I think that it was really the networking that was, if not more powerful even, where we all were pulling each other up together.

AR: Definitely. Well, tell me how you got into one of the items on your CV was your work with breast cancer survivors. And I'm wondering if you could tell me how that came to take place.

MF: Well, I'm sure that breast cancer has touched all of us, and certainly I had an aunt who died from breast cancer, a very dear, dear close aunt, and friends who have been touched by it. And one of my colleagues, and friends was a surgeon at one of the hospitals here and she just asked me if I would do a group for breast cancer. So I did and kind of learned a lot also in that process; I just saw myself as a facilitator in that group. And it felt like it was an important thing to do, and so I decided to look at the process of it and had women in a more open forum talk about what helped and hindered them. [I also] did some research on it and actually published on the topic and actually presented on it. And I think it was through Division 35 one year at an APA conference on the topic of interventions for breast cancer [and the presentation focused on] what helps and what hinders, in terms of what the women themselves were saying. Because again, I think there were some patriarchal kinds of things going on in terms of doctors telling women what they should be feeling or what they should be doing and not really validating the experience of women. And I think we're listening more to women these days and what's happening, but I found that that was really important work.

AR: Yeah, definitely. Well, tell me too about some of your [other involvements]. I know you've been locally involved in a number of women's organizations too, just from your CV, Philadelphia's Women's Network.

MF: That was very exciting.

AR: Tell me a little bit about that.

MF: Well, that was very early, I think the beginning of the 70s, I'm not sure, but I was working. One of my first jobs was working in an insurance company for the first employee assistance program [EAP] that ever happened and this was great because it straddled my interest with organizational psychology and clinical work. So I was a counsellor in an employee assistance program, an insurance company owned it. So I met a whole lot of women who were not psychologists, who were in all different fields, working in the corporate world and I was asked to be on this first Philadelphia Women's Network. That was the first network, I think in the city, which was just for corporate women in America. So I was delighted to be apart of that; it was a very exciting time. There were ten of us from different organizations and different backgrounds; there was a lawyer, an accountant, a manager, and we said, "How can we start it?" And we each brought ten friends to the first meeting and had a hundred women right there.

AR: Wow.

MF: It was very exciting. And Maggie Kuhn, who was the head of the Gray Panthers, I don't know if you know who she was…. She was an amazing woman, and she started the Gray Panthers, which was a national organization to bring awareness about ageism and she was one of our first honourees. So it was very successful, I believe it is still going on, and of course there are a lot of other women's organizations today, but it was a very exciting time.

AR: Yeah. Did you stay involved with NOW?

MF: No, I was never really involved in NOW at that level. I mean I used to go to some of their meetings. I can remember one year there was someone who was speaking in Philadelphia, someone who was running for, I believe he was running for governor at the time, and he was against abortion rights. It was being sponsored by one of the women's organizations and this was maybe ten years ago and I was outraged that they would sponsor it; it was one of these businesswomen's organizations. But I called NOW and I told them about it and they didn't know about it. [So] they said, "Well, meet us outside and we'll picket." And I was so impressed that they were able to get this together in very short notice and they had signs and everything else outside, so that was nice.

AR: Yeah, it's good to know whom to call.

MF: Yeah, just to know whom to call is nice. But my interest has been mostly psychological; I'm really less political than I am psychological. Although with feminism it's certainly related, and we know that. I mean you have to be an activist to some extent.

AR: Well, I've asked some of the feminist therapists that I've interviewed, I've asked them about the seemingly paradoxical notion of working one on one with individual clients versus the notion of creating macro-level social change that certainly is implicit also in feminist therapy. And I've been asking people to explain how they sort of see that relationship between working one on one and in fact creating social change on more than an individual level and how they see that all happening.

MF: I think you just can't pull them apart at all. And I think that for me, working with one person at a time is how change happens; one person at a time is how change happens. Which is why I like to do some organizational work too because change also happens in a bigger way, yet I prefer the one on one. I think for people to understand how much [of an impact they have on possible change], when you're working one on one, sometimes the awareness of how much the environment is impacting on you [may not be realized]. It's your personal history in terms of your family, in terms of your larger network and in terms of your social cultural environment. How much that we're not even aware of. I mean so many women are coming in with problems about their weight, or problems [concerning if they] should they do all kinds of plastic surgery. And to understand that why we feel the way we feel is often because we're bombarded with social messages that are very hard to get away from. And at least if we're aware of it, I think it's helpful. I do think that when people feel better about themselves and when they feel calmer inside, not necessarily [more angry], they feel more free in a way to act in ways that feel meaningful, because what people really want is to find meaning in their life. Once they get to a certain level, the meaning might be to help society to change in a way because that is a way to find meaning. So it is very much therapeutic to do that, but it has to be the person's own meaning, not the one that I'm going to tell them they should do.

AR: Right. Have you ever run up against, in your therapeutic clinical work, does anything stand out in your memory as a time when your feminist values kind of collided with something you

were trying to do with a client, or that you got challenged because you were a feminist and that had become evident?

MF: You know, not really. I think we could tend to maybe overgeneralize, especially at the beginning of a movement, like all men are this or all men are that. I think in therapy, you understand that any generalization isn't helpful and that you really have to look at each person at a time. And for a woman to understand [that] perhaps in some ways we are different species, maybe not better or worse but certainly different. And we often work differently and it may be because we're men and women, or maybe because we tend to function in a more thinking state or a more emotional state, or intuitive. So there are lots of ways that we're different, and [it is important] to understand how those differences might impact us. But I mean, I have a couple right now where the man is raging and the woman, (they've been married twenty years) is saying it's all his fault. Well, obviously it's not all his fault, she's been a part of this for twenty years, and she hasn't been able to say no to him really. And every time he rages he gets more of what he wants, so there's that kind of collusion that has to be made more conscious. You know, it's a feminist issue in a way because she's never learned to stand up for herself and she's never really felt that she was equal.

AR: Right.

MF: But it's also a feminist issue for him. He has a very soft side and it doesn't pay off in this relationship for him. So it's interesting to look at it in that way. I can't think of how it really hurts except if you do generalize and use it as a general putdown, [it] would not be so smart to do.

AR: Right. Well, tell me about the organization Gold Star Wives of America and how you got involved in that.

MF: I didn't know about this organization when my husband first died. In fact I didn't know because we were living up at Massachusetts in the Cape at the time and then I moved. And I really believe that the Armed Services could have found me if they really wanted to but I didn't even know I was entitled to benefits, I didn't know a lot. And I had no idea that even my education, my whole doctorate program could have been paid for if it was [with]in ten years of his death. I had no idea.

AR: Wow.

MF: One day I just got a letter from an organization called Gold Star Wives, and I was shocked. And I wrote them back and said, "Why now and who are you, and what is this about?" And I had also never met a widow anywhere near my age. So I found out that in fact Gold Star Wives was a group of women who have lost their husbands during active duty, or because of active duty, and went to my first meeting there about 15 years ago, that's all. And it was really shocking to be in the midst of hundreds of widows of all ages and of course, more recently we have a lot of really young widows, there are the Iraqi widows now.

One of the things that I felt was that I didn't want other to women to at least not know what their benefits are. Things are better now, although we still have to fight sometimes to even find out

who these women are because the Veterans Administration says that there's the Privacy Act and that they can't give out the names of the widows. I don't know. There is much more happening now where they do have officers who do come and give you more information about your rights or whatever [during the same time they are told of their spouse's death]. But a lot of women tell me that even when there's somebody there, they can't absorb it at the time; it's a time of trauma. And a lot of these casual officers aren't well trained, they're certainly not given psychological training and it's a tough time. And so the reason I got involved was simply because I did not want what happened to me to happen to [other] widows. And also because I was so impressed with some of these women and how they have no background in politics or legislation or anything else [yet] they go and fight before Congress and keep women's rights, veterans' rights, just in the forefront. And I'm very impressed with the fact that they just do this.

AR: Yeah.

MF: And so they fight for our rights, and some of the things were so unfair. I don't even know where to start with them, but one of the things was that people who were killed in military action would get a death benefit of, I think it was less than ten thousand dollars. And now because of Gold Star Wives, they now get a hundred thousand, which is still not a lot of money, but it's something. And still, the benefits are very meagre, but I think it's important. We had a fight for cost of living and they really keep this alive. There's even something that the men got and I'm saying "men" because now actually the organization is open to men. There's been a big discussion about it because of course women are now in the military.

AR: Right.

MF: And we need to change the name, which hasn't happened yet. We actually have one male member, nationally, not in Philadelphia. But the other thing I was going to say was that they used to take away part of an insurance benefit from your indemnity compensation. Now that's not fair; if the person was paying for the insurance benefit, you should get it. So things like that are what they're fighting for. And so I'm just impressed with the work they're doing. I became the Philadelphia chapter president because in Philadelphia there actually wasn't anything happening, there were no members. We now have 80 members in Philadelphia, and I'm sure there are a lot more. And the thing is that people simply don't know that they're eligible to be members and they don't understand that it behoves them to be members because they're not only helping themselves, but they're helping their sisters of all generations. We now have very active young women. And I think that the issues that come up, again feminist philosophy, is really helpful. Just the idea that you can do it all, I mean it's not like you want to, but you can. There's a lot of power in just being a woman and there's a lot of power in mothering, in that sense. And also just the concept of war should be very costly, and there shouldn't even be a war, I think there's a feminist philosophy in that, in saying that's not how we solve our differences; there are other ways to do this.

AR: Right, right, interesting. You mentioned that you're also in the process of working on a book on grieving and women's experiences of grieving. Can you talk a little about that?

MF: Well, because I'm interested in bereavement obviously, and the process of bereavement. I think there's a lot that hasn't been said from a clinical point of view. And also, especially this population that I [discovered] women who, like myself, have been bereaved years and years ago. What are they like today and how does that impact their lives? I think it's an area where there has been very little study. So as I've been meeting these women, I've asked them do so formal interviews actually, and some very interesting things have come up from it. The fact that, and I don't think we're surprised in a way, trauma is always with us in some ways and it has impacted our lives profoundly. And it's not a matter of getting over [a loved one's death] or getting over the attachment [to that person] at all, it's a matter of actually making the attachments that work for us. As a therapist, I think that we need to understand that bereavement is not about letting go of the person; it's about having a positive relationship, one that works for us in our life. But you always love someone who you've loved, and you always have your own memories, I mean we can go back to any memory and feel the feelings we had then. A lot of these women have had experiences that I think are important for therapists to know. For instance dreams, I mean they feel the abandonment dreams; he's with another woman, or things like that. I think that [abandonment dreams] are common themes but that they're not written a lot about. I think these women have a lot to teach us about the process of bereavement and how it impacts on the rest of our lives.

AR: I have a graduate student now who's working on a dissertation on grief and grieving and she in fact lost her mother just two years ago, so obviously this motivated her interest. But she is also a feminist and she has been telling me about [it], since this is not my area. She has been telling me about her dissatisfaction with the state of theorizing of grief and grieving. And so it's interesting to hear you talk about it. In terms of these women's stories and how much we can learn from them. Do you think there is a way in which women, and I would hate to generalize this way, because I imagine it's a very individual experience, but do you think that there's a woman's experience of grieving that may differ in some ways with that of men's?

MF: I think society gives women more permission to grieve and more permission to actually cry, which are things that we have to do. And I think that if men are in the service of their ego or their macho self, it makes it even more difficult because they need to put it away. And look, it's mostly women who come into therapy, and it's usually the men who come in because it's the women saying you got to come in. So women I think often have more accessibility to their emotions, which you might say makes it easier on some level [and] maybe makes it harder on some level because you're not cubby-holing it. I think we need to do both in a way; I think we need to be able to access our emotions and I also think we need to put it away and function at times also. We need to be able to do both. So it depends who the person is and what they need to be able to do, and what their work is about. But I think we shouldn't be afraid also, of the intensity of emotions; it's incredibly intense We have to help the person hold that.

AR: Right. Tell me about the side of your professional life that is the industrial organizational side. You mentioned sort of getting into it and starting a company.

MF: Right.

AR: How has that kind of unfolded?

MF: Well, in my own personal life it's less and less; now I'm really just doing one on one. Linda runs the company basically, you met Linda. But how it started was because of this EAP job that I initially had; when I left I understood how it worked. And I used to do a lot of presentations in business, which was fun. I did some seminars, actually even did communications for managers, things like that and that's how I started into it. And just under the EAP business, I always liked it because it was a company benefit where people didn't pay for [the service], the company paid for it. And usually it was limited, like one to three or one to five sessions, but it was helpful for people and they would never think of coming to a therapist. So you were working with actually functioning people who were working and yet they really are not psychologically oriented. So this is your introduction. And I think it's a really important place to be able to meet someone at this door of their own psychological self almost. So I liked the concept of it. And what's happened over the years, unfortunately, is that with managed care and health care changing, managed care started to take over some of the EAPs. And they don't really understand EAP, so they also wanted us to do their managed care, so we became more engrossed with managed care because we had to and because we already had these companies that took over the EAPs. So it's changed some, but still it's a company benefit. But then, what happens when it's more than what they're telling us; so you're given five sessions but you see right away that you're not going to use all five-then put them right on their managed care. So see them once or twice and then put them onto managed care, or if you think you can get through this in five, then you do that. So it's not quite as clean as it used to be but I still think it's a wonderful introduction for people. It's wonderful that companies are finally learning that in fact people take themselves with them into the workplace and [thus] when they're having stress or when they're having family issues at home, bereavement or whatever, that in fact it does affect their functioning. And so companies are seeing that it (44:55) them and you have to talk to them in terms of absenteeism and things like that.

AR: Right.

MF: But still, I think the concept is a really good one. And so now I'm really doing very little with the company, it's sort of on its own. We have about 10 therapists who work with us and a couple of them work out of this office here and some of them just work out of their own offices throughout the area. And we have about 35 contracts with national companies where we are their representative in this area. So it's been fine. It's mostly working on its own. Every once in a while we get a supervisory referral but usually it's totally confidential. When they are a supervisory, you do have to report certain things. But mostly, I'm really proud of the therapists. They seem to just roll with it and like it. Of course nobody's paid enough for this kind of work these days, and so that's a shame and that's an issue with I think psychology in general. (46:02) [These are not just psychologists who are working unless they're social workers]. We now have two licensed professional counsellors who are working on the AP programs. But I think in general psychologists' incomes are going down, which is absurd and you wonder. Look what happened in medicine: as more and more women get in it, it becomes less valued in a sense. It happened to teaching and I think it's happening to psychology and you really need to wonder what this is all about.

AR: Yeah. I wonder what the future will hold in terms of that [since] psychology has become just increasingly [and] overwhelmingly populated by women, especially clinical psychology.

MF: And watered down it seems to me in terms of what's valued. And I feel that we buy into, so do the medical professions; managed care is coming, so we just go, "Okay". You know, we really should have fought that. The whole idea of the decade of behaviour with APA, I mean our work isn't just behaviour, it's partly behaviour, but it's not just about behaviour. And what about the soul? Of course I sound like a Jungian! What about the family, what about relationships? I just think that behaviour just buys into all the least common denominators in some way.

AR: In some way, that's right, the sort of baseline.

MF: Right. And I mean it's important, behaviourism I think is powerful, but it's not all there is. It's not even half of all there is.

AR: Right. Well tell me more about mentors. You mentioned having had [Maddie Girschenfeld?]

MF: [Maddie Girschenfeld], she was one of my professors in my program and she definitely had a feminist consciousness, so the kinds of things she said often intrigued me. And she asked me to do things that I didn't know I could do, and seemed to see something in me that at the time I didn't see in myself. So that was wonderful for me. Other mentors, I think almost they didn't even know [that I considered them] mentors. There would be a professor here or there and I could just look at her and say, "That's the kind of professional I want to be!" Or "I want to have that kind of style, or that kind of integrity". And again, you absorb all these mentors and they don't even know who they are. And of course there are men too who you absorb, some of what you want to absorb is also there. But I think that kind of power, which they don't even know they have over you, is very powerful. I think the opposite is true too, which is probably that [I've] been a mentor to a lot of people that I don't even know about. And of course consciously I know I'm a mentor too, you know, I have some psychologists in my own practice…

AR: Right. Well, I was going to ask you about your role as a mentor too.

MF: The fact that I really like to do professional trainings. I've done a lot of professional training. I just did one not too long ago about doing women's groups. So here it comes full round; I had done this many years ago, and I was even bringing up some of the typical kinds of things that we used to do in some of these women's groups, like to picture the world to be different, to picture that the roles are different, to picture that women were just 100% in the Supreme Court and there were no men, how different that would be. And so there's still that that we need to look at, you know. We're not represented 50% in the power structure in this country and then of course there are other countries that are even worse. I think we have to help bring consciousness to that as well.

AR: Right. Well, I have a question that I always ask and I'm going to ask it, but I'm going to ask it in two different ways because we've been talking a lot about feminism generally and about the representation of women in different kinds of work, and so on. We've also been talking about feminist psychology, and so I want to ask you what you think feminist psychology has

accomplished and also what remains to be done within psychology, in terms of feminism. And then perhaps I could also get you to talk about feminism generally as a social and political movement. But let's stick with psychology for the moment.

MF: Well, I think that it took some of what Freud was saying made us rethink it, "Wait a second, maybe there are some things that are actually not within, there's some pathology that's without". And so I think that really needs to be acknowledged, and it is an interaction certainly. I think feminist psychology has accomplished quite a bit, even in terms of looking at how we work with couples. I mean we're not so locked into the roles and look at the world; it's okay to have different roles in a marriage now. There's a lot and we've come a long way in a lot of ways. I mean it's true that the younger generation, as we were talking about, doesn't maybe consider themselves feminist, but they are. And the fact that they don't even have to fight for it is an accomplishment! It's a wonderful accomplishment. In psychology, I think that the empowerment is the big issue; how does a woman empower herself and is it different than how a man does? And I think that it is often different. What are the definitions? I think maybe it's not about how a man or a woman does it, but how an individual person sees him or herself as successful. So the more we can go to the individual level [the better]. It is feminism to do that, it is feminist to do that, because that's just equality: to look at the individual level and [discover] what is meaningful in your life, or what [the] definition of success in your life. It doesn't have to do with you being a man or a woman; it has to do with who you are. And part of who you are is a man or a woman and how that expresses itself.

AR: Right.

MF: So if you look at the world, there's a lot that's been done. I think that more men psychologists actually should take some courses in feminism to understand a little bit more about the concepts. But there's just a lot more that needs to be done. There's a lot more awareness. I think that it's much more subtle now; I mean all the sexual harassment issues are not what they used to be or they are more aware. I think that awareness is really important. I mean a lot of sexism is so subtle. I think we know the overt stuff pretty much now, but a lot of it is still really subtle and really there. So I think we need to learn a lot more about it. I would have to really think more about it, but I think there's probably more work to be done with it. I think that mostly, the word feminism has to be accepted in a different way and I don't think it should be called something else. But I do think as feminists we've had some problems with our words. For instance, allowing the pro-life side to call themselves pro-life when that's just a lie. I mean, whose life are we talking about? And I think that was a huge mistake. I think we need to learn to label better. I kind of say let's stay with feminism, but in a way is it maybe gender-based therapy or something that might help people understand that it's really for men and for women; it's not just for women.

AR: One of the people I talked to said that she's a very different feminist today than she was in the 1970s. One of the things that have changed for her was that when she was a feminist therapist in the 1970s, she believed that feminist therapy was for women only and now of course she doesn't believe that at all. Her definitions have changed.

MF: I don't think I've changed that much. The way I think I've changed is that I used to be more angry. Actually it's even funny, but I think that was something that we all had to go through because maybe we didn't own our anger as women. You know, it wasn't nice to be angry, that wasn't how we were brought up to be; angry. So I think that was a process of [accepting that] we can be angry too. And anger is a very powerful emotion, it makes you feel powerful, but then there's another place to go with it.

AR: How many years have you been in clinical practice?

MF: Well I got my license in '77 and I was working in the field before then.

AR: So over thirty years.

MF: It's been a long time.

AR: Have you seen any, or could you speak about or discern any changes in the kinds of things that your clients and I guess I'm thinking specifically of your women clients, have brought to therapy. Have there been shifts or changes in that?

MF: Oh yeah, absolutely. First of all, they always used to be able to come during the day and now they can't!

AR: Yeah, that's true. You've had to change your schedule too.

MF: Well, actually I'm lucky that I see a lot of people during lunch hours. You know, they make their lunch hours from 11:00 to 2:00, or three, so that's pretty good. But I do think certainly women have made strides. And so I'm seeing more professional women now than ever before and more women who are also in many more relationships than ever before and people who are seeing that sequential relationships are more okay. I see a variety of ages in my practice. I just got a call from someone today who is 83 but I have seen a woman who was 84. I don't see children but I have seen as young as 17. I think that women are dealing with being much more frenetic and busier than they ever were before, certainly than when I started. I mean that's just true in general; I think it might be true for men also. I think that some of the issues are more about dealing in the world than maybe they used to be. You know, [before] it was more dealing with [their husbands and children], and now I don't see that as much. Well, with [issues] kids, [I still see] some of that, but still, I think it's more about meaning. It's more about how can I find meaning in my life, especially for people who come in mid-life. But that's true for men as well; I don't think that that's really different for men. You know, we've done one thing all our lives, but somehow, do I want to do this for the rest? There's something missing, that kind of sense.

AR: Would you have any advice for someone who is coming into psychology as a new person, who is also a feminist? What advice might you give to a young feminist?

MF: I think you have to carve your own way. I think for women, most careers are more meandering, you know. [I] don't think there's going to be a straight line. Just be open to what's drawing you here or there. It's really okay to explore different aspects of a field, it's really okay

to grow and develop. I think that's the most important thing, to listen internally to yourself. Your personal growth is not all that different from your professional growth in a lot of ways. I mean I just turned 65 and one of the good things about it is that I'm giving myself a lot more permission to take time off. I'm sorry I didn't do that earlier on because I think we have a very challenging profession and I do think that we probably could use more time off than we take. Even just to take a week [off] here or there more and now I just feel freer to do that. I don't want to stop working because I love it, so what I would say to people is that it's a wonderful profession if it's for you. If you're on your path you will know, you will know if you are on your path. And if it's not yours, there's probably enough in the field that you could find what's right for you in the field and then you can help someone else find what's right for them too. But get out of the way; let it be their course. In terms of feminism, I hope that people get educated about it and I can't see that there would be a lot to argue with these days. I don't think anybody is going to say, "You're a woman so you shouldn't be able to do what a man does." In other countries I'm sure that is true. But hopefully, I think that therapists should be a little more aware of whether they unconsciously have beliefs like that. [They should acknowledge their] own subtle sex roles. Are they coming out as messages to your patients? That's possible.

AR: Is there anything that I haven't asked you about, some aspect of your life or your career that I haven't touched on that you think would be important or that you would like to contribute?

MF: That's a good question. I'm wondering what the role of the psychologist should be in the world. Here it feels like the world is so in need of the resources that we have and why is it that we can't seem to be more powerful in those ways, in getting that across? I think the world is in such trouble and I think we could really help heal it if there were a way to do that, an opening to do that.

AR: Any ideas about what's stopping psychology from doing that?

MF: Well, I'm to blame as well. As I said to you before, I'm really not a political person. I really like to sit in my office and theorize or help people. And yet, there's a human chain on Saturday that I'll probably go to, but I think we have to look at our leaders and can we have them be more powerful or more conscious in terms of being more outspoken. Perhaps even just on that level, that might even make a huge difference.