Psychology's Feminist Voices Oral History Project

Interview with Meg Bond

Interviewed by Alexandra Rutherford
Waltham, MA
November 27, 2007

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MB – Meg Bond, interview participant
AR – Alexandra Rutherford, interviewer

AR – Well we'll start with our standard question, which is, tell me a little bit about the emergence or development of your identity as a feminist.

MB – That is no small question!

AR – It usually isn't.

MB – (0:20) [I really haven't thought about this much – seems like an odd thing to say!]. My emergence as a feminist…well it's hard to locate it but I was going to high school during the '60s. I graduated in 1970, so it was a time when there was a lot of talk about gender issues, and really, the feminist second wave was underway. And it's not really so much that I was deeply immersed in feminism in high school, that really didn't come until later, but I went to a very urban [high school]– I was in a minority as a white kid in that high school. I just can't help but think of that experience, being in this very multi-class, multi-racial urban high school, as a place where I was coming of age. I think that had a huge impact. I mean it has an impact on how I think about diversity and my introduction to diversity. Even if within the high school I was still playing some fairly gender [stereotypic roles] – I was a cheerleader and all of those kinds of, you know, very gendered kinds of things.

AR – Yeah.

MB – But I think there was a piece that laid some groundwork for some real sensitivity to social and political issues. And within my family, again not a hugely political family, or not a hugely progressive family, but I did get messages about [social issues] – my father was a lawyer and so sometimes we would kid around about how eventually we'd have a law firm that was Bond, Bond, Bond, and Bond, which would include my father, my brother, and me. So there were things that I can remember that were sort of marking possibilities that were way beyond my mother's. My mother was very educated, very smart, actually went to Radcliffe.

AR – Wow.

{2:30}

MB - She was an undergraduate at Swarthmore and then went on to get a certificate at Radcliffe in management. It was where all the white men were in the Harvard business school and the women who had any aspirations did this non-degree quasi program that later would become part of the business school. She then became a stay at home mom. [She was a] married, stay at home mom, had four kids. And it was her classmates who I think really broke through to whatever

extent women did. So it was a very traditional, white, middle class family, with a mother who, had she been born in another time, I think would have done something different. So some of the messages to me were that I was going to do things that she couldn't do. And even though we were in this cushy sort of white middle class neighbourhood, I went to this very urban multi-racial economically diverse school. And I just think all of that set the stage so that when I got to college, I was just very quickly drawn toward the whole consciousness – I had a women's group from my freshmen year in high school all the way, not the same group, but a women's group from 1970 into graduate school.

AR – Oh wow, okay.

MB – And different groups, but that was always an anchor for me. So it was very much a coming of age journey; the high school piece in the '60s and the college and graduate school in the '70s.

AR – And at college were you involved in second wave or women's liberation types of political activities? How did that play out?

MB – How did that play out? I had been so active in student government and things like that in high school that I think when I hit college I didn't really want to do the organized [group thing]– I don't know. I think I just sort of pulled back a lot from that. It was much more personal. Like I said, I had my women's group, and actually, I went to Stanford, so for me going to a school like that was a real culture shock.

AR – West coast?

MB – Well I grew up in Southern California, so no, it was culture shock in terms of the elitism, in terms of the homogeneity. I mean a lot of the kids that I now teach in college, they had the homogeneity in high school and then they had the heterogeneity in college. I had the opposite. So I got to Stanford and I was really, I did get kind of disillusioned by the level of privilege of so many of my classmates. And I did the year abroad, and was travelling, but after my sophomore year I ended up dropping out of school and went to live in Vermont with a cousin, and there I worked as an abortion counsellor for a little while.

AR – Oh wow.

{5:45}

MB – And [I] worked in a homeless shelter for kids, and I did several different jobs. So the organized political work, sort of, felt like I was part of the women's movement. I got involved in some of the anti-war protests and things like that, but not as any kind of organizer. I was sort of around that but it was really more personal networks of other women who were asking the same questions about gender, about sex roles, about sexuality.

AR – Well you mentioned the women's group. What was the nature of that group?

MB – It was very, very much the personal consciousness raising model of the times. We would meet once a week and really just talk about personal issues and explore and share, and sort of challenge practices that we were observing around us. But it was very personal.

AR – What then attracted you to psychology?

MB – Psychology, I think, growing up with this message of we would be Bond, Bond, Bond, and Bond, up until my senior year in college, I thought I would go to law school. And it really was this bizarre encounter, I remember, on the tennis court. I took some gym class where I was taking tennis and was playing against somebody else who was, I was a psychology major, so a psych major who just assumed that I was applying for graduate school in psychology. And it really hadn't occurred to me. I think partly because that was one of the gendered messages I got; I just didn't see myself as a PhD. It hadn't been something I could envision, but her sort of offhanded comment made me suddenly think oh yeah, maybe. Maybe the reason I wanted to go into law – and it was very sophisticated – was so that I could help people.

AR – Right, right.

MB – So maybe I could just learn how to go help people. I mean it really was not a deeply considered choice. In fact, I had really thought that I would not go into graduate school, at least not immediately, after college. But somehow it got organized by so many people around me, applying to graduate school, that I quickly threw a few applications in the mail. And even then after they went in I thought what I really ought to do is just take a break. But then I got a phone call from the University of Oregon, and not only were they going to invite me to join their clinical program, they were going to give me four years of funding. And I thought, I can't say no.

AR – Yeah exactly.

MB – So in some ways I kind of fell into psychology as opposed to it really being this really well thought out strategy.

AR – Well tell me about how it worked. Tell me about your graduate training.

{9:09}

MB – My graduate training. I was at the University of Oregon, and it was a behavioural clinical program. All of the faculty were white men, middle-aged, half of whom had [been only children] (9:30) – I mean they were a group of less than perfect fit role models. So there again there was a community of women students who really were my mentors.

AR – Okay.

MB – I mean in terms of, sort of, co-mentoring and some older women students who we spent a lot of time talking about women's issues and feminism with. I think it was my first year there, [when] a couple of us decided that we were going to put together a conference on women and mental health. [We] got the support of a faculty person who was in the school of education.

There was a woman in the school of [education], Susan Gilmore, and she cheered us on. But as a group of four or five students, we put together this conference and it was very successful. From my memory, is was something that people were just thrilled to see happen. So we did capitalize on a sense that there was something here that was really important to do, and to raise these issues.

AR – How did it go over within the clinical faculty?

MB – You know I don't have a real strong memory of that. It was not sponsored by, I was in the psych department, but it was not sponsored by psychology. I don't remember it being fought. I think it got kind of a benign nod.

AR – Yeah.

MB – But it felt like a tremendous boost in the sense of feeling like there were a lot of like minded, even though the faculty there were very homogenous white males, there was definitely a women's community and a feminist piece to that.

AR – Did that ever make its way into your actual training while you were there?

MB – Well the piece that made it into the formal training was actually through, I'm actually forgetting what faculty the person sponsored this, but we ran groups for pre-orgasmic women. The sex therapy movement was getting underway, and there was a model of running these groups for [individuals] we called pre-orgasmic women. And I also remember the other women students, there had to be a faculty advisor to this but I can't exactly remember who it was. This was through the psych clinic, I mean this was a legitimate piece of the psychology department. So I remember it not only being this very feminist therapy, but of the real mentoring that we all gave to each other; watching each other from behind the mirror and talking about really every clinical comment. And that kind of really deep, deep supervision that's both a professional development piece, but it's also a real personal development piece. So it did permeate in those ways.

{13:25}

AR – So far you've talked a lot about training in terms of a more typical kind of clinical training. It says in your CV that you got a PhD in clinical community. Explain that community piece.

MB – Again I dropped out of school. I knew I went to graduate school before I was very focused. I mean I just happened to get in, and they were lovely and gave me funding for the whole piece, which was wonderfully validating, but I think I really needed to have some time away and come back. Luckily in those days I didn't lose my funding; I was able to take a couple years of a leave of absence. And again actually, then I moved to Colorado. I lived in Bolder Colorado, and I worked at the Planned Parenthood in Denver as an abortion counsellor, there with a more sort of a paid position. I did that for a little while until I got a little disillusioned actually; it was not as political as I thought it would be, it turned out. It was sort of interesting; there was a rigidity to the job role that I rebelled against.

AR – So you could do this much but…

MB – I could do this much, but not that much more, and you need to talk about the medical facts, that there wasn't a political piece to it. And I think part of it was that I was young and was sort of chomping at the rigid, 'you will say this, you can't say this' [mentality]. But it still was a formative experience. But then after I left that job I got a job at an adolescent shelter, sort of similar jobs to what I did in Vermont. But these were more full staff positions and less of the volunteer capacity.

AR – Right.

MB – And while I was away, then I went back to Oregon, while I was away the clinical program there had [added] some new faculty. Jim Kelly had joined the faculty, so the program had taken a much more community tilt. And that fit for me.

AR – Yeah it was fortuitous.

MB - In terms of my feminism, I see community psychologists, the values that guide community psychology, the theories that guide it, are so compatible with feminism. And the clinical, that felt harder to figure out how that could fit. So with the clinical, the feminism felt more like a rebellion, and community felt like such a fit with my sense of wanting to work toward change and be a psychologist.

AR – Can you unpack that a little bit more and kind of explain why that is such a good fit in terms of…

{16:23}

MB – Well it's a good fit in some funny ways because certainly at that point in time, the fit hadn't been articulated. But community psychology very much comes from a systemic, very multi-levelled analysis of what leads to human suffering, human problems, social problems. It has a real focus on addressing social issues, and a real move away from a focus on pathology. Also thinking about people's strengths, those are really all core values or concepts in community psychology, and I think they're core values for me, in my version of feminism, core values of feminism. And looking at the way that the power distribution in society affects human relationships, I think is central to both in really big and really important ways.

AR – But yet that wasn't really acknowledged in the early history of community psychology.

MB – It really wasn't. And that's the article that Anne Mulvey and I wrote. It was ironically, oddly, not a part of those early days of community psych. Community psych was really formed as a field at a very similar time to the Division 35. But I, partly because of where I was, I was in a department where there was a community psychology. I could sort of embrace this field. But community psychology feels to me like it should have been more feminist from the get go.

AR – Yeah.

MB – And that's one of the things a number of us early on were talking about: how there's good feminist work being done in the field of psychology, and there's a community psychology which embraces values that are very compatible. Why are these two not connecting? But I stuck more with community psychology because partly I think that, not all, but I think that AWP [the Association for Women in Psychology] and some of those efforts were, it seemed to me from my vantage point, more clinically oriented. And I was moving away from clinical and moving into thinking about intervening in communities, and in a sense had moved onto thinking about organizations. That's sort of where I had moved with my community psych background.

AR – Right.

MB – So community psychology just was the field that really resonated for me in terms of values about justice, about how to address social problems. It gave me an academic place and set of theories to do the work that I wanted to do.

AR – I mean, you could ask the same question of feminist psychology: why wasn't it more influenced by community psychology?

{19:48}

MB – Well there was that, right, you absolutely could. Well there were people who were bridging those two much more actively than I was. I was much more within community. But yeah, there have been some boundary spanners, but not the kind of partnership that somehow you would have thought of, in terms of the compatibility of the two sub[fields] – you know we're all in psychology – the two subfields.

AR – Once you got back to Oregon and this community group had formed, were you able at that point to connect with mentors within the program?

MB – Well Jim Kelly was my advisor for a long time. He then left, and actually, Robyn Dawes was my dissertation advisor. And Robyn is not community, he's not in clinical, and he is in some ways a very unlikely mentor for a feminist dissertation. But it's one of the important lessons I learned along the way. My dissertation started under Jim Kelly. It was a comparison of two women's, what I call women's advocacy groups, but one was junior league. Very traditional, women, but very traditional, and they take on social issues but it's very white middle class. The other was a board of a feminist women's battered shelter. So I said, here are two women's groups with women involved in advocacy roles, and I wanted to look at the support networks. When Robyn took over and I eventually moved to Chicago, he wanted me to do two more, a junior league and a battered women's shelter in Chicago. But Robyn had such strong credentials as a traditional methodologist, that almost by happenstance, he was the one person in the department who could legitimize my very non-traditional dissertation.

AR – Right.

MB – And I am very grateful that he did that. And people didn't question the methodology because Robyn Dawes was such a top notch methodologist. And he respected the case study quality of it.

AR – I was going to ask, what was the methodology?

MB – Well he was very clear. I did have some committee members who were thinking, 'well your n is the number of women you're interviewing,' but Robyn was absolutely clear with me: 'you have an n of four, and you have to treat it like an n of four.' There may be many people making up these organizations, but it's an organizational level. And he was very helpful in saying that's perfectly legitimate, you just have to call it what it is and do your analysis based on it being a set of comparative case studies. So it was an interesting moment when I realized feminist work could happen with the endorsement of somebody who is respected for their very, very traditional work.

AR – Well it's amazing that he was so secure to be of that ??(23:11) too.

MB – Yeah.

{23:12}

AR – Well what did you compare the groups on?

MB – Well I looked at the support networks and how they used their support networks to really facilitate their advocacy work. And probably not surprisingly, it was the ideological compatibility and similarities that really fuelled the work of the women at the battered women's shelters, and it was much more of a social connection for the women in junior league.

AR – Okay.

MB - So I don't think I had any brilliant conclusions, but it was work that was really wonderful for me to do. I then went from Oregon and did my clinical internship at Denver, at the University of Colorado Medical Center, and then after that I moved up to Chicago, which was when I was finishing up my dissertation. And as I was saying, Robyn required, he said you have to have two more organizations. I think he wanted to put his stamp on the dissertation. Interestingly, the group that became my real support network in Chicago was the battered women's shelter.

AR – Oh neat.

MB - So I started out interviewing and doing sort of a historical analysis and learning a lot about this shelter, and then after I finished my dissertation I was invited to join the board. So I was in Chicago for about six years and that really was my, very clearly, feminist support network. So it wasn't a group of women who were psychologists, but they were just really wonderful, powerful, activists; part of that whole movement around domestic violence. Part of my interest has always been around how do feminist organizations evolve and develop, and I learned a lot there. Just

being part of the struggle of going from a really ideologically based organization, but trying to become sustainable and viable.

AR – Yeah.

MB - And really being in the midst of those forces around moving from a real collaborative model to thinking how do we raise money, how do you hold onto your feminist roots but still generate the kind of traditional resources that you need in order to really function. To be able to have a house and buy toilet paper, and all these sorts of basic things you need to do in a battered women's shelter, and sort of maintaining that. So that was really, really valuable, and those are some friends that we sort of went through a lot of struggles together on that board.

{26:13}

AR – I've interviewed a few people who have been involved in feminist therapy collectives, and sort of had their origin in the mid '70s. And they talk about similar things in terms of how do we remain feminist yet make this a viable, economically sustainable, place. So you worked on it in the context of a battered women's shelter. What were some of the struggles, how did people make those compromises? How did they navigate that, wanting to be feminist but also needing to do certain things to keep themselves going?

MB – Well some of it was the struggle around who was going to be on the board, that this organization, like a lot of feminist organizations, really was a group of feminists who got together and said domestic violence is a problem. And this is one of the older shelters in the country. So the roots were very much out of a feminist grassroots kind of effort to create a safe place, a safe confidential place, for women who've been abused. So the founding members were clearly feminist, I mean very explicitly. And just starting from creating an organizational structure that lets the staff kind of do the day to day work and separates out and builds a board of directors, that is one sort of juncture that's a little disconcerting. I came on the board after they had at least created more of a governing board structure, but there's a temptation I think in a lot of these newly formed organizations to have a lot of blurred lines between the board.

AR – Non-hierarchical.

MB – Non-hierarchical and collaborative. And you know those meetings that go on until 2am so that you can come to a consensus. And I think you can only do it when you're young!

AR – When you have the energy.

MB – When you have the energy, yeah, and the commitment to working it through. But when I was involved, I actually ended up as president to the board a couple years after I joined. We hit this juncture that is not at all uncommon where we realized we needed powerful women on our board; we needed connections. We needed lawyers, we needed bankers, we needed professional fundraisers. And as you go, and as we went, you're starting to look for people who have particular skills, but they may not be connected to the same political analysis that's been so essential to the founding, and be really identifying as a feminist organization. And the tensions

were really palpable, and there were dramas around an executive director who was sort of displaced, and this board member who had this fundraising expert. You know the dramas. The details really are not so essential, but the tensions that emerged between efficiency and ideology, between how much do we sort of go after the sources of influence and the particular skills that we need. And unfortunately that sometimes meant a stress on having shared values; that the lawyers who want to work in a much more…

AR – Bottom line?

{30:04}

MB – Bottom line sort of way, and lets not fuss with all this extra, lets just get the job done, sort of the loss of process in that.

AR – Interesting.

MB – And one of the funny [things], not funny, but I think it has happened through so many organizations, was this deep debate about do we go for Playboy foundation money. At that point the Playboy Foundation was one of the few foundations that was giving money to domestic violence shelters. So that just embodies the conflict.

AR – That's so bizarre.

MB – Well I think it was Hugh Hefner's daughter who had some investment in looking at women's issues. But do we take money that's been made off of the objectification of women in order to sustain a program that's really based on fighting that? And for many of us, it was no, we don't. But then there's this sort of new wave of folks coming in saying it's money, it's going to sustain the shelter. So those kinds of tensions around where do your values fit and how do you hold onto them. So that was really a very, very important part of my history there in Chicago.

AR – And where did you go from Chicago?

MB – Well in Chicago, I mean I have a fairly non-traditional academic trajectory because I never wanted to be an academic. Again, I think I couldn't envision it. I just don't think I had an image that it was a job that a woman could do. I don't know, I just didn't see it. So in Chicago I worked at a place called the Illinois Institute for Developmental Disabilities, and I was part of a management and organization development group. We went all over the state doing OD work with agencies that serve the developmentally disabled, and it was a partnership between the department of mental health and the University of Illinois, Chicago. So I ended up with an adjunct position at UIC and did some adjunct teaching. And even though I had always thought that I would just have an applied job, and I still love doing that kind of consulting, I ended up starting to do some research and some teaching, and ended up thinking maybe this academic piece might be interesting.

AR – Yeah.
{32:57}

MB – And also at that time, that's when I got more deeply involved in community psychology, when I was there. Because there in Chicago, and the people I was working with in this role and connected with UIC, there was a very strong network of community psychologists. I mean, Chicago has always had [that], and at that point there were a number of graduate programs in community psychology. You had UIC, you had DePaul, Loyola.

AR – So there was a good strong community there.

MB – There was a strong network of community psychologists. And the people I worked with there, Chris Keats was really the main person in the management and organization development program that I was in. He was on the faculty at UIC. I just got more deeply involved with the Society for Community Research and Action, with Division 27, and at my very first APA, I volunteered to be co-chair of, I think it was an interest group at that point, on women.

AR – Oh neat.

MB – So [I] got very involved in Division 27 while I was in Chicago, and connected to those roots. And connected particularly through my involvement with what eventually became a standing committee on women. And through that I started doing research on sexual harassment.

AR – Oh, okay.

MB – So it wasn't so much even through my job, although I was looking at organizational issues, and because we were this quasi academic mental health kind of place, I got support for doing research. I mean not a lot of financial support, but it was okay for it to be a part of my job. So one of the first studies I did there was a survey of women in community psychology, asking about their graduate experiences and finding out that about a quarter of them had said they'd been sexually harassed. And that was partly with my hat of co-chair of the committee, but went on from there to do research on sexual harassment for several years. So in an odd way I ended with a vita that had some academic credibility, never thinking I would go an academic route, and never really aspiring to that. [So it's a little like having gone into graduate school] (35:35)

AR – Yeah, yeah.

MB – And then met my current husband in Chicago. He was offered a job out in [Nashawa], and I was feeling like maybe I wanted to try to move in a different route, and didn't quite see myself being able to do that in Chicago. I just was ready, I was open to moving. So we moved out here at that juncture.
AR – Okay. And did you at that point try and get an academic job?

{36:07}

MB – Well I did, you know. At the place that offered him a job, which was a for-profit mental health [organization]. He was designing the family therapy program, and they offered me a job in their group and organizational component. I don't think I ever really thought I would stay there

for very long. I would just use that as a good transition point. But there was one juncture – this was run by a lot of psychiatrists – where they were invited to come in and work with the community on the emerging problem of adolescent suicides. I was asked to consult, and I developed a proposal that was all about meeting with community leaders and finding out what's going on in the community. And I had this whole process developed that was very collaborative and finding out what the community strengths were and the issues, just very process oriented and very collaborative.

AR – Yeah.

MB – But I put together this whole proposal, took it into the psychiatrists, and literally this woman went through it saying, 'They don't want to be collaborative! They asked us to come in and tell them what to do. We're supposed to be the experts here.' I had heard that community psychology was started in many ways out of a rebellion from that. I had never quite seen it so in my face, and I really couldn't believe what this woman was saying to me. I just realized in that moment that this is not the place for me, I need to get out of here fast. So I had been playing with the idea of looking for an academic job, and I got on it. So I only lasted for maybe about three months I think at this place, but it was long enough.

AR – Yeah.

MB – And interestingly, I got my first job at Lesley College, which is a women's college, and one that could see my fairly non-traditional credentials as… I mean I had many more conference presentations and publications in the works than a lot of the current faculty. [It was] very much a teaching place. So they appreciated my applied [work], and I had sort of the academic credentials, even though not coming straight out of an academic position. So I worked at Lesley as my first position.

AR – Okay. I'm a little bit conscious of time and I do want you talk about, we're skipping ahead, but I do want you to talk about your most recent work. You've gotten a grant now, well the work I'm thinking of is the women and work project, the [WISE-??].

MB – That actually, I wouldn't consider that my primary work.

AR – Okay, well tell me then.

{39:20}

MB – My more recent work is focused on issues of race and gender in organizations. [I mean the sexual harassment work [is primary] for me, really. [We're] trying to develop an ecological model of sexual harassment, and thinking about changing organizational cultures and contexts as a way to address problems like sexual harassment, which in so many circles has been legalistic. And again, consistent with both my feminist roots and my community psych roots is thinking about things in terms of multiple levels, and thinking about the whole organizational system, and even intervening in ways that really almost don't even mention issues of diversity or

discrimination or harassment. And so going from that I really have moved into general issues of race and gender in organizations. The book that I just published is a case study.

AR – Oh.

MB - Eight years I worked with a very unlikely place for a feminist community psychologist, but [I worked with] a manufacturing firm. Very blue collar, very white male dominated production firm, manufacturing, that made a real commitment to looking at issues of race and gender. So then I sort of moved back to my case study kind of methodology, and it was very collaborative. I think they really saw me as a consultant, and I saw it as a case study. So that work I've just finished writing up.

AR – Okay, and not to give away the book, but what did you find? What worked in this context? This was a place that was open to making changes in terms of gender and ethnicity. What did you find?

MB – Well it's hard to encapsulate that.

AR – It's a whole book!

MB – Well it's a whole book and what the book does, and what my work has done and is going to continue to do, is really take a very ecological framework, which is straight out of community psychology, and look at the process of change. So a lot of what I've tried to do in that book is chronicle the many pieces of what we did, in terms of developing partnerships with the organization, to doing training that was really focused on an individual perspective (developing an ability to see multiple realities and to really look at their relationships in different ways). We did a lot of work with teams in terms of developing, and some of the teamwork didn't even necessarily mention [that] it wasn't straight diversity focused. It was opening up people's eyes to the interdependencies and the importance of thinking about the impact you have on other people, and thinking much more collectively was also a big piece of the team based work. And then a whole thread of the work was very much on institutionalizing a value for diversity.

AR – Okay.

{42:34}

MB – Around both policies, but also in terms of messages from the top down about what's acceptable and what's important, and what will and will not be tolerated. So over the years, it was very multi-layered. And what I try to do in the book is really chronicle some of the dilemmas. So it's not prescriptive. I don't really believe in the ten steps toward diversity kind of approach. So it's not sort of neatly packaged as this pop sort of set of solutions.

AR – Yeah, take this and apply it here.

MB – Right, right, and that's one of the things I'm very committed to, is that you really have to think [about] each [thing in] context. You could learn, there are many wisdoms that can be taken and dynamics learned from settings, but each setting has its own unique character.

AR – Yeah.

MB - So what I'm doing right now, since I've sort of pulled together that piece, is that I very much want to go back to my community roots. All the work I did in Illinois was with community based non-profits and state run organizations. I did this foray into manufacturing, but I really want to get back to doing similar kinds of work with community based agencies, because I think they are indeed facing even more intense diversity. Plus the diversity has tremendous implications for the quality of the services they can provide to diverse communities, and then you mix that with a whole different [set of things, such as] the funding and sustainability challenges that face community based organizations. That's really where I'm moving at this juncture.

AR – Oh neat. And with the US population becoming increasingly diverse, and as you say the funding getting increasingly smaller…

MB – It's a real challenge. So the Women in Science piece that you mentioned, I do direct the centre for women and work at ____ (44:37). We're celebrating our tenth anniversary this year, so we've been at that for awhile.

AR – And how did that centre come into being?

MB – That centre came into being because the previous director actually was [Mary Roth Walsh]. She wasn't really the previous director of this, but she had created a centre for research on women in the workplace. And when she died there was this shell of a structure. It's very had in the state of bureaucracy to create something new, so really Mary left us this gift that was really, there was not much there, but there was an entity. And our dean at the time, I was collaborating with an economist on workplace diversity issues, and she thought an interdisciplinary pair was perfect, and our topic was right on target. So she really tapped us and said we don't want to let this die, will you two take it over?

{45:35}

AR – Okay.

MB – So we started from scratch really, but had the blessing of having this state sanctioned entity. So we changed the name to The Centre for Women and Work, and turned it into something that was not just a single research agenda, which was what Mary had, but was more multi-faceted. And Jean retired about five years ago, so I've been at it by myself for about five years.

AR – Wow.

MB – And it's really evolved, I think, in some wonderful ways. It's now, more anything, a hub for a place to bring together a wide range of scholars who are all invested in looking at issues of gender in the workplace. My effort has been to create an intellectual community and a support system, so that it can generate real spin offs. That's really at the core of the center.