Psychology's Feminist Voices Oral History Project

Interview with Michelle Fine

Interviewed By Leeat Granek
The Graduate Center
New York, NY
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L: Leeat Granek, Interviewer

M: Michelle Fine, Interview Participant

L: So I'll start by asking you some general questions about feminist identity and then I'll move into asking some questions about your career and then the last part will be a wrap up of the combination of both. How and when did you first develop a feminist identity?

M: Probably depends on what we are calling feminist - I think that I, I grew up in a household of immigrant parents. My mother is the youngest of 18 children from a Jewish family in Poland and they came as kids. I was raised in kind of the 'air conditioning' of thinking about social justice and injustice, but my parents' relationship was a pretty traditional relationship of that generation where my dad lived a very bold and exciting life, a kind of American dream story. They came here during the era when Karen Broadkin Sacks wrote the book 'How the Jews Became White', it was the era of the GI bill and suburbanization. My dad started out as a junk salesman on the lower east side in a horse and a buggy, but that soon built into a plumbing supply salesman. My mother, on the other hand, was kind of the stay at home, more depressed [kind of mother]. She carried the pain and the loss of generations that his kind of progressive narrative didn't allow.

So there was a weird splitting, not split like they split, splitting in terms of how loss and progress get separated from each other. So as their youngest, watching that split created kind of an early sense for me in responsibility to voices not heard, but a desire to get out of the house! So that front door becomes symbolic 'how do you get out of here' knowing that my mother has headaches and was lying in bed as we all exited. So my mother used to say charity begins in the home as we all ran out of the house to save the world, but not the home. So I start feminism there.

And then through high school, really trying to figure out women's roles and their roles and kind of knowing. I think I wrote about this in the introduction to *Disruptive Voices*. Watching my mother cry on the kitchen table, made me think, 'No I'm not going to do that.' And I think my sister [thought that] as well. My sister made the same judgment. I have a brother and a sister, both older than I. My sister is seven years older, my brother is 11. When I got to college - I was at Penn State and I think I took the first women's studies course ever - and it just, it just, I feel like it saved me, it opened me, it gave me a way to frame a whole set of feelings, thoughts, anxieties that I had about my own body, my family's relationship, my role in the world.

L: Do you remember who taught it?

M: Yah, of course it was collective! It was a collective of women at Penn State. So from that point forward, I was involved in the rape crisis movement, violence against women movement. Then later abortion rights, sterilization abuse, lesbian rights. So it opened up through violence against women and then into a broader array of feminist and socialist feminist and integrating kind of critical race and queer theory as the world evolved and politics evolved. It started early but it gained words probably in college. It had a set of bodies and emotions attached to it pretty early on I think. I think the depression of my mother's generation for many of us gave birth to the feminism of our generation.

L: What kinds of things specifically were you involved in the feminist movement? You started to mention abortion…?

M: Reproductive rights. Violence against women, those were the primary ones in college and graduate school. Then I got involved in the disability, women with disability rights movement, but through an organization called CARASA in New York, the Committee for Abortion Rights and Against Sterilization Abuse. It was a pretty broad kind of feminist, socialist commitment around reproductive rights, child care, federal funding for abortion, young women's access to contraception and then lesbian and gay rights within a broad reproductive rights framework.

L: It's amazing that these things are still going on.

M: Contentious ! And rolling back to what it was…

L: We are still fighting for the same things. Ok, so what attracted you to psychology and how did you merge your feminism with your work?

M: I think I was always interested in how the social group fit into the psychological and how the psychological, the self, resisted and responded. I think that's - I've lived at that border. And so psychology was appealing. And then when I got to graduate school I had the fortune to work with Morton Deutsch who was a student of Kurt Lewin's, and Mort was very interested in questions of justice. So it wasn't so hard to turn the corner and move to questions that interested me and there I could do work around gender and race and sexuality and class. My dissertation was a randomized experiment where people kind of gracefully treated each other like shit and then we saw who blamed the victims and who blamed the system, but my dissertation, the text was started Hester Prynne, who has really been a character in my intellectual life. Hester Prynne is the women in the *Scarlet Letter* who gets pregnant and then gets sent to the margins of society and it's from the margins that she narrates a very powerful social critique, even as she wears the A for adulatory, some people think she wore the A for America. So, I grew interested in the outlier who watches and engages and might be stigmatized, but actually resists that. So Mort Deutsch, Kurt Lewin, that line of work really created a segue for me to get involved.

L: Why did you choose Teachers College as opposed to any other graduate program?

M: Well, first I went to Boston University and I was working with Clara Mayo there and she passed away. There was a very contentious tenure battle at Boston University and students got wrapped up into it, so a bunch of us fled. I wanted to come to New York and I really wanted to find someone who was theoretically interested in questions of justice

and Mort Deutsch was the guy for the job. There weren't a lot of women mentors around to be found.

L: Did you have any other mentors there?

M: He was really the primary one. I also worked with Charles Kadushin, but Mort was the kind of theoretical and emotional mentor.

L: Ok, and how did you get involved with alternative research methodologies? You said your dissertation was the randomized control study and then how did that turn for you?

M: My first job was at the University of Pennsylvania at the school of education and the dean at that point was an anthropologist by the name of Dell Hymes who is a quite renowned linguist and anthropologist. The school of education at that point had just hired a group of mostly women, young women, but also men who were really well trained in a variety of disciplines, kind of critical disciplines - history, anthropology, linguistics, psychology - and so for twelve years that I was at Penn, I had really the remarkable opportunity in working in a profoundly interdisciplinary space that allowed me to think through under what conditions might an experiment be a useful strategy, but also what other tools are available and given my interests in theory action, policy, certainly more ethnographic methods at that point were appealing to me. Later, more currently, participatory methods. But I'm still kind of in that world. I'm kind of the nerd who still likes numbers and comparisons and you know, there are two ways in which I remain a nerd. One is, a lot of my friends who do critical theory have just stopped gathering data or constructing or whatever verb we need here at all. Lois Weis in particular, we have had a long wonderful collaboration holding ourselves accountable to what people have to say about their lives, women, working class people, women in prison, kids who are thrown out of school. So for me that's kind of interesting to group theory with empirical materials, so I don't really want to dispense it. So that's one way I'm odd in the critical education world.

The other way is that, even though I'm probably best known for qualitative methods, really all of the work I do is mixed methods. We worked in a women's prison for four years and did a participatory study of the impact of college on women in prison and half the research team were prisoners and half outsiders and we got the New York State Department of Corrections to do a big recidivism study. So we actually had a number to which we could then hang our interviews with women and their kids and correction officers and women post-release. Our ethnographic observations and women's narratives and memoirs were also part of it. So mixed methods and kind of a commitment to still working through empirical materials feels really important to me.

L: It's funny too that in Psychology you are certainly, when you say I'm standing out as wanting to have the numbers, in psychology that's such a common thing, qualitative methods are much more marginal, outlier.

M: Well yes, yes, I live in both of those worlds. I teach in psychology and urban education and women's studies. In Urban Ed, someone just said to me, Teachers College - they like to teach research methods because they are a 'good guy' who uses numbers. The good guy is code for qualitative. And in Psych, you know there's a real dominance of the experimental model and numbers and counting and decontextualized variables, although I think that's certainly changing a lot, or has changed a lot in the last five years.

L: I read in your CV that you were a visiting scholar at the University of New Zealand in 2000. What were you doing there?

M: At the University of New Zealand I was invited by Linda Smith who is the director of the Institute for Maori Studies. She and I had collaborated on thinking through what critical participatory work looked like and that was a really remarkable visit. The kind of civil rights struggle there is really separate and unequal and it's really a struggle around sovereignty and autonomy. Which is very different than the kind of integration battle that we have here even though we don't do it all, and from what I hear Canada is catching up to the worst of us at this point. I have a colleague down the hall who is a black Canadian

from Nova Scotia who every time I use Canada as a positive example, he says hold up a minute. So, I really went to New Zealand to understand and work around this question around participatory methods, but also really also involved theoretical and political struggles around what justice look likes, so it was really a kind of cold shower in thinking through autonomy and sovereignty, what we would call segregation here as a civil rights strategy and it has forever influenced how I think about the illusions of integration here, or the necessary conditions for really bringing people together across lines of power.

L: And is that project continuing now?

M: We continue to be in touch. They had a projected called Kids First where they were collecting data from young people around the country, immigrant, Maori, Pakeha, Pakeha are white New Zealanders, queer kids, kids with disabilities, rich kids, poor kids, kids in Maori schools, kids in integrated schools. They were collecting testimonials and then presenting them back in small communities and I was doing similar work with young people across different kinds of schools and zip codes and neighborhoods, so we have been in very close touch about that. So we have collaborated on a journal [issue] we did in the international critical psychology journal that Valerie Walkerdine edited. So Linda's work was in there when we were writing on counterstories and methods for lifting up counterstories.

L: Ok this is a general question. As you look back on your program of your research, what do you see as the major themes? So you talked about social justice, racism, feminism, education, disabilities, qualitative methods. How do they all come together for you? How do they merge? What do you see as the most important of them all? Or as the major focus of all of them?

M: My biggest contribution is in the students who have worked for me who are now people in universities and transforming how we think about methods. The academy's relationship to social issues, injustice. I was just coming here on the train reading an article about the new President of Iran is calling for the removal of liberal and secular

academics from the academy. At the same time there was on Op-ed piece by an Iraqi journalist who said the United States allowed us to emerge and now you are turning our backs on us and we are like a voice and soon atrocities will continue and there will be no voice. At the same time Adolph Reed had an essay on who dares to cover what really happened in Katrina? And so that's all to say I think my biggest contribution is helping to kind of grow and nurture a generation, a diverse generation of young scholars who dared to integrate theory, research, policy and action. Bringing rigorous data to questions that we would choose to socially silence. And some of that is about qualitative methods because people on the bottom of hierarchies say it better, and some of it is about numbers.

The prison study that I talked about - Bill Clinton signed a law in 1994 that took college away from prisoners and before that there were 355 colleges in prison programs in the country and then in 1995, there were 8. Because they took Pell grants away, tuition assistance. So we did this participatory study with women in prison about the effect of college. Because we mobilized to resurrect college through a consortium of universities. Women university presidents met at the maximum security prison for women and agreed that if women are going to turn their lives around, they would need education. And so they each contributed two faculty members, and we created a consortium of faculty/colleges to offer a full curriculum for a B.A. in Sociology. And the New York State Department of Corrections did this recidivism study and they found that women who had been through college while in prisons had an 8% recidivism rate, women who hadn't had it had a 33% recidivism rate. So that number which we then could print out and produce cost/benefit analysis, doesn't make sense to spend tax dollars keeping people in prison for all those years because they are much more likely to then come back and then foster care for the kids, especially women. And also then we could begin to interrogate how do women end up in prison for violent crimes and as often as not, in this country it's called felony manslaughter, which means he shot someone, she hid his gun. He killed somebody, she didn't say anything to the police, she drove the getaway car.

So that number on recidivism actually allowed us to interrogate a number of ways in which crime, violence, the prison industrial complex and its kind of collateral damage are gendered. It was really cool. That was a research group of 8 of us, 15 of us. 8 women

inside the prison, prisoners who we trained in research methods and then myself and 7 researchers from the outside. So I think I feel best about the work that happens at the intersections of critical theory, under which sits feminism and critical race.

L: Do you have a teaching philosophy?

M: Yah, I probably teach in the way that I do research, which is very participatory. Today is my first class on social injustice, I need to hear what people are working on and then build the course around that - which always makes it tricky around figuring out what is your syllabus! Just like it's hard to do a literature review on a participatory project because until it's launched… but I also take seriously Vygotsky's notion of zone of proximal development, kind of taking people to places where they can't imagine quite going and then the third cut on that is trying to create a classroom where dissent and inquiry are routine and respectful. So the first assignment people have to do is take a scene of social injustice and write about it as kind of creative of non- fiction from the point of view of a person they would not likely be. So I've had people, a Latina, a fabulous Latina women, Madeline Perez**,** wrote from the point of view of a white woman talk show host who was trying to be really cool around 'sistas'. A student Maria Torre, who was doing work with me at the prison wrote an essay from the point of view of a right to life corrections officer who was taking a woman prisoner for her abortion and the conversation they had. Another woman, Sarah Carney wrote from the point of view of the kind of nerdy but smart girl who was used by the cool girls who made believe they were her friend because they wanted her to do her homework. Kenny Foster wrote a piece from a black, he's an African American social psychologist, from a black kid, and what he was thinking when Kenny walked in and thinking 'I'm down with these kids, I can do this research' and this kid was like, you're getting a PhD, you're rich, you're old! So it's a useful way to say, we're not here about singular points of view, we're here around multiplicity, queer your thinking a bit, write well before graduate school destroys your writing.

L: So related to this, how do you think psychology can become more politicized?

M: I'll give four answers. One has to do with epistemology, which is where do we think knowledge lies and who has it. From my work and from Nancy Hartsock and Patricia Hill Collins and Gloria Anzaldua I would argue that there is a lot of knowledge-percolating going on at the bottom of social hierarchies that's not naïve, or wrong, or uncontaminated by ideology but there's a kind of social criticism, a knowledge percolating inside the woman who cleans the bathroom here and knows who throws Tampex on the floor and who throws paper in recycling and not, but is sworn not to tell. So one has to do with epistemology, where do we find knowledge and who knows and these notions of kind of expert validity and concurrent validity.

L: Before you move on, do you think psychology should have an explicit epistemology or ontology? These are two different things… is there an explicit epistemology in which we should operate?

M: No, I would never argue for a singular epistemology in psychology, but I would argue that people need to be clear about their epistemologies and ontologies that they are relying upon when they do their work and most of psychology is done from what Sandra Harding would call 'the G-d's eye view', 'the view from nowhere', that's really problematic. The only people who are positioned are you know white feminists, sometimes women of color. So we are positioning those of us who are Hester Prynne, who are wearing the A and not repositioning the G-ds eye view. So I think there needs to be an explicitness around from where we believe knowledge derives in each piece of work. But I wouldn't say psychology can and should as a discipline, but I certainly think that critical psychologists have begun to integrate this. And even within critical participatory folks, there are big fights. There is a guy named Anisur Rahman who is in Bangladesh who does very interesting participatory work, but within his contexts and from his point of view, he needs to train animators, using Boal's theatre of the oppressed framework from theatre of the oppressed to go to communities and help animate the issues that people are experiencing. My work is much more direct. We create occasions where women in prison, or kids, or a very diverse group of young people can come

together and actually we can create a pedagogy and a space where people can begin to narrate and challenge and shift their position. So it's different, and that's all within participatory - much less experimental design where the categories of the constructs are all over determined.

On this point, I am doing a project with a colleague who is Muslim, Turkish and we are looking at Muslim American young people in the US, post 9-11. He's a quantitative psychologist. All of the grants we have applied for required these kind of designs that predict depression or anger or acting out, so we used these instruments that are nuts. These Muslim American kids are not drinking, having sex, yelling out, that's not where the acting out is happening. But in addition we are doing focus groups and we have them do maps. These maps which I'm happy to e-mail to you are just magnificent representations of the complexities of their lives. We just say draw maps of your many identities and the young women mostly draw Islam and America and it's blended and its freedom and education. The boys, who can be upper-middle-class boys from New Jersey who have never been to Pakistan, draw U.S green terror, Pakistan, brotherhood, peace, I want to go back home. On the quantitative stuff, there are no gender differences and no one is smoking and everyone looks very healthy. And then on these maps, one gets a very different visual read on what's cooking. So where does knowledge lie? How do we gather it? How do we construct it? How do we co-construct it? Those are all questions psychology needs to be asking itself. So that's one chunk.

Another is what topics do we take up, what are the problematics, to what extent in this country do we really study ideology or class? And if we do, do we understand that these are social formulations rather than categories of people? When we set a class, we interview the poor black, Latina, or white woman who is in college. Class is obvious there, but you can also study race, so the notion of kind of social formulations is missing in psychology, so even the kind of progressive, whatever, is still pretty categorical for me. So the categories, whether they are gender or sexuality or class or race or ethnicity, I get why we do it and I participate in this. At the same time we are really lacking the vision that would be more sociological, but to which I think psychology has a lot to offer that says, we live in a class formation and people are living and operating inside those. We really don't understand class simply by interviewing or surveying poor people. And

the role of ideologies has really been lacking. So what constitutes knowledge, what methods do we use, what topics, what's our project? Are four questions researchers should be asking themselves.

Flip Tape

L: Four questions…

M: Which sounds a little Passover-like, doesn't it?! The psychologists need to be asking ourselves, what's the project? There was a time and maybe we still do it, where we were testing attribution theory by talking to women who had been raped and like the rape was just the context in which we studied it.

L: Do you feel like psychology should have a, I know you don't like 'shoulds', a project that is.. when you say 'what's our project?'… should have a social justice aspect to it always/ or is there room for basic research?

M: I think there is a basic research on social justice. I don't want to juxtapose them. I think people do laboratory experiments that are around social justice. I think the work of Benaji or John Jost, or Gardner and Dovidio or Faye Crosby, people who are doing basic research that speaks to questions of social justice. What I worry about is that there is a kind of creeping hegemony with respect to funding, publications and what's considered 'rigorous' that is privileging either practice, professionalism or experimentation, quantitative methods and I worry that young psychology scholars who are interested in more critical methods are not teaching in psych departments, they are getting jobs in schools which is what I did, in human development, social work, nursing, communications, women's studies and so by so doing, we have left psychology to the MRI's, to the imaging machines, to the brain cognitive [people], so the social gets loped off. That's a worry that I have. That there is a creeping hegemony towards a singular ontology that's problematic with respect to asking questions that are profoundly social and that are about justice. But I don't know that social justice requires a singular method

and in fact, it's clear to me that it doesn't. But psychology as a discipline needs to create room for folks that are doing critical work. I do worry that we have now found our own journals, found our own book series. Seltrick and I want to do an essay with our students on these maps and how they do and don't speak back to the quantitative stuff and just last night we were thinking what journals would actually be interested in that intersection, kind of there are methods journals. I mean the qualitative journal will do it…

L: But I guess then you are talking to people who already know that!

M: Yah yah yah, that's ok! Because it's kind of fun to be in those conversations. But psychology is kind of becoming a gated community. As my students are looking for jobs, I can see what psychology means increasingly and again, once they get there imaging machine, it's over. So, keeping the kind of pluralism of psychology, keeping SPSSI in psychology, keeping critical perspectives in psych feels like working against an increasingly gated community.

L: Ok, you've had a prolific career in publishing books and articles, I was looking through your CV and was very impressed! What publication are you most proud of? And which do you think has had the most impact? And why? And they may or may not be the same one of course.

M: There are three pieces, four, five, that I most love. 'Framing Dropouts' was a very important book, particularly in education, because like Hester Prynne, it renamed kids who leave schools as social critics rather than depressed, alienated, hopeless, withdrawn. That they became kind of voices of consciousness and responsibility around what's going on in public education for poor kids of color. I think that that book kind of helped bring the question of drop outs out of the closet. And it's back to the closet as we move to high stakes testing. I think Canada is just 10 minutes behind the U.S on high stakes testing.

L: By high stakes testing you mean standardized testing?

M: Yes standardized tests in order to graduate. So the more high stakes test you have, the higher your dropouts rates are, but school districts are only talking about how test results are increasing but it's the poor kids who are left in their senior year. So this question in keeping the dropouts in the room.

The second is this essay I wrote in '88 called "The Missing Discourse in Desire" which I think has been translated into, I don't know, I met someone from Taiwan who said it was translated into Chinese. And it originally came out in the Harvard Ed Review. It's an essay about sexuality and sex education and girls, and how the available discourses for girls are victimization, violence, morality, but not desire. With a student here, Sara McClelland we have been writing a twenty-year follow up to that and we are just crafting an essay on wanting and girls and women's appetites. If our clitoris can come over and over again and is disconnected from reproduction, one might make the claim that we are built for wanting, and yet if we eat too much, want too much, talk too much, talk too loud, have too much sex, that's a bad thing. So kind of theorizing why wanting is so dangerous for women and how that kind of plays back to what is desire mean today. We have a twenty-year follow up, I'll be glad to send it to you, it's coming up in the Harvard Ed Review in September. It's called, I don't know, 'Sexuality and Desire, still missing after all these years'. So that was a cool piece and I love that piece.

The third piece is the hyphen piece in the Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln's book that I think brought psychology into that kind of critical, qualitative conversation for me at least. Thinking through the relational position, pieces of what it means to be a researcher in relation with that which you study, rather than the researcher on, or even for, but not with. So that feels important too.

The fourth is the prison work I just love. And then the most, I kind of love this Muslim work we are doing now. Over the last couple of years, in 2004, I published with a bunch of a students with this project. We worked with a bunch of youth researchers from rich schools and poor schools and top tracks and bottom tracks and student council and lesbian and gay clubs, bringing them together to look at what we were calling the achievement gap. They rightly corrected us as the opportunity gap. We brought them together over four summers. We had research camps for young people. They conducted a survey of nine thousand young people across a whole set of districts. We had open-ended,

close-ended questions, and then on the anniversary of Brown Vs. Board of Education, there was a youth performance. Our last research camp was on social research, social justice and performance. They worked with dancers, chorographers and spoken word artists, so there is a book called *Echoes of Brown* and it's all the youth spoken word pieces as well as the performances as well as all the data.

L: That's so cool!

M: That's cool! Thinking hard about audience and product has been pretty interesting and that's something that Psych rarely does, but kind of, you know, breaking the hermetic seal around everything's fine. So it's back to my mother lying in bed with a headache as my dad says, 'America is the greatest country! I'm going to go sell plumbing supplies!' It's making sure she's in the world as well as him, rather than she being seen as the depressed other for whom it didn't quite work out.

L: Ok, what advice would you give to a feminist woman working in Psychology now?

M: Remember that, think hard about… there's two kinds of advice. One is how to get along with colleagues and the other is the kind of work you might want to be doing. How to get along with your colleagues. Presume they have daughters that they care about. When I was at Penn we did a sexual harassment survey of the university community. There were two guys from Warden- the business school, and myself, and a feminist man from the School of Social Work, Mark Stern. And the two guys from Warden, they were just doing the survey and it was easy to presume that they didn't get it and we did. And when they started reading - we included open-ended items in there - and when they started reading the stories, and started talking to their daughters and wives, they got marbly, they, little fissures in their bodies started to emerge. So find the fissures, we can't just presume most men or senior women don't care about these issues. But there is a job of educating people and you may choose to do that or not. I have plenty of friends of color who said, 'I just can't educate everyone all the time. I'm done!'

So I was like funny and sarcastic, that's how I coped and I probably published twice as much as I needed to, and I was one of the few women from that cohort in Penn who got tenure. Brian Sutton Smith, a psychologist, said 'Oh all the women we've hired are beautiful' and I said 'Yah, that's really fucked up, isn't it?!' We all appeared really nice in our interviews and then we got really bitchy over time because if you dared to say what you really think during an interview, you'd never hire us and all the men are pretty frumpy and uninteresting. Know that's the context that you're working with, find other women and/or feminist men and work across lines of race and sexuality and gender and politics. Do not presume demographics will tell you what someone's politics are. You will find conservative men, you will find conservative people of color. Remember your project! Remember that you are there to link theory and action, not to separate them.

So that's one chunk, the other is remember that gender comes in lots of bodies. You know in this update on the missing discourse of desire we really try to trouble the category of gender and introduce a lot of evidence to what happens to a lot of girls with disabilities and African American girls and lesbian girls and one of the conservative editors said, 'Can't you just talk about girls? You know the way you did in 1988?' and I can't. But it makes the essay a little jumbly, if you look at who has access to sex ed and contraception, one of the things that you need to know is that young women with disabilities, high school age with disabilities, particularly retardation, are twice as likely to get pregnant as those without. Well, we have to think what is that? And they are also less likely to get sex ed and their mothers are less likely to talk about sexuality and their peers are less likely to talk about it. So you get this unbelievable isolation. And then for girls of color, poor girls of color, the question of access to contraception and funding, so when things get made over the counter, now we have over the counter 'morning after pill', although not for girls, just for adult women. But once it's over the counter, federal funding doesn't pay for things anymore. So when it was prescribed… . so there are all these important ways that ideas get more complicated, but it doesn't get for easy writing, it just makes for a better feminist analysis. I still want to hold on to feminism as my mother movement and under that, and spliced with that is critical race and queer and socialist theory. But I worry about people who do feminist work and it's really all about white girls, if that makes sense?

And be good to your students. And have a boundary. Have a boundary. You can't breastfeed everyone. Don't keep tissues in your office, it encourages crying. They will cry anyways. I never have office hours, my door is always open, people call me at home. It would be good if people learned boundaries, because there is this funny thing about presuming feminist faculty to be always available, always nurturing and weird psychodynamic things happen in that absence of boundary. Whereas with colder women faculty or men, people wouldn't ask for as much as often, so there's a funny thing to this loosening of boundaries and I'm a terrible advocate on this one. Because I violate it all the time and I have not gotten it yet. It's worth thinking about how to draw those lines and once you draw a line, you will be seen as bitchier than when a man draws those lines, undoubtedly. And have a support group of other feminist faculty from around, across disciplines, because you will need each other. You'll need each other when you' re not invited to a basketball game, you'll need each other when you have to figure out am I going to comment on what they just said at the faculty meeting, you'll need each other when you are thinking, you are not going to make me cry. You'll need each other when you have to figure out when to leave a faculty meeting because you think you are going to go nuts.

And have important conversations off the record with senior women on how we manage those scenes. At Penn we once made a pact that all the women faculty, because when the men would talk at faculty meetings they would follow each other up, and when we would talk, nobody would, we would say something obviously challenging or 'really?', and the other people were too junior, because there is always this conflation of junior and senior and then senior men wouldn't follow us up. So we made a pact that if one of us would speak, someone would have to follow it up and that was very funny. I have very funny stories about absurd things that my friends would say and then I think…

L: What kind of stories?

M: Oh, someone died midway through his dissertation so we had this whole conversation of 'does he get a degree?'…have you been to faculty meetings? No. Well, they can just go and on about inane things because you are not really talking about the real issues… so

it was like ‘how many subjects was he supposed to have had collected data? And if it was over 50% we would give him a posthumous degree. And who the fuck cares right? He’s dead!’ So you know give his parents or his wife or his kid a degree, who cares? I was of the [side] ‘give him the degree,’ but really who cared? My bestest friend Linda, finally we decided to give him his degree because he collected 70% of his data or something absurd, like he died at the right moment and Linda said, ‘So let me get this straight, people who die will get their degrees and my students who are living don’t get their degrees unless they finish—do we really want to encourage this kind of behavior?’ And I just cracked up, but it was like my job to say something to defend her. There were scenes like that. Feminists are funny at meetings. Staying funny is important. I had to leave Penn when I stopped being funny. I had to leave when most of my friends were denied tenure and I was no longer funny and I was mostly thinking, I’m not him and I’m not him, like defining myself oppostionally. Then I thought I’m not funny anymore, so it’s over, I’ve lost me.

So, drink wine, have friends, we had a group at Penn called SWAPS, Sane Women At Penn and all of us discovered that we had been recommended for teeth guards at night because we were all grinding our teeth so badly. And we had dinner once a month and it was fantastic and we are still- I just got an e-mail from a student who works with one of them, I probably haven’t spoken to her in fifteen years, but her babies are my babies. So do that. That’s an old feminist tradition, eat and drink.

L: Ok, it’s 11:05, is there anything else, there’s a lot of stuff I had to skip! But is there anything else that you feel is important for me to know about yourself or your career, your work about psychology? About feminism? Anything at all that I haven’t asked you about?

M: Just for the APA archives, or Division 35 archives. I think there is a very important feminist project that I have never participated in but friends have, like Rhoda Unger, or Ethel Tobach, which is to really to get inside the mainstream of psychology and fight it out. You know, those women, you know Ethel just did a session at APA on Jews and Palestinians and paid an enormous price for just raising the issues. Or Rhoda does these

textbooks that I would never do. My gift and pathology is to say, let's create a different conversation, I'll help and I'm funny and I can do this. But I really have incredible admiration for those women who fought on the inside, you know Kay Deaux who struggled to create textbooks, to create journals, Celia [Kitzinger] and Sue [Wilkinson] in England. Valerie Walkerdine who created something that would last a long time inside the belly of the profession and you know again, my gift is to create a really interesting side show and hope that it creeps in, but I think that's really a gift and someone needs to pick up that torch as well.

L: Thank you so much.

M: My pleasure.