Psychology's Feminist Voices Oral History Project

Interview with Corey Flanders

Interviewed by Jenna MacKay
Toronto, Ontario
June 6th, 2015

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Interview participant: Corey Elizabeth Flanders (CF)
Interviewer: Jenna Mackay (JM)

JM: It would be great if we could please start with you stating your full name, place and date of birth for the record.

CF: Corey Elizabeth Flanders, May 2nd, 1988, Born in Great Bend, Kansas.

JM: Thank you again for participating in this interview. I was thinking we could start with you telling me about the emergence or development of your feminist identity?

CF: I grew up in a pretty militantly feminist household. My mom is definitely second wave [feminist] and not just about equality, but about women being better than men. Which is not what I subscribe to, but it set the tone of recognizing the existence of feminism from a very young age, especially growing up in a really socially conservative and rural place – Kansas. So that kind of laid the bedrock of recognizing feminism as a concept and idea. When I started explicitly identifying, as a feminist, probably would have been in undergraduate [studies]. I just had the good luck of having a really great social network, I had activist friends who were really into gender equality, sexual identity equality and reproductive justice. And it was a really great environment to explore specific identities related to feminism and adapting to that and making my place within the community there. I got involved with a few campus organizations revolving around reproductive justice, queer and allies group, and the commission on the status of women – I don't know if that exists in Canada but it does in the states.

JM: Is that a federal organization?

{Part 1 - 2:43}

CF: Yes, it's a federal university organization that is not necessarily a watchdog, but a group of college advocates keeping an eye on gender equality at ones institution and advocating for that. I ended up majoring in Women's Studies and took a lot of those types of courses and that strengthened my more critical approach to a lot of these concepts that surround gender equality and reproductive justice.

JM: Given that your mother was a really militant - as you said - feminist, was there ever a rejection of that? Sometimes we reject, want to reject our parents, or define ourselves as separate, was there ever a struggle of claiming feminism for yourself?

CF: I think a little bit, I remember starting out at college the first time, moving away from home in a different city, but still in Kansas, I was one of those people that changed my majors probably a thousand times. I can't remember what I started out in but essentially I got more and more closer towards women studies, I also majored in psychology. My dad is a clinical psychologist and my mom is a militant feminist, so I said "No. I'm going to be my own person, I'm going to do my own thing and be like an anthropologist." And then I ended up where I am just my parents. My parents are very lovely people.

JM: So how did you come to psychology?

CF: My dad is a clinical psychologist, so again growing up as that being a part of my life. I think the first psychology course I took might have been psychology of women with one of my favourite professors.

JM: What was her name?

CF: Charlene Muehlenhard – she's a psychology professor at the University of Kansas and that was the first psychology class I took and I was like "Hi ya!" It really resonated with me. I think growing up I thought about psych in a clinical perspective, with an emphasis on individual behaviour, and I wasn't quite interested in that. But thinking about group level interactions, like a lot of things you focus on in psychology of women, like how sexism frames our social interactions and gets reproduced into gender roles and things like that, that really struck my interest. I was like, "Oh this is also psychology, ok great! Maybe this is something I am interested in." So I ended up delving more into it and I think Charlene, the instructor for that course played a large role in me going towards psychology as well. I ended up volunteering in her research lab, at the time she was doing a lot of work on, or at least what I was working with her on, was dealing with sexual pleasure - particularly in relation to orgasm and gendered orgasm scripts within mixed-sex sexual encounters. So I worked with her on that and took a lot more of her classes and she ended up being the mentor on my undergraduate honors thesis.

JM: Can you maybe tell me a little about what you found inspiring about her as a mentor? Why you kept working with her and how she brought you into psychology?

{Part 1 - 7:08}

CF: Charlene is super lovely and she was one of the first critical psychologists that I had met and interacted with within the sphere that I was in at the time. Seeing that you can be in psychology, and not stay so strictly to the really mainstream theories of behaviours and things like that, I think that was really engaging for me. I really think it was doing the hands-on research with her that really brought me in because she had such a great mentorship style. For example, I wasn't even going to do a senior honours thesis - it sounds like a lot of work, it's scary. I didn't think I really want to do that and she sought me out and expressed why it would be a good idea and volunteered to be in a mentorship

role for me and was really proactive in getting me involved in doing an honours thesis. So I think that was really influential.

I remember as a research team we would all be sitting around in a roundtable talking about (it was a mixed method study so a lot of it was coding the data and having discussions about what X participant meant when they said Y, trying to sort everything through a coding process). I remember her being really democratic. It wasn't that she is the authority figure and she states what happens and that is what consequently happens. It was much more involved with graduate and undergraduate students and that was a different atmosphere than I was use to in sort of the professor–student dynamic. I think her mentorship style has very feminist roots in it. Really I just fell in love with research and I always remember being exhausted in undergraduate studies, but every time I sat down at that table I was never exhausted I was always excited and engaged.

JM: Can you tell me a little bit about how feminism shapes research in psychology for you in particular?

CF: I think for me I felt a lot of tensions coming from a couple different directions. I feel I always grew up kind of split between psychology and womens studies or gender studies, always being involved in research and courses that were cross-listed and faculty mentors that were kind of spread through those disciplines. So how feminism influences psychology?

JM: In general and maybe research in particular?

CF: I think one really wonderful thing that a feminist perspective lens contributes to psychological research is taking a more critical approach to research overall. So for example, not just assuming that social identity theory is going to apply to every identity someone could have. So just always keeping a critical eye toward that, and recognizing how the systemic differences in power and the perpetuation of oppression can influence how people experience their social identity and how that might differ substantially from someone who has a whole lot of status and power and things like that. I think psychology can really benefit from those perspectives and research can reflect human experience more accurately and with more breadth and depth than without those critical perspectives, I think that's probably the major aspect.

I also think methodologically there are some really big contributions that a feminist perspective can lend to research in particularly by adopting mixed methods or qualitative methods because for so much of the field of psychology there's been such a positivist and quantitative lens - like behavioral experimentation and things like that, which is all great and fun and interesting, except for the positivism [chuckles].

{Part 1 -12:32}

I think without people who are doing critical work we wouldn't have this infusion of mixed methodology and qualitative research which is so important and getting into that accurately reflecting human experience and being critical as opposed to giving someone a

survey that was developed with a sample of 22-year-old white men from 1962 - not that the rest of psychology is like that, but it feels like that sometimes. I still think there's a lot of tension between methodological camps. I think quantitative people think qualitative research is completely subjective and worthless and just someone's opinion that they decided to write down, and sometimes maybe from the qualitative (when I'm inside women study spaces they think quantitative work is inherently un-feminist). I feel sometimes that tension, being in psychology spaces "Uh qualitative, that's just stupid" [laughs].

JM: Can you talk about that your experience living that tension and maybe not being totally at home in either discipline?

CF: That is kind of how it feels. I'm sort of floating between the two sometimes. I think when I was in graduate school it was a little bit tougher because I think the dynamics of the psychology department that I was in were a bit more toxic and so it might have not really been about the methodology, but people were quick to be harshly critical and not in a constructive way of one another and often time those camps separated based on disciplines. And so I think what made that experience a lot easier is that I just had the world's greatest mentors throughout my training periods and that just eventually made it a non-issue essentially. My favourite methodology are using mixed methodologies and to have that be validated and to see world class research being done with mixed methods and see how quantitative methods can be approached with a more critical eye has been the main way the tension has been soothed for me and I have been confident bringing the qualitative research into quantitative spaces and vice versa.

JM: You mentioned that you had strong mentors as well during your Masters and your PhD, so you always have been able to kind of carve out a little bit of a feminist home in psychology. Can you tell me a little bit about your graduate experience?

CF: I would say I had two primary mentors in Graduate school– our program was continuing from Masters to PhD, so it was all the same program. My official PhD supervisor was a woman named Elaine Hatfield who is a social psychologist and she came up in the field when things were super sexist, I think she got her PhD in 1963, so she was one of the only female grad students when she was a grad student. I believe she was the first female faculty at her first faculty gig and she would talk about how she and her first female undergraduate student – they didn't give her an office first of all, so she had to squat in an office and eventually take it over. She would talk about how she and her grad student would go to lunch and sit down at a table for lunch with her male faculty and the male faculty would all leave the table one by one. I'm sure those were certainly formative experiences for her.

{Part 1 - 17:32}

So because of that she was always immensely supportive of her students and creating a supportive and comfortable atmosphere for everyone. The work that she did that was pioneering in her era – which is still going on. She is looking at passionate love. She's

one of the first people to consider love as something measurable, and important to study and the influences of love on human behaviour. She spent a lot of time having to defend that, and so she's pretty open to thinking about ideas that are a bit more critical or understudied and less mainstream and recognizing the value in that.

My other primary person who served as mentor for me is **Susan Hippensteele** (she was in the Women's Studies department). She was just a powerhouse, really interesting, really engaging person, with a really strong – I don't know if she necessarily identifies as a feminist - but she is an activist within her communities. She served as the legal representative for gender equity on campus for a long time. She has a PhD in psychology as well as a JD. She has been a very strong advocate for a long time and a strong advocate for me doing bisexuality research and sexual minority research, so it was great to have her around to be supportive in that environment.

JM: Can you describe your research a bit?

CF: The couple of sentences that I would use to describe it in its current state, other than seemingly always changing slightly, is that I am really interested in mental health and I'm really interested in sexual and reproductive health and how those two health domains interact with one other. Particularly from the context of sexual and gender minority folks, how they experience their own mental health, sexual reproductive health and what factors influence those experiences for them and mostly from a social perspective.

JM: And you said it's always kind of changing a little a bit, how have you seen it change? Like more in sexuality in general or moving into bisexuality?

CF: I would say that's accurate. I think when I was working with Charlene I was really interested in sexual pleasure. I've always been interested in positive psychology and that's sort of another lens on my research. So thinking how things aren't just resilient or getting better, but thinking about what are truly positive thriving experiences related to mental health and sexual reproductive health for queer and trans people. So in undergrad I was really interested in sexual pleasure, and thinking about sexual pleasure for female identified people and claiming that. In graduate school I ran a brief research study/ program evaluation, of a pleasure-centered sex education curriculum for women on campus. So that's kind of where I started from. And I was also interested in sexual fluidity at that time too, in the context of sexual pleasure. Like what do people find pleasurable and how does that sort of flex between lines of sexual identity and how does that match and not match in lines of sexual behaviour. So that's where I kind of started from and then I never really intended to start research on bisexuality and other non-monosexual sexualities. I didn't really do any of that in undergrad and then I got to grad school and I was trying to figure out a Masters thesis project and I was reading through literature and

{Part 1 - 22:58}

how we perceive bisexuality differently based on someone's gender identity or someone's gender presentation. Thinking about how [formative?] bisexuality has influenced the perception of femme people, how there's maybe less flexibility in sexual

experimentation or expression across genders for male people. So my Masters thesis ended up being centered around that.

Then I think I was kind of hooked on looking into different aspects of bisexuality and identity and how identity is perceived and portrayed, and so my dissertation started out dealing with those same ideas and same concepts. I was doing a literature review for that and how bi-identity is supported and not supported. I started stumbling into a lot of literature where a lot of research on the relationship between health and sexuality was starting to come out at that time - including research on bisexuality in particular.

So realizing how many health disparities there are and how severe those health disparities are, and how understudied they are, at that point it sort of clicked for me. It was not only what I find engaging and important, but also being a member of the bisexual community, sitting there thinking that no one or not very many people are looking at this and I as a bisexual person, who has the skill set that I've been trained for years and years to do this work, it almost felt unethical to not pursue it. I felt I had to just be an advocate for my own community through research, through knowledge translation and education and things around that. I think that is sort of the trajectory that's led to where I am now and having more of a health focus in research.

JM: I think that's really interesting, your comment about being a member of the bisexual community and having the skill set that you do, that it is almost unethical to not do something and I know that I've had similar feelings. Can you talk a little about that? Is that because you have an activist background, is that because you're a feminist, the commitment to do research to better the health of your community.

CF: I think it does come from having that background of a feminist activist advocating for lessening of various oppressions and I guess I'm also just really use to an uphill battle. Growing up in Kansas and doing reproductive justice work is [laughs] an uphill battle. I realized years after leaving that space, that literally every single protest that I went to as an undergrad, which was a lot of them, was a counter protest. It was just to maintain ground and not lose ground essentially. It was a lot of the work we were doing and a lot of the work that folks are continuing to do today. I think that sort of landscape was familiar to me. So coming into this, and I feel this less now then I did in grad school, maybe because it's getting better and maybe because I'm in a space that is really supportive, but I felt that it was just that no one cared. It just seemed that no one really cared that there were these massive health disparities and that people in the bisexual community are killing themselves because of all of these social influences.

For example, in Kansas the governor we have now just revoked employment protection for queer and trans people in the state of Kansas - Equality Kansas, the LGBTQ rights organization in the state, released a statement afterward discussing what a blow this was to all lesbian, gay and trans people in the state of Kansas. It still seems sometimes in some spaces people still don't care, so I felt a duty and an obligation (not in a negative sense), but that I want to do this work, I'm trained to do this work and if so many other

people don't care and are unwilling to recognize this as an issue, we need to stand up for one another.

{Part 1 - 28:22}

JM: What else has been your experience of researching non-monosexual identities given that this is such a new area of psychology?

CF: I think there have been a couple of things. One, it's really exciting because it's so open right now. It's exciting thinking about all the work that can be done, and available to do, and it's all just kind of fresh. A lot of days I feel really positive about it and I feel that there's all this room for improvement and all of these areas to work toward to try to lessen the health disparities that do exist and I think I've been fortunate to be connected to people who are doing that work and who are supportive of that work, like Division 44 and Division 35, I feel are both supportive spaces. So I feel if I were the first person doing this, that would be really hard, but even coming into it maybe 10 or 15 years into it just getting started, there's already a lot of people who have done hard work and made ground in making bisexuality an important area of study. That has made it certainly easier for me to be able to do this within the field of psychology. I think it does take some element of [being able to] 'sell it.' Like for example in my graduate department I had to sell it for people to recognize it as being an important area of study, which was sort of an odd experience. So I think not all spaces are super inviting for that type of work, but I think I certainly have it better than people in my position 10 to 15 years ago.

JM: It sounds like you were able to sell it.

CF: Ya, I think so. [laughs]

JM: I know that some of your work was picked up by *Playboy* [Magazine]. I'm curious about the reaction to your work in general, but when I saw a reference to *Playboy* on your CV, I thought there might be an interesting story there.

CF: Like I was saying earlier, positive perspectives have always been important to me, even though I feel like a lot of my attention is directed toward alleviating distress and alleviating disparities. I think part of the way we can do reduce disparities is understanding when people are thriving and they are doing very well and they are having these really great experiences - what does that look like and how can we replicate that for others?

So the *Playboy* article in particular, it was one of those side projects that one of my grad school colleagues and I got interested in. It was looking at how sexual sensation seeking and personality traits kind of blended together in particular thinking about sexual sensation seeking, has a negative connotation because it was developed to assess HIV risk among sexual minority men in particular. So it has always had this - it's considered a trait - its not just something that people will engage in, but it was developed thinking about it as a more long lasting trait in an individual – which carries this value judgment

that was really uncomfortable for me. So we were thinking well, "What are the positive implications of sexual sensation seeking?"

{Part 2- 3:28}

So we just looked at it in correlation with a couple of positive psych measures like overall wellbeing and satisfaction with life, with curiosity and things like that – things that as a society we really value as positive traits and found that they were significantly linked. Those who were higher in sensation seeking were also more curious and also had more overall satisfaction with their life, compared to people who came in lower on that trait. So we sort of reframed a traditional negative subject.

I was at a conference and I got an email from one of the writers for the sex and politics section at *Playboy* and was interested in an article, had read it, and wanted to know if I wanted to talk about it. So I Googled him and had no idea, I didn't want something weird happening. He had written a piece on reproductive justice and it was a fairly feminist perspective that he wrote it from, so I thought it was ok. We chatted and that was my first lesson that everything you say to a reporter, unless you specify it is off the record, is not off the record. I think I went on the rant for a little while about the reproductive justice state in Kansas, not that I would have ever gotten hired at a conservative school anyway, but now I feel like with some of those things that aren't off the record, definitely not. That was an interesting experience; he just wanted to know about the study, the idea of sexual sensation seeking. He was really interested in promoting the positivity of pleasure and positivity of recognizing that certain things we always perceive as being bad aren't inherently negative.

JM: Earlier you mentioned division 44 and division 35, are you involved at all with any activism with them?

CF: Whenever I go to APA I look at what program they have in those two divisions essentially and those are the things I go to. Last time I went to APA there was a bisexual conversation hour for division 44, I attended that and I presented once before and I'm going to again in this next session for a colloquium on bisexual issues for division 44. I haven't necessarily been involved in any activism there but I do think it is a good networking opportunity and you get to connect to other psychologists who are specifically working on sexual minority issues, gender minority issues and bisexual issues. Which has been really beneficial, not only for me, but has also provided other people with opportunities to give me as a contact to talk about developing a study, looking at bisexuality for example.

JM: It's definitely nice to have supportive spaces. Maybe we will switch gears a little bit and you can tell me about your post-doc. I know that I know a lot about it. But maybe if you could just describe where it is and what you are doing for the transcript. I don't know if this is your first time doing more applied community-based work and if so what that experience has been like?

CF: My post-doc position started out with Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) working with Lori Ross and researching for her LGBTQ team.

I say starting out because we are moving to Dalla Lana School of Public Health with the

{Part 2 – 8:21}

University of Toronto - so I'll be in both spaces for a while. I initially was brought on by Lori to work on a study for a National Institute of Mental Health study, to look at perinatal mental health among visible and invisible sexual minority women. They had done a pilot study that found that invisible sexual minority women - either women who did not identify as heterosexual or who had had past sexual experiences with other women, but were currently partnered with men - had higher rates of post-partum depression, or that invisible sexual minority status was associated with having higher rates of post-partum depression, compared to sexual minority women who were currently paired with women. So based on that pilot study, Lori Ross and the other PI Abby Goldberg started developing the study to just look at that phenomenon to try to look at why. Where is this coming from? What contributes to what they started calling 'invisible sexual minority women' or queer women and/or women with sexual minority history who are currently partnered with men. So being an invisible sexual minority women seems to be contributing to higher risk compared to what they started calling 'visible sexual minority women' or queer women who were partnered with women and there for specifically seen as queer.

The study is a longitudinal mixed methods study and a prospective study, so we start recruiting people and getting them to participate in late stages of pregnancy, and we follow them up to one year post-partum. So we have three groups that participate in the study. We have heterosexual women partnered with men, sexual minority or behaviourally sexual minority women both who are partnered with men (invisible sexual minority women) and sexual minority women who are currently partnered with women (visible minority women) and we check in with them at six to eight weeks post-partum, six months post-partum and one year post-partum. We are doing online surveys with everyone to check in about things like social support. For our sexual minority folks we are looking at connection to the LGBTQ community and level of outness, experiences of discrimination and outcomes like post-partum depression and anxiety. With our invisible sexual minority women group we are also doing in-depth interviews at each time point to get more context about their experiences and try to figure out what is contributing to this health disparity that we saw in the pilot study.

So my role largely at this point has been with data collection and doing a lot of the interviews, which has been a really fascinating experience. It is so wild to interview someone who's pregnant and then you meet their little one when they're 12 weeks or so, and all of the sudden they're a year old and they're walking and they're talking and picking up things up, like the recorder you're using for the interview and running away with it. It's a very intimate study, which I think is certainly related to having feminist values around motherhood and what motherhood has the potential to look like. And

having the opportunity to sit down with people and talk about sexuality and bodies and raising kids and their values and their overall identity and how that contributes to their overall experience of parenthood. It's been really fascinating.

JM: I know that since you've been here in Toronto you've also gotten involved in other community-based research projects with community partners like Rainbow Health Ontario, Planned Parenthood Toronto. Can you talk a little bit about working in these community partnerships and maybe what the differences are to when you are maybe in a more academic setting?

{Part 2- 13:16}

CF: I feel kind of similarly to when I started jumping into bisexual health, the "Oh my god, I can't do anything but this ever again!" I feel sort of similarly about community-based research, having the opportunity to get involved in how it's done and in projects using community-based methods, it was sort of another step. Now I almost feel it would be unethical of me to not implement some of these ways of doing research into my future work. I think it comes from a similar perspective of thinking that having a critical perspective is really important, we have to critique the field of psychology and continue doing so and sort of stay away from a more positivist perspective. I think community-based research really facilitates that critique of positivism because it's not just about me as a researcher and expert, and assuming that therefore I know how to do everything best and will make this fantastic research project. That is not the case at all.

So doing community-based research has been really eye opening in thinking about how much better research is when community is involved. Like how much more responsible it is to the community it is serving, particularly since I'm interested in these social disparities and health disparities. It is so important that the work that's being done in the field is actually what the community wants and is responsible to those communities. Also, community members are just awesome researchers, when people are really invested and they really care. I think that there is a huge factor in having lived experience makes you an expert in the area. For example, Margaret Robinson and I are doing a project where we just had our first research advisory committee meeting and the first part of the study is a focus group study and the community advisory board just ripped apart the focus group guide that we had and brought as a potential starting point for the potential focus groups that we are going to do. First there is always that moment of "Oh no!" [laughs] but it is so much better, it is such a better focus group guide now that it's had that community input and feedback and I'm just way more confident in it as a project and way more excited about it and considerably more certain that its actually going to be addressing the issues that are important to the community. Two thumbs up for community-based research! And I think I've been particularly lucky in learning about it and getting my feet wet with this as an approach with Lori Ross, because she does it so well. I've heard all of these scary stories about it being done really poorly or about things sort of being blotted as community-based research when really it is not at all. So it has been great learning how to do this from a really responsible community-based researcher.

JM: What do you think makes the community-based research your team is doing more responsible compared to other forms of community-based research that might not be as community based?

CF: I think working with Lori, she just has really progressive values with research. I think she is also really invested in the community that she works with so I think when you have that level of personal investment it really makes you respect the voices and input from the community members that volunteer to get involved with research. I think it makes you more open to critical feedback and things like that and I think the wide scope of community that has been involved in projects with this team too is really important so on the bisexual mental health project for example, making sure that youth are included is so great.

{Part 2 - 18:43}

So often we totally ignore the voices of youth within everything, particularly research. So paying intention to intersections of identity and whose voices may have an easier time being heard versus those who might not, and really advocating for inclusion of those more marginalized voices and identities. I think all of that contributes to a better environment to conduct CBR (community-based research).

JM: Can you talk a little bit about, you identify as a bisexual woman and you're doing research on bisexual health with bisexual community. But you're also in the position of being a psychologist, the researcher. What is it like simultaneously being an insider and an outsider? Like a member of the community but also a professional that's researching the community? Is that something you ever think about or have felt tensions with?

CF: Definitely, I feel like any tensions that happen there have all been ultimately positive and/or productive. I certainly think that I'm a better researcher in this area because of having the lived experience. I feel like it helps in a lot of ways, intuitively knowing some things that are worth looking into. Whereas if you are a total outsider you don't have those lived experiences, it may be more difficult to clue into things or you may miss the nuances that are present. I think that's helpful from a research perspective. It is kind of hard sometimes where there are tensions. Like say, leading a focus group for example, and participants are talking about bisexual issues and bisexual health, and having to not intervene and just facilitate without influencing people. Sometimes that's hard because sometimes someone will say something that you totally empathize with, you really want to connect on that point but from a research perspective you feel you are not able to do so or I feel that it's potentially unethical to project my own experiences into this research project or I'm projecting onto someone else's experience. I need to let them state their thoughts and feelings without my lens. I think it's important to keep those spaces more about the participants, like on the NIH [National Institutes of Health] study for example, because we meet with people so frequently over the course of the year, we get to know each other really well – although I get to know them better than they get to know me. And I think because in that study we are talking about such intimate information and talking about things that are relevant to not only their lives but also my own life, it can be

difficult sometimes to not want to stop the recorder and just have an honest back and forth conversation about something that's really bothering them or something that's bothering me or something that we can work through together, but that's just because I'm invested in them as a person and not only as a researcher so sometimes it's hard to keep those separate. Or in keeping those separate it can be difficult, it's not necessarily difficult to actually know that there should be separation in there for the sake of the research.

JM: Are there other aspects of your lived experience that you feel informs your experience of the world, but in particular the way you approach psychology?

CF: One way that I try to always be grounded and approach both my work and my life is recognizing all of the privilege that I have in my life, so I think implementing perspectives like intersectionality are really important to keep grounded the fact that I certainly don't have the lived experiences of all sorts of people and that my experience is going to be very different from not only people overall but people in the bi community as well.

{Part 2 – 24:10}

So I am always trying to be cognizant of that and not unintentionally erase someone else's experiences. So I think that's probably why community-based research has become like "Oh my gosh" to me. Thinking about how I was discussing how being a bi person doing bi research, you can kind of have better understanding of some of these nuances but that doesn't expand to everyone's experiences of being a bi person. I'm not going to have an intimate understanding of other types of nuances or the intersections of other identities I don't embody, and having community members who do have those experiences contribute to the research is just so vital to conducting responsible research. I think in my approach to psychology that is always an important [aspect] - to not only be critical of myself but also continually invite critique from others, particularly people who have a different perspective than I do, I think opening yourself up to critique from diverse individuals is important to doing better, more valuable work.

JM: That's a great perspective to bring and to always be recognizing that there are voices and experiences that you don't necessarily understand or identify with. I am going to switch gears and will start wrapping up, where do you see yourself in five years?

CF: Hopefully employed, employed will be great, shelter, food. I guess that kind of speaks to some question about the extent to which the field values the type of work that I do. Last year was my first year on the academic job market and hopefully I will have a paying gig someday. Having been another full year in my post-doc position now in a more community atmosphere, I feel much less attached to staying in academia but I do plan on going into the academic market again. I just feel like – I was having a discussion with another colleague the other day - and she was discussing that she's been "gay for pay," she's been doing queer work for so long that if she took those items off of her CV it would look that she was doing nothing for the last ten years and we were talking about

the politics about what you keep on your CV, and what you don't keep on your CV when you apply for certain jobs. I'm at the point now where my CV would literally be blank if I took away the type of work that I do now. But it's also the idea of selling it, I do feel that I would have to continue doing that to be considered employable by certain institutions and certain departments, more frequently within psychology then potentially a women's studies department.

In five years I hope I have a job, I hope that in whatever capacity I am in that I will be getting to do research still. I hope that I am still in a position that I can advocate for my community and help promote positive experience and safe spaces and things like that for non-monosexual folks and sexual minority people. I think one of the things that's been so strong for me with psychology research has been the mentorship that I've received. It has just been phenomenal and I recognize that as probably the single most important factor in getting me to where I am now. In five years I hope I'm in the position where I can be paying that forward.

JM: That's wonderful. If you're back on the academic job market are you committed to psychology as a professional identity or are you more open to working in a woman's study department?

{Part 2 - 29:12}

CF: I mean I'm open; I will be looking for positions in psychology, in women's studies maybe sociology, maybe public health, all of these different areas. But if I'm in a women's studies department I will be the psychologist working in the women's studies department. I feel like that identity will still be attached. But I think that's one of the great things about psychology, it lends itself to interdisciplinary fields so easily. There's just a lot of different directions and you can sort of take that perspective and expand it by other disciplines' perspectives.

JM: Particularly if you have a critical perspectives as well and are aware of theories and other disciplines

CF: Yeah, "Oh we're talking about the same thing we just call it different things!"

JM: You mentioned that mentorship was important, do you have any words of wisdom or advice, given all of your life experiences to students that are entering psychology and wanting to go about it in a more critical way?

CF: I mean I would say look in your course catalogues and read the descriptions and find classes that do have a more critical description and don't be afraid to take courses outside your discipline that might have similar content but taught from a more critical perspective, particularly courses that are cross listed in psychology in other departments. I know as a student, I am still a really bashful person, I had a *really, really, really* hard time talking to my professors and recognizing that they are actual people and probably getting to know Charlene played a big role in reducing that sort of aversion I had to

talking to other humans, particularly to humans with relatively more power than I. If you can, and you feel able to, reach out to those people who could serve as potential mentors. I know in my case, if someone would reach out to me I would be so overjoyed, that's why people get into teaching I think, particularly in these types of fields. I think it's important to a lot of people to teach and mentor people who are interested in the same things and that's really rewarding for everyone involved.

JM: Are there ways that you think feminism informs how someone teaches and mentors?

CF: I think for sure. I mean I think it would certainly inform perspectives of power differential and status and hierarchy. I think in the case of Charlene for example it all felt very equitable, and even though we were learning from her and she was helping guide/honing our research skills, and providing opportunity for that, it was very much a two-way street in terms of things that she could learn from us based on what the skills and our experiences provide to our research project, compared to another professor at that same school who for example didn't let his students refer to him anything other than Dr. Last Name until they had a Ph.D. That sets up a different dynamics in terms of mentorship- I guess he is the expert and professional and you are sort of the trainee. Having more of a feminist approach, just valuing equity makes for a different mentoring and teaching experience.

JM: Is there anything we haven't talked about that you would like to share or discuss?

CF: I can't really think of anything off the top of my head, it's been a lovely. You're always a pleasure to talk to.

JM: Thanks Corey. It's been so great hearing about your life experiences and approach to psychology. I feel you're very articulate and remind me how much I love research. I feel I'm on the periphery of it, it's been a couple of years now since I've done research and it does feel like such a great skill set to have if you're interested in social change.

CF: I think that's a really great perspective, valuing social change, research gives you a tool set to approach it.

JM: Thanks so much!

CF: Thank you!

{Part 3 – 5:37}