

Psychology's Feminist Voices Oral History Project

Interview with Stephanie A. Shields

*Interviewed by Alexandra Rutherford
Pennsylvania, PA
March 4, 2011*

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SS: Stephanie Shields, Interview Participant

AR: Alexandra Rutherford, Interviewer

AR – What I will have you to start with is simply state your full name, and place and date of birth for the record.

SS – Ok, my name is Stephanie A. Shields, and I was born in Omaha, Nebraska, on the sixth of February, 1949.

AR – Great! Well, I am going to start the way we often start the interview by asking you to tell us a little bit about how your feminist identity developed and how you became a feminist.

SS – How I became a feminist! That is the most obvious introductory question and that is not the one that I thought about. I think like a lot of people, I would have to say that much came from my mother's encouragements, and actually from my parents. It was not a feminist encouragement per se, but education was very important for them. There are four of us and I am the oldest, and it was always very important for them that we go to college and that was the kind of the message "You have to go to college. You have to go to college." After that, there wasn't any career ambition or anything. My mom finished high school, and my dad got his GED after he was finished with his navy service in World War II. So, I was the first person in my family to go to college. So, I think it was more that and also that they encouraged a kind of independence.

So when my high school chemistry teacher said that there was this national science foundation, a summer program for kids doing science and that there were scholarships, and my parents said "Ok, you can go to Riverside, California" which was like 700 miles away for six weeks and that is fine and actually there is a whole other interesting story about how I got there, the car broke down and everything. So, it was just kind of encouraging that kind of independence I guess, and I remember actually quite vividly in 1969, this was great days of California's state scholarships which have been instituted in early 60s to get people into college who were non-traditionally college students, women, students from rural areas, women of color, poor individuals. My state scholarship paid for four years of university including a year in Rome, which transformed my life completely. I remember being in Rome in the year '69 or '70 which was real time of upheaval in the U.S. and everywhere else, but we were kind of in this study abroad bubble; it was really strange. I remember somebody had a *Time Magazine* and on the cover of the *Time Magazine* was something about feminism. I remember looking at it and going like "What is that?" and having no idea. Well, the following year, my senior year in college, feminism was sort of bubbling around, and there was a new book out by Judith Bardwick on the psychology of women and I read that and part of it was really exciting because it was about women and the part

of, I was like “What is this stuff?” And I guess from there...At that point I started to develop something that was really explicitly a form of feminist consciousness. When I started graduate school at Penn State, and I am 99% certain that it was the first year or maybe it was the second year, but I think it was the first year that they did not artificially limit the number of women admitted into the graduate studies. Before that, of the 15 or 20 people admitted, there would be like two or three women.

AR – And that was like a rule?

SS – You know when I first moved back to the Penn State 15 years ago, I tried to scare up some of the records and old graduate record were gone by then. But, for our year, there were 10 men and 10 women and half of us were in clinical and the other half were in experimental. I was in developmental psychology, and several of us were, you know I have used this term before, but I do not particularly like it, but, we were ‘baby feminists’. We were baby feminists in the sense that we were like “All right, what are we going to do now?”, like newly hatched, newly kind of turned on, and a little pissed off, and but we were in this, we were in graduate school, we were first year graduate students and we were the bottom of the heat. It was also at the time when we still called our professor by their [last names], you know like Dr. Harrison, Dr. Sherif and everything like that and we got into some troubles.

AR – Well, let me ask you about those troubles, but also let me ask about the professorial, kind of during your Ph.D., what was the gender composition?

SS – Oh, that is easy, because it was something that really stood out at that moment. Of the thirty some tenure-line individuals, two were women. Ellen Piers who was in child clinical, and she did the Piers-Harris Scale, some kind of projective test.

AR – Yeah her name is familiar.

SS – I was a TA for her one semester and actually it was Penn State was in a quarter system at that point. I had been warned about her, but we got along ok.

AR – Because she was hard?

SS – Yes, she was, her method of survival was you have to be as twice as good to show that you are half as good.

AR – You have got many reasons to think that way?

SS – Right, but you know she was always good and fair to me, but it was definitely you just have to do this. She was pretty hard on graduate students. The other person was Carolyn Sherif.

AR – Well, tell us then a little bit about your career trajectory or your training during your Ph.D. I have to ask of course, I do not want to divert you to this, but I do want you to talk about this and why you chose this and we will get to that. But tell me that did you connect with Carolyn Sherif and what was that like?

SS – Well, I was in developmental, not social. In fact, I have never taken a social psychology course in my life, but now I am a social psychologist.

AR – Right, right, how did that happen?

SS – Because, if you study emotion where else do you go? If you study gender where can you go? But the point that I went to graduate school at Penn State was at that time kind of living on this reputation, a very good reputation on developmental, and experimental, but it was kind of living with that reputation. The guys, many of them were not particularly research active, including the person who was my advisor, Dale Harris. Penn State also at that moment, would not hire spouses in tenure-line positions. So, there were three lecturers in the psychology department whose husbands were tenure-line professors, and one of them in particular Phyllis Berman and I became very close. I am trying to remember now, how and why it is that very first semester, I am going to say semester because Penn State is now on semesters. The very first quarter that I was there and I had a conversation with her, I do not remember if I went just to see her or if I wanted to get involved in her research, but she was doing really boring research on children's understanding line orientations. We have got to talking, and I thought it would be kind of a good idea maybe get the women in psychology together. So we wrote this and I still have one. I look at it now and I go "This is so cute because it is like so tentative." like "From time to time it would be nice to get together to talk about our common issues as women in psychology and our interests in psychology and if you are interested in this, let Phyllis Berman or Stephanie Shields know and we will arrange a meeting." So we did and it was in Phyllis' house, and Carolyn came. That was really exciting. We had a turn out that was much better than we thought and it was quite something.

Actually I am trying to remember; now I do not remember if it was on my first year or my second year, because it was also that the first year of our graduate cohort, in '71, they had six openings on the faculty that they were searching for.

AR – Wow, that is a lot!

SS – Yeah, well, it was a growth time... and all six were filled by white men. If that search had happened even the following year when we were organized, things would have been different, but at that point six white men were hired. Of course graduate students at that point had absolutely no... Well, of course nobody asked us what we thought about the job candidates, they were not represented on the research committee, and that was unheard of.

AR – Well tell me what did you guys-do you remember what you talked about on that first collective meeting?

SS – I honestly do not. I just remember it was really exciting. It was almost sort of like intellectual consciousness. The culmination of that group actually ended up being that we wanted to have a seminar on the psychology of women and I do not know if that came out of the first meeting or a subsequent meeting, but Carolyn agreed to facilitate that seminar and to be the instructor of record. The lecturers came; particularly Phyllis came to the seminar. We had

women from the psychology department and then a couple of people from sociology who have got on to become well known sociologists. I think Chuck Fegley who was in marriage and family person was in that seminar as well. That seminar was really transformative experience for everybody. In fact, I remember seeing in one of Carolyn's forewords of one of her books, I think it was adolescent and groups or something like that, where in it she actually talked about how transformative experience it had been. So, that was just really amazing.

AR – Do you remember what kind of materials you discussed or used in that course?

SS – Well sure, we did papers and even we had sort of classic moments in a graduate seminar where the graduate students say this is the way we want to do it, not the way you have organized it. So, yeah, we even had that kind of moment. But we were trying to do, we wrote papers, we presented materials that we were finding on those papers that we were writing. I mean, I do not think I have a syllabus from it. Actually I will go and look.

AR – That would be amazing to have.

SS – Yes, I will go and look. We wanted the outcomes of that seminar. It was then the development of an undergraduate psychology of women course and the women's studies program in past days.

AR – Which you are now a director of?

SS – No, actually I was a director for three years and it is actually now a department. When I was hired there, I was told by the dean that it would never be a department and now it is. Yeah, so, were did I leave off?

AR – Well, does anyone want to lead it from here, I mean I have something I want to ask but is it ok? All right! Trying to be more- I also forget that some people might want to ask questions.

SS – Well I am having a great time; it is so much fun to talk about yourself, especially if you have not thought about it for quite a while!

AR – Honestly yeah, people describe having good time doing it because it is a time of reflection they don't usually get to take, right? But I want to ask you specifically about how and why it was that you came to write on Leta Hollingworth?

SS – Ok, I think I have actually told you this story before, but now we are taping it. It was my first, no it was my third quarter, so in the spring quarter of my first year in graduate school, on the recommendation of my then roommate I took a history of psychology course from Walter Weimer and he was a very interesting individual, young, wealthy, and he was not in it for the money, he was in it because he loved critical thinking I think. And because she had taken it the year before and got a lot out of it so I took this class and we had to write a paper and I was not sure what I wanted to write the paper about and Carol said to me, my roommate Carol McMahan, who ended up getting her degree and going on I think and doing primarily practice "You know you are always talking about psychology of women, was there psychology of women

before there was Freud?" I said "I do not know, but that would be a good paper." And since this was spring of 1972, I had no idea what I was going to find, so I decided I would and might as well start from the very beginning, so I went back to like Aristotle. So I got into my own kind of history of women course. So I went back to Aristotle and Church Fathers and Christine de Pizan and just learned a tremendous amount. Now of course there were not personal computers much less anything else, so looking for information really meant spending a lot of time in library digging. I got to know the people in the library really, really well and I got to know way old psych abstracts and many other abstracting sort of services for history really, really well. So, I ended up writing for Walt Weimer this 70-page paper. Yeah, it was 70 -page and I still have it.

AR – Oh wow, excellent!

SS – Seventy page paper that started out with you know in the Bible [Laughs].

AR – Yeah, yeah.

SS – It goes all the way through to functionalism in American psychology. And now, Walt Weimer was kind of like this interesting character, because he just always had a kind of attitude. I remember on the last day of class, and I had no self confidence at this period in my life, but the last day of class, we had to do, I do not know we even did teaching evaluations, and he is like "Ok, so do you want to tell me anything about the class?" and everybody was quiet and I raised my hand and I said "Well sometimes the things you say seem to not show very much respect for your students" and I was like "Did I just say this?"

AR – Oh wow, that is courageous!

SS – And he is like "What do you mean?" I said "Well you put us down!" Anyways, so that is a little bit of the background. I finished this 70-page paper and I guess I had picked up over the course of time that he was not particularly interested in psychology of women or he did not think much of women, because I took the paper up to his office and out it on his desk and said "Read this, I dare you" and he did he read the whole thing and I got it back and he had corrected all of my grammar in the 70 pages which was funny and he had a note on the front that was like, "Well the first 30 pages are amusing enough or interesting enough, that you really have to do something with the rest of it if you want to it going anywhere", and I was like "Ok, I take that as positive."

It was really exciting and oh, you asked me about Leta Hollingworth specifically. Well, in the course of this great history of women, and history of women in psychology and history of psychology of women course that I was kind of teaching myself on the side.

I have to tell you this. We had a next door neighbor in school psych program, and Gale Solomon, actually Solomon was her married name, but Gale Weiss, we were good friends, we were trying to go on a diet and exercise program together and she volunteered because I was finding all of this stuff and so I was bringing books off from the library and I would go next door and say "You have to read this or you are not going to believe what they are saying about women."

So she actually volunteered to type my paper for me or help me with the typing of the paper. I would write stuff out and there would be and I had of course you know I did not have training as a historian and in fact social history I think at that point was not really a sub discipline. So it was packed full with passages-long quotes and Gael typed a good part of that paper if not all of that paper for me. Because I was taking other classes and I was a TA too. I guess you had a lot of energy when you are 22, so I gave the paper to him "Read this I dare you!" and so as I started getting more and more into psychology itself, things really got interesting, particularly with evolutionary theory and than tracing American Psychology, I found these women.

AR: Where did you find them? You have just found their published work?

SS – In old journals, yeah their work.

AR – Because nobody had done the historical work about them.

SS – No, I have found their work so I found their papers. Fortunately I was at Penn State which had a very... So we even had a copy of Leta Stetter Hollingworth's functional periodicity dissertation in the library or maybe I had to get that through another library we had Helen Woolley, 1903. One of the other, we had it in the library. That was really wonderful, because it was very difficult to get these materials. Yeah it was all through their original work

You know when I was an impoverished graduate student, one of the places that I cut corners is because I did need to work with the material, I had to go out to the Xerox machine and fortunately it was after Xerox and I have no idea what I would have done if there would have not been Xeroxing. It cost like a nickel per page. At that point it would be like I do not know 40 cents a page today. So I was like "Oh how much of the references do I actually need? How much of the paper do I actually need to copy?" So with Leta Hollingworth, she was one I think I had just got everything I could find.

AR – Yeah.

SS – And it was really amazing to find these lost women. I would go to {? 23:59}. You know people did not know that there had been two women who had been presidents of APA before Anne Anastasi and Leona Tyler. Anyway so that is how I found Leta Hollingworth.

AR – Right, was that actually out of that paper then for that class that you followed the published papers?

SS – Yeah, and then actually if I can tell another story...

AR – Absolutely, yeah.

SS – So it was something like I kind of knew what I really needed to do something with, but I was in developmental psychology and I had do a masters thesis which absolutely had nothing to do with history and actually had nothing to do with developmental psychology. So that is ok, I

did that. In that seminar I wrote about postpartum depression, because I was interested in emotion. That is why I had gone into graduate school, because I wanted to study emotion.

So I could not tell you exactly when this was, but I do remember this vividly and I know I told you this story before that I was sort of walking down the hall and ran into Walt Weimer and so he asked me “Did you ever do anything with that paper?” and I said “Well”...I do not know where my...I had been so bold with him before and it was like “Well I kind of thought I would revise it to publish it maybe” and he said “Where are you going to publish it? You have to decide that first” and I said “I don’t know” and I asked him if he had a suggestion and he said “Well, *American Psychologist*.” And I do not think I actually started hyperventilating, but probably close to it and I was like “Really?” and he said “Yeah!” and then he turned around and walked away from me and got partly down the hall and turned around again and said “Of course you can’t write, because no female can.” And fortunately I guess by then I knew him, he did not crush me or anything and I was still sort of on cloud nine that he had said *American Psychologist*.

So it was my second year in graduate school, I had gotten a fellowship for the year so I was free of...I think it was my third year. I was free from teaching and I think maybe I may have even been finished with course work and so the ‘developmental psychologist’ started to spend all of my time working on this history project. The history project that came out of it something that I submitted to *American Psychologist* and of course I had to pay one of the secretaries to type up the manuscript for me and Mary was a single mom and she kept saying to me “You know this is way too long, they will never going to be accepted.” But I submitted it anyway. It was I think maybe there had been other papers that had gone accepted without revision, but I got it back and it was accepted.

AR – Wow!

SS – And one of things that I have always wanted to do actually like who exactly was the action editor on that. Somebody opened the door and said “This is exciting stuff and we need to know about this.”

AR – Well because you have done work on gatekeepers too, so it would be interesting to know who was the gatekeeper there?

SS – Who was the gatekeeper and I do not know but I would love to find out, because and I would also like to find out what else was published, because both of my papers were published, one was published in July ‘75 and the other in August ‘75. Who was it who was working at that really key moment that could see that people needed to know this.

AR – Yeah.

SS – And so and then the other paper that came out was about Leta Hollingworth and if I can tell a Ben [Ludy] Benjamin story. So when the Leta Hollingworth paper came out and of course this is back in the day there is people would stand request cards and what you were supposed to this was to order reprints from the publisher. I guess APA probably had a lot of money. Reprints

from the publisher at the time the year was about to appear and then people would send postcards to you saying “Please could I have a copy of your paper?” So it was really amazing when my functionalism and then Darwinism paper came out, I got all these postcards. It was like so cool and like a whole bag full of them. I did not have the money to order reprints and I am not sure whether I had actually even asked in the department whether that would be possible. I will tell the Ben Benjamin story and I do want to come back to the reprint issue.

So the Hollingworth paper came out and I got a bunch more postcards which was really exciting and one of them was from this guy named Ludy Benjamin and it was like “Please may I have a copy of your paper?” and at the bottom he had written “Thanks to you! My paper will never see the light of day.” [Laughs] I was like “Oh my god! You know I do not even have a Ph.D. and I have professional enemies” [Laughs]. And then he had written another note “But yours was better” which was really sweet. Because he had independently studying Nebraska psychologists had found her as well. So it really does say something about psych guys to being open to telling the story of women psychologists or areas of psychology that have been previously hidden. When you are open to it, it is going to be discovered.

AR – Yeah.

SS – So with the reprints I did not know what to do, because I really wanted people to have a [print]. So I went to the department head and asked if I could get some help with doing this. And he said “Well, how many do you have?” and I said “I have a lot.” “Well maybe if I have enough”; could I bring them in for him?” So I brought in a bag. He said “Ok well, you pay for the photocopying and we will pay for the postage.”

AR – So I mean you think he would be overjoyed, one of his Ph.D. students getting honor...

SS – Well, this is also the same department head who told me I was not going to have trouble getting a job, because you know people had started hiring women.

AR – So wow, ok. So what happened? You started your Ph.D., you started your graduate studies with an interest in emotion? Now I have not asked you about this, but how did you get interested in emotion?

SS – Well when I came back from Italy, it was my senior year and like a lot of students who spent sustained time abroad. It was very difficult to come back and you come back to your senior year in collage and people start asking you “So what are you going to do after you graduate?” I had no idea and so I started to say I would go to graduate school. While I have been away, as an undergraduate I was at Santa Clara University, they had hired Eleanor Williamson who was the first woman tenure-line faculty person in this six-person department at a small liberal arts university. And she was amazing, I mean her grandmother had been one of the [Terman’s] Termites and so she was just amazing. I have got to be an undergraduate teaching assistant for her and I think it was because of her I have got really interested in developmental psychology and I did kind of an internship type of thing or sort of as part of some course work. I worked at the Head Start Center. Head Start at that point was still very new. And it was really interesting to me watching the kids and you know what they thought was funny and what they sort of assumed

about other peoples' internal states. This was like 1970 so theory of mind kind of like was not out there, but there was lot of Piaget. So I have got interested in the whole idea of what we know from Piaget is you know kids experimenting on the world and learning about it and moving from concrete to formal operations, but you cannot really experiment on experience you know like how is that the kids learn sort of map internal states so that we can tell the difference between emotion and not emotion, this emotion or another emotion. How do they learn to map their feeling states on to the language and appearance that other people use? So that just seemed really, really interesting to me. I think had I gone to graduate school 10 years later, a while different set of experience would have happened. So when I started I was going to do with children's sense of humor but that did not really go anywhere. For my master's thesis I did something on like a sort of person perception study, people's perceptions of a woman who was happy with her pregnancy versus not happy with her pregnancy and so this is right after where Roe v. Wade. So it was about choice and lack of choice and happiness and so on.

AR – Well, I was just going to ask you when the kind of gender and feminism piece come join with the emotion piece?

SS – Much later. So then for my dissertation, I figured that maybe the royal road to consciousness would be psychophysiological and I got very interested in psychophysiological measurements which is at that point there was a lot of changes in instrumentation at that point that was making some kinds of things possible, research in children that would not have been possible. My advisor Dale Harris said "Sure, you can do a psychophysiological study if you persuade Bob Stern to chair your dissertation." I was very fortunate that Robert S. Stern, he had studied one of the grandfathers of human psychophysiology. I think he was an associate professor by then and he was like "Oh sure, you can do a study with kids." So my dissertation was *Children's Reported and Actual Responses to a Stressful Situation*. That was the emotion part, and there was this gender part that was really at that point the history part and they were really different.

AR – There was the kind of involvement in your women's group and kind of taking a psych of women seminar piece too that was sort of separate in its own way.

SS – Right. That was also something that was different from a particularly type. Now students were writing papers that had some promise a publication, a presentation or poster and we would encouraged them just like that. It was me on my own figuring out that I needed to go actually make a professional presentation. In fact I submitted my history paper to Division 35 to present at the New Orleans Conference in 1974 and I lied on the application that I was a member of APA. I did not have money, so I was never a member of APA. But they accepted my paper. That is another thing it was a huge symposium and I cannot remember what the other topics were, but I remember being in New Orleans that it was a room just chock full of people and with people standing. Which is kind of interesting that we had so many psych of women or feminist or gender relevant or intersectionality relevant sessions at APA now that some of them have as many people in the audience as people on the panel. But at that point the room was just chock full and I was terrified of speaking in public. In fact, the way I have got over it was to get up and pretend I was Leta Stetter Hollingworth, but that is a different story [Laughs].

AR – [Laughs] It is a good one.

SS – Would Leta Holligworth be [nervous]? No, she would not [Laughs]. But at that point I was the chair and I was actually going to be able to go through with this. I got up and with this little tiny baby voice, but you know somehow people heard what I had to say. Because I started out with that Helen Woolley quote that you see everywhere now that “There is no field aspiring to be scientific that suffers from flagrant personal bias...” Oh my gosh! I knew it by heart always.

AR – Something about ‘drivel’ in that I am not sure [Laughs].

SS – “...and even sentimental rot and drivel, have run riot to such an extent as here”

And I think I was kind of like a moment. You know I could feel that people wanted to hear this. I had a lot of, I remember being totally high from it. By then I have been studying this for a couple of years and you know especially in a graduate student’s life that is a long time, but it was new to other people. So I would love to know what that symposium was that was so full of people.

AR – Well you know this is right around the time I think that Bernstein and Russo had published *Up with Our Foremothers* piece. That was in ‘74. So if this was ‘74, I wonder if either of them were there.

SS – There could have been other members at the panel.

AR – Yeah, neat! Oh gosh, that is fun too! Well that would have been only the second, probably the second. Wow!

SS – But yeah it was only because somehow I have figured out you are supposed to get papers. So I have occasionally wondered how many other really smart great things were people in graduate school writing at that moment who were just hungry to find out about history or hungry to do this research, but at that point sort of the professional development of our graduate students, much less it is the professors. Oh my god! At that point this was the professors who chewed up and spit out. Kind of ended up in a file drawer, just because there was not that sense that you really do need to get this out, the world that does not know this already and we really do need to be thinking about these things.

AR – Right. So tell us little bit about the completion of your dissertation work and kind of the next stage.

SS – Well I did my dissertation and it came out with the children’s self-report stuff was very interesting, the psychophysiology...

AR – What measures did you use in that?

SS – Oh multiple measures such as skin conductance, heart rate, actually not heart rate variability, but pulse volume, indecisive sympathetic activation and that study would have been

much, much better had I done it 15 years later when there were more filters and better ways to quantify the data, but because of the new person who actually my dissertation chair had become a new head of psychology. And through the old boys network he got me a position at the Altoona Campus at Penn State. When I did not have my dissertation completed, so I was ABD. It was really nice, there was one other psychologist Valerie Stratton and it was really nice, but I realized that I could enjoy being at Altoona Campus and really getting into the teaching, but after a while it would not be enough. I really wanted to be at a research university, although it was a terrible time for the academic job market. We went from a period in the late 60s where one guy would get on the phone and call up another guy and ask “Do you have any other guys finishing their dissertations so we would hire them?” To there being an overproduction of Ph.D.s, interestingly enough it is just at that moment women were just starting to increase the proportions of Ph.D.s in psychology and in other disciplines as well, but I just knew about this in psychology. So it was the first time that we saw the phenomenon of graduate students not leaving the nest, but sticking around and being hired as lecturers or trying to get some additional work out, all day look for jobs. My husband at that time was trying to get into medical school. He got his master’s in biomedical engineering and was trying to get into medical school. So we were kind of agreed we’d see what would work. I think he was like a lot of men in our cohort. I mean if you are going to get involved with a woman who called herself a feminist that point you know you had to be in the ride. [Laughs]

AR – And you were calling yourself a feminist at that time?

SS – Oh, absolutely! I did not know anything about what was happening in Chicago, what was happening in New York. I was in graduate school, man, you know, I had blinders on. It was tears and poverty. It was graduate school. But like a lot of guys at that time, you know they are with you and then it gets tough because you really have to be both committed. And so when things started to go really well for me, it was harder for him. He did not get into medical school then I got offered a position in University of California, Davis which the two of us were so excited about because it meant being able to go back to California which is where I was from. My family had moved to California, because they had heard about how in California there were free community colleges.

AR – Wow! That is how dedicated they were to get you guys education.

SS – Well, I mean if we stayed in Nebraska, nothing would have happened. There was free community college, so I do not think we needed to move with scholarship. I found about those after we moved out, so yeah. Anyway so he went on the way he wanted to when I got the offer, but said to me “You know you have to take it. You are crazy if not to.” So I did and moved and then one of the sad things that had happened was that marriage ended.

AR – Yeah.

SS – So I will skip talking about the department at Davis at that point.

AR – You will skip talking about the department? It was not a pleasant experience?

SS – It was not.

AR – Well, tell us then about what sort of was going on in your own kind of intellectual life at that point.

SS – What was happening for me was a real tension between wanting very much to do research on emotion, especially emotional development. So it worked that I started to do there immediately, working with kids. When you do not have the departmental support, it is just really hard when tenure clock is ticking. And so I started to do research with collage students, but yeah there were still interesting questions. Questions were the students were not samples of convenience. The samples kind of made sense, because I was interested in the physiological correlates of emotion and what meaning people make out of bodily responses to emotion. And I had been told very clearly that I was not going to get tenured if I did work about the history of gender.

AR – What was the rationale there?

SS – No, I did not ask. I mean I was an assistant professor and you know I guess my boldness once in a while came up and often not.

AR – It was just the attitude that it was not real research?

SS – It was not real research and in fact I am remembering in one of my pre-tenure evaluations, one of my critics laying into me for my history work not being real history.

AR – Wow!

SS – And in fact I had an article in *Science*, in 1982 on the variability hypothesis, that ended up counting toward my tenure. So my heart wanted to do one thing, my head wanted to do one thing... my head and heart wanted to do two things. The language I used at the time was “my head wanted to do the emotion research” because I think I was doing a little bit false consciousness that was real science and then my heart wanted to do more things with gender, more and I was not quite sure what that was. The reason I know this is that there was a woman who was in our graduate program there who was a self-identified feminist. Actually one of the people who it was not Pat Rossi, but Sherry Kerry who I had this conversation with, but Patricia Rossi who you know for her work on violence against women and rape mates and so on. She was a grad student right about that time too. So these were women in my age who were in graduate school. I mean my age, 30 [Laughs]. And I remember going for a beer with Sherry at that point and saying to her “I feel so torn, really torn. Here is the emotion part, and here is the women part and they don’t go together, they are just so different.” And it was painful.

AR – Yeah.

SS – And then one semester I was teaching, we ran the quarter system at Davis, so one quarter I was teaching psych of gender which I could not teach. I went into the Davis, first of all I did not

get to teach Psych of Emotion for the first...I cannot remember how many years I was there. I may not have taught it until my tenure.

AR – Why? There was just...

SS – Oh, because I graduate student of somebody else was teaching it and it did not get to be me and I did not get to teach psych of gender because Karen (Page) Ericksen was teaching Psychology of Gender Reproduction and there was room for only one gender course. Two of us bonded for being a minority in the department. And I say minority there was one African American man and there was no faculty of color and besides Karen there was one other women who was not denied feminist.

At a certain point Karen and I conspired that we would sort of divide the gender course and create two gender courses. Of course the response from our colleagues at the faculty meetings were “Oh my god! This is going to just totally shift the balance on undergraduate curriculum and we have to do an entire review of the curriculum in order to make sure everybody who wants to teach a special course.” So of course I volunteered the review the curriculum, let out the review of the curriculum, “Ok, who else is proposing special courses?” nobody else proposed any special courses and so two years later that course has been finally approved.

So a little further in my career than you know not right away, I was teaching and just turned out back to back like with 15 minutes apart Psych of Gender and Psych of Emotion. So I would go to my Psych of Gender class and this is the story I have told a lot of times. I tell it in my undergrad classes to say “No, teaching and research really do go together.” I went to my psych of gender class, and all I wanted to talk about is “Why is my boyfriend like this and my girlfriend does not understand? Girls are so emotional.” And then I would go to my emotion course and they wanted to talk about “Why is my girlfriend so emotional? Why does not my boyfriend understand me? Why men are so inexpressive? Blah blah blah.” So one of these click moments or you can either say palm on the forehead moments, that I realized emotion-gender, gender-emotion, and I did not think they went to together? And so I decided that this was going to be the thing that I was going to do. So I went to the emotion society meeting, the brand new International Society for Research on Emotion. It was not very old at that point, it started in 1984. So this would have been maybe in the late 80s, I guess.

I remember talking with Ken Strongman, a psychologist of emotion from New Zealand and he was saying “So what are you working on?” and he was telling me that he was writing these new reviews of the advances in emotion. It was a heavy time in the psychology of emotion in the 80s, because emotion was something that psychologists did not study. They studied stress, or maybe psychosomatic disorders, or many psychophysiology, but emotion, no! But by then Paul Ekman, Caroll Izard had gotten to be big and powerful and so George Mandler and other people were sort of bringing renaissance to emotion research. So we had this new International Society for Research on Emotion. So Ken Strongman was saying “Oh yeah I am going to do reviews of these advances.” so I said “Well, you should really have something about gender in there, because this is really interested.” “Oh, tell me what?” “Well, you know, I will get back to you on that.” Because I was not quite sure. Another reaction that I have got from people in the emotion society is like “Why are you studying emotion because we know that there is nothing really

interesting about gender and emotion, because there are no real interesting sex differences.” Which is essentially true, I mean women have something of an advantage in terms of recognition of facial expressions and making recognizable emotional expressions, but there are no a lot of places where you see bigger consistent differences. So if you use a difference perspective, there is absolutely no, you know as an emotion researcher like “Why would you study this?”

AR – But from a social constructionist perspective there is a huge difference, right? Yeah, let me just wrap up.

{End of DVD 1}

SS – ...a well-worn path, because I did write about it in the first chapter I think of my book on emotion, *Speaking From the Heart: Gender and Social Meaning of Emotion*.

AR – Yeah, prize winning publication by Stephanie Shields [Laughs].

SS – Actually I had been invited to write something about Carol Tavris. Invited to me to... goly, I forgot about this! She was writing a book, a put together and an edited book called *Every Woman Needs to Know about Something and Psychology [Everywoman's Emotional Wellbeing]*. I cannot remember, I mean it is on my CV somewhere. And she asked me to and I know Carol through my colleague Karen Ericksen at Davis. They had gone to graduate school together at University of Michigan. So it was really wonderful to be able to. I first met Carol Tavris in 1983 when there was kind of an organizational meeting for this International Society of Research on Emotion. There they sort of arranged round tables and get to know you kind of hour and I of course knew her name at that point. I am trying to remember from what exactly, because it was '83.

AR – So is this before the...

SS – She had already written *Mismeasure of Women*, because I think it was in '82. So I met her there which was really great and she invited me than to write a chapter for this *Everywoman's Emotional Wellbeing* and it was on, she wanted me to write it on, I do not know, “Why not on emotion?” I was like “Ok, sounds good.” I had no clue what I was going to write and I actually did the first draft of it. I recommended this to, this was one of the wonderful things with Karen Ericksen and I did periodically is we would either borrow or pay for somebody's like really cool coastal getaway at Montego Bay or up in Mendocino and we would pack up and actually the first time we did this, she packed up her big electric typewriter and I packed up my Radio Shack model one computer with two external disk drives and drove up to...I know it sounds like we should have driven in a Model T when we did it [Laughs]. Drive up to Mendocino and we had this kind of a work orgy weekend, where we would sort of roll out of bed and get to bed and I knew she was working in the other room and she knew I was working there, so there were no fooling around like if you were there just by yourself [Laughs]. And in the afternoon we would go into to town and buy food, and then I am trying to remember. One time we were away we were watching Jesse Jackson speak in the Democratic Convention another time we went away maybe this is when I was writing the chapter, we watched Magnum P.I. together. So we would do these sort of like work orgy things and the rule was you had to have some specific thing that

you needed to accomplish by the end of the weekend and usually it was like a first draft and cleaning up and getting a final draft. It was fun. I think Carol Tavris was the Magnum P.I weekend at Mendocino. So it is like I had to come up with something when I was going to say about women and emotion. So I came up with something about like “When someone calls you emotional what does that mean?” And I have not actually looked at that chapter for a long, long time. I wonder if I would disavow its content at this point or still like it. So that got me started, I mean it was published in 1886. You know so anytime I was invited to write a chapter, I would say “How about gender and emotion?” Then I decided to write a book, because people were writing a lot of really dumb things about gender and emotion. Basically what they were doing was what we see so often across different areas of psychology and that is never getting beyond a gender differences, and I would have to say gender differences slash similarities type model, something that actually stays at the level of comparing genders as opposed to problematizing gender. And then beyond that problematizing gender as a category in connection with other social identity categories. Everything changes when you do that.

AR – Would you say that it was kind of the goal of the book? Would you like to talk more about that?

SS – The goal of the book was to one,.... I knew enough people at Davis. Wow, this is really fun talking about my self. [Laughs]

AR – That is the point, it is good.

SS – At Davis when I was an assistant professor there, I think at that point there were maybe about 10,000 undergraduate students. So it was a much more compact campus, but there was a law school and a vet school and a medical school. I went there in ‘77, and there was a woman in Aggie Kahn, Barbara Zoloth, who... There was already a Berkeley model for this of getting women, U.C. Berkeley together for monthly or periodic sort of presentations, research kind of focus talks. So she got us together. There were about a dozen of us who met for the first time in Carol Brooke, a law professor, at her home, and I think Carol was the first one, but there were so few of women at Davis at that point. It was both exciting and depressing. It was exciting because I was never more than like one degree of separation away from any women on campus who wanted to be known as somebody interested in women’s issues and never more than one degree of separation away from any of the guys who were interested in issues of social justice. So that group got started. Barbara actually ended up leaving academia, and I remember talking to her on the phone and saying “You know you have got so much invested. You’ve almost got tenure!” And her saying “You know I looked at this stuff and I can just walk out of my office and not think about it again. There are other things I really need and want to do.” And at that moment, I realized I did want to get tenured. That as hard as everything was, and it was awful, I could not just close the door of my office and not thinking about these things.

But so we ended up having this group at Davis and it was across, what was wonderful about it, it was across the different schools and colleges. So I knew women in humanities who were working on books. I knew women in the law school and how do you write a law review article and what is a law review article. How lucky they are that it is graduate students who are determining what gets published in the law review or law students who determine what gets

published in law review rather than more senior gatekeepers. So I have sense of what it took to do a book and I understood from them that when you sit down to write a book, the book is the research, the book is the process. So that kind of inspired me and I was able to get a Rockefeller Foundation, again these moments of opportunity where Rockefeller Foundation had decided that it was going to invest some in gender research.

AR – When was this one? Interesting...

SS – Actually I do not know if they did this for like maybe three years or fours or something. Actually, my friend Phyllis Berman back from Penn State who was the one who you know from time to time “Wouldn’t it be nice to get together to talk about women psychologists?” and who stayed my friend all of my... [Tears up] I am sorry, she passed away when I last met...

AR – Oh my gosh! Very recent!

SS – She applied an early round because she was very interested in at what age do kids really start doing gendered behavior. So she started looking at doll play, because that would be... In my first empirical study that I was ever really seriously involved with it that was published was with her as the lead author, also a feminist collaboration, where we look at people’s attractiveness to the young and there is a whole other story that got her interested in that and that got us interested in that. Oh, I forgot my train of thought.

So she had applied for this Rockefeller and actually gotten it and she encouraged me to do that. It was like this: You put in a two-page proposal and then from that they invited something you know 25 or 30 and then they gave away like 30. So I put mine in and I remember it was March – ‘89, because I was in Paris for the Emotion Society meeting and I was supposed to hear any day now and of course you could not check your texts or email [Laughs]. So my then-boyfriend at home was going over to my house and checking my phone messages and nothing, nothing, nothing. “Did I make that second cut? Did I make the second cut?” So I got home and discovered that I made the second cut and from there I made the third cut which enabled me to have whole year to work on that. But I did not finish it then, that is what I should have done then, but I did not do it then. I think some of the things would have been way clunkier about. I think it took the time it took. But I really wanted to write it, because it seemed to me that people were really going off in the wrong direction, asking about differences and similarities. So it was a real opportunity to really ask some questions. I mean I could say interrogate, but that makes it sound far more highfalutin that what I actually did. Some basic questions, so for example at that point I have figured out that we share a lot of beliefs about emotion and help tell us a story, but these beliefs may or may not be grounded in actual differences. So one of the stories we tell about gender and emotion is that men are inexpressive. So I wanted to know “Where is the data?” So I started to look to see what have been published on this and discovered that the sort of the men are inexpressive kind of pathologizing of men’s supposed un-emotion was very much connected to sort of the mid late 70s the rise of androgyny kind of thing where thinking that people to be whole people, both instrumental and expressive. A lot of the research, if you look at the actual empirical bases there is not much of an empirical basis saying that men were inexpressive. What there was, was coming out of clinical work with men who you know for sure there are a lot of men and a number of women who have a great deal of difficulty being in touch with their emotions, being able to verbalize about their emotions and so forth. But there was something that

was so particularly attractive about that work that somehow God itself attached to and sort of undergirding, sort of a popular belief. And I also at the time had to pay attention to when do men get expressive with their emotions? Oh gosh, all the time! Especially in certain activities that are very masculine-identified like sports. If you are in a competition and you are not emotional you are not going to win. You mean you do it in the right way, but emotion is a big part of it. So this was the process of my discovery.

So it was the process of my discovery. So I knew that it was going to take some time fortunately because of the many feminists I have worked with at Davis and then the book did not get finished because I started to do some other things. I really wanted to be out of my department as much as possible so I started to do more administrative work. I got involved with the person who is now my husband and he had recently come to the U.S. and at that certain point California was kind of going through a recession at that moment and we were having a really hard time getting any kind of partner opportunity for him. So I went on the market to create some partner opportunity which worked well for him, but that meant moving before my book was finished. So part of the reason I left director of women's studies was there was no way that I could be an administrator and have book thoughts. A lot of people can do that, but it did not work for me. So I had a book in line in 2002, which is you know. It is a good thing that it was not... Well, it took a long, long time.

AR – Yeah. Well at some point with all of that, you became aware of Magda Arnold's work or Magda Arnold?

SS – Yes, Magda Arnold! I became aware of Magda Arnold. So when I was directing women's studies, one of the things that I was really concerned about and I still am is that NWSA may be a fabulous umbrella organization, but there was really nothing representing graduate training in women studies and connecting the different programs that we were developing at that point and even at that point there were already a good sixty masters programs in U.S. and Canada that were offering masters or a graduate specialization or a graduate minor, something like that and then also at that point there must have been maybe eight doctoral programs.

AR – At what year was this?

SS – That must have been '95ish.

AR – Ninety five?

SS – Ninety five, I cannot remember exactly. One of the things that I did was to try to raise our profile at Penn State was I made a little multiple choice test which is "There are how many?" and of course the answer was the bigger number that would come surprisingly. "What do you mean there are 10 or 12 doctoral programs?"

I honestly cannot remember how many there were in '95, but there was a group of the CIC which is the... You have heard of the Big Ten probably because of sports?

AR – Yes.

SS – Well nobody has heard of the CIC which is kind of like the academic counterpart of the Big Ten. So, it is the committee of the province of the Big Ten universities plus the University of Chicago. One of the nice things about being part of that Big Ten is different sort of subgroups like different department heads or deans will have a meeting across these ten schools. So I have got to know people who were directors or chairs of women studies at the other big ten universities. I have met some amazing fabulous women and that was the concern of that group, because Ohio State was about to...they had a graduate masters degree, they were on the road to Ph.D., Minnesota had a brand new Ph.D., Indiana was sort of looking at doing gender and sexuality studies, Iowa had a brand new Ph.D. You know we were trying to think about what we wanted to do at the graduate level at Penn State. So anyway there was an agreement that we would really get together I think before or after some large women's studies meeting in Tucson. And I had been, I was the founding editor of the newsletter for the emotion society and Joe Campos, a very well-known developmental psychologist asked me to do it and said "It is really and way better than being a journal editor, because everybody is really happy to see you and when they see the journal editor they are never happy to see you." "Ok," I said "that sounds like a pretty good deal."

So I started the newsletter and it was very helpful for our organization. So in the back of my head, I remembered from the address labels that Magda Arnold who was a name to me but not somebody whose work had been particularly influential in my own study of emotion. But she was like a name. Did she live in Tucson and so I thought "Well," I had no idea whether she was still around or not, but I'll write to her and say "I am gonna be in Tucson and can I meet you?" So I got a letter back from her saying yes that she would like to. And this is the part I may have even told you this before because this is the part where I have just quenched "Did I take a tape recorder to that meeting? No." Fortunately I took my still camera. So I have some nice pictures of her at the age of ninety...She would have been...This was '95, she was born in 1903 and this was early '96.

So I went to her house to pick her up and we went out and talked about her life and it was really wonderful. She is a very interesting and complex individual. She actually died two months shy of her 100th, either 99th or 100th birthday. She was very strong till the end. When I met her she was very afraid and told me that she was having some memory issues where she would kind of zone out at a time, but I was just like here I was sitting in front of somebody who was a woman, an immigrant, a Catholic which at that point, it really made a huge difference in her life and was a very bad thing to be as a scientist and academic at that point and who studied emotion in early the 1960s when nobody was doing it. I mean if you can find anybody to do her biography, her story in a way that it intervenes with what was happening in the study of emotion, the position of women, the Catholics and higher education is just an amazing story. So I went away from that meeting and wrote a little thing in the newsletter about her and I always had the "I am gonna get back to her" but I kind of lost the track of her. "I am gonna, gonna, gonna"...Because I was doing things, I was working in my book and I was doing other work. Then I realized that I had lost her.

One of my colleagues found me in one of the emotion society meetings Arvid Kappas. You can see I am a historian in my heart, I am naming names, I mean I cannot give you their birthdates,

but I am naming names. Arvid Kappas said to me “You know that piece you did for the newsletter just means a huge deal to me. Magda Arnold had always been my heroes.” Because he is very cognitive, he sort of looks at appraisal models of emotion. It was really great.

So in the meantime I decided I cannot lose her and so I tried to get one of my graduate assistants -- at that time I was still directing women’s studies-- to try to track her down obituaries and you know just everything and then I started calling people with the last name Arnold in Tucson. Yeah, because I have realized what I have found and then what I have lost and it turned out that I have found one of her daughters who lived in Tucson and now of course I have lost her too, I have not been in touch with her in a few years. She met with me and I think I was at SESP, some social psychology meeting and I arranged to meet with her. She made available her autobiography, which Magda told me she wanted to give me her autobiography. I am trying to remember her daughter’s nameOh this is terrible! She gave me a copy and told me that there were still people alive who knew Magda and I do not know if there are alive now, because this has been ten years down the road.

AR – Did she have a personal collection of papers that ended up at AHAP?

SS – Yes. So she has papers there, but I have no idea what is in them.

AR – Oh interesting! I will take a look. I am going to be there in April, I will ask them if they can open it up.

SS – Yeah, yeah, I have no idea what is in them, but her autobiography is a revisionist biography, she was I think revising it all the way up until the late 80s or maybe even longer, from the dates that are in there.

So anyway, after knowing that Arvid was interested in her and it is like “Hey!” and I found Joan Arnold, her daughter and it was like “We are coming up on her centenary. We need to do a special issue, actually it started as symposium for ISRI and then we got a special issue for *Cognition and Emotion*. That was really great and I think that in my humble opinion the work we did at the symposium and in the special issue really brought her name back into the mix as a critically important individual, sort of the first modern theorist of emotion to say appraisals are the basis for emotion and what emotion it is, and what happens at the course of emotion. Before then a lot of people had been giving most of the credit maybe to Dick Lazarus, I do not think George Mandler has got much credit as he deserved, but Dick Lazarus was kind of always the one and Magda Arnold is really is the one and she now I think is more often cited. But unless somebody writes her biography, she might get lost again.

AR – So doing history as an activist project...

SS – I think it is probably the most important feminist academic activism that I have done...well, I don’t know if I’d say it’s the most important feminist activism I’ve done. Trying to get an salary equity study done is a big one, but do not underestimate the power of history.

AR – That is a very good sound bite. I have about three more questions that I will to ask and I know it is 12:50...

SS – Oh my gosh! I have to go to a poster.

AR – ...and you have to go at 1pm. So I will ask one of them really quickly. Do you guys have any burning [questions]? You have actually answered a lot of our semi-structured interview questions as you have been talking. So I will have to pick one of my three. Ok I will pick the advice question I think. I was going to ask you about your intersectionality work, I was going to ask you also about the relationship between women studies and psychology specifically.

SS – Oh gosh, I wanted to talk about all those things.

AR – Well, we will do another interview. The question we often end with is do you have any advice to people coming into psychology now new career people who are feminist and want to do feminist psychology and what is your advice and or sort of what do you think the field needs, where we are going from here? I know it is a double-barreled question.

SS – [Laughs] Wow, that is a much easier one to answer, what does the field need?

AR – [Laughs] So any or all of the above that you would carry to answer.

SS – Ok, so I am not going to talk about intersectionality now or should I talk about intersecionality?

AR – If you want, go for it.

SS – Well once you go from a constructionist perspective, the next logical place is intersectionality and I think very much of my involvement in women studies are helping me be familiar with that theoretical perspective and frankly being able to read that work as a non-fluent speaker of that second language.

AR – Right, right.

SS – So I think for me the connection between women studies and psychology actually became clearest when I left...I was getting very disillusioned with psychology to be honest. When I left California, I asked to have my appointment be 100% in women studies. And because I was concerned about graduate education in women studies, I was really seriously thinking about just shifting my career over that direction. There were a variety of circumstances that made me realize that is not what I wanted to do. And one of them was that by actually being 100% in women studies program, I realized...Well, the analogy that I used with other people is, it is like you can like everything about French, you can speak French, you can study French, you can pretend you are French, but you go to France, you are not French. So I went to women studies, I loved women studies, it was a second language. Then I realized I am a psychologist, the kinds of questions that I am interested in answering are really those questions about the experience of the individual as a meaning-maker or a meaning-making community and the way that I wanted to do it is not by looking at texts exclusively. It is not by doing experiments individually either, but

there is something about the kind of the perspective of psychology on maybe how to sort out and at least initially think about multiple factors influencing a particular set of behaviors, set of beliefs that psychology is comfortable to me. So I need to come home to psychology and so I did. Now I do not want to lose the women studies part, although Penn State is such a huge university that I do not have the contact of people. You know even the people in women studies have shared appointments or differ from me in disciplines of origin. I do not have that contact so much anymore, so it is very hard to try to stay current, not be sort of bogged down by psychology.

The analogy I give with psychology when I talk to people in sociology is like sociology is like sort of this little...I am going to use this horrible military analogy, it is kind of like a cruiser, you know gets out there and it can move around. Psychology is like an oil tanker. [Laughs] In order to make it turn you have to start 40 miles ahead to get a little bit of a turn and so you know you have to choose where you are going to have your impact. If you want that turn to happen you really have to be willing to take the very long view. You also have to very willing to say that long view is what is going to be is affecting this discipline as a whole, when I can be having an influence right now is my community; the community of people who study emotion, the community of people who care about the relation between women studies and psychology, the community of people who think that social psychology needs to be much more informed by feminist psychology. The people who think that social psychology and feminist psychology needs to have its activism, connected to the life outside of the academy even if we are not the ones who are specifically doing that in a day to day basis. So you know rich communities are part of it, how you make bridges between those, meanwhile trying to get that super tanker to make a turn?

AR – Wow, good, good. I think this is a really good place to end even though we have been talking for a long time.

{End of DVD 2}