

Psychology's Feminist Voices Oral History Project

Interview with Beverly Greene

*Interviewed by Leeat Granek
New York, NY
September 11, 2009*

When citing this interview, please use the following citation:

Greene, B. (2009, September 11). Interview by L. Granek [Video Recording].

Psychology's Feminist Voices Oral History and Online Archive Project. New York, NY.

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September 11th, 2009

BG: Beverly Greene, Interview participant

LG: Leeat Granek, Interviewer

LG – First, thank you so much for taking the time to talk to me today.

BG – Certainly.

LG – I'm going to start out by asking you some general questions about your feminist identity and then moving into asking some questions about feminism in your career and then about the state of psychology in general and feminist psychology in particular.

LG – The first question is a general question about how and when you first developed a feminist identity?

BG – Well, I don't know quite what that means.

LG – Ok.

BG – I certainly value feminist thinking, and I think by reasonable definitions of feminism, I'm a feminist. But, I don't walk around thinking of myself as having this feminist identity because I'm not quite sure what that means. I think it may mean different things to different people. Early on in the course of my work, when I was writing about marginalized groups, I found a more welcoming atmosphere within the feminist psychology audience despite the fact that, at that time, feminism was really about white women. There was very little consciousness about the struggles of women who had multiple identities [and] the notion that the primary locus of oppression for all women was gender is, I think, overstated. It depends on which women you're talking about and I guess my reaction to a lot of those readings – while a lot of things felt very salient and congruent to me – there was something about that that was not unlike in ethnic minority psychology the experiences of women; what kind are invisible and stereotyped, as if all ethnic minority women were the same, or all ethnic people of color were somehow the same, as if there were no gender differences between men and women among African Americans that differently contributed to their oppression and marginalization.

The early strands of my work were about pulling those things together, and looking at intersections because most of the people I knew had intersecting identities [and] I think everybody does. But, certainly people who are multiply marginalized have a different

kind of challenge and I think the other piece was that everybody who's a member of a marginalized group isn't equally marginalized. I think there was some unwillingness to look at that; that there are ways in fact that within marginalized groups (3:45) within women, within African Americans, within lesbians and gay men, within the disability community, within social class stratification – within each group there are people who are more privileged than others and often use their privilege to oppress others who are like them and that wasn't getting talked about.

Feminist thinking sparked a lot of my own thinking about that, and the omissions captured my attention in a way that it stimulated more thinking and when I began to articulate those things in professional presentations and writings, they seemed to be more welcome within the feminist community. I don't want to portray this as if everyone wanted to hear that; there were many women who were feminists that didn't want to hear that because some of them were, in many ways, using their white skin privilege to ignore differences between themselves and women of color as well as their class privilege and just the sense that everybody articulates what reality is from their own perspective and when anybody attempts to say, "Well this is everybody's reality in my group." But that's problematic. I understand that for political solidarity it's important to unite around common causes, but it doesn't mean we are all the same, it doesn't mean all of our struggles are the same, and certainly as a clinician thinking about psychotherapy with people - starting out with that assumption really leads you down the path away from really understanding that person's dilemma. You can't reduce it into all of these simplistic "this group does this" [or] "this group does that" but how does this person experience that group? How do they experience their particular dilemma as a function of those intersections but also as a function of who they are by virtue of who their family was? What were other kinds of influences in their lives?

I'm not sure if that answers your question but that's where I felt that work was well received.

LG – Yeah, so I wanted to ask you more about intersections later – can you talk a little bit about when that consciousness was raised for you? Was it something that you started...

BG – Intersections?

LG – Even the intersections of the work you were doing and the feminism you were involved in at the time – what came first?

BG – Well, I live in intersections; I grew up in intersections.

LG – And having an awareness?

BG – And having an awareness of that, and what was missing and why it is that in each place people seemed to only be able to see one thing. Why there seemed to be a need to, in some ways, compete for who is most oppressed when any form of oppression harms people. Any form of oppression, whether it's from people who share some identity with you or not, is just not tolerable. So my life experience brought an awareness of

intersections. I would say that there was a way that our family created a kind of space where growing up we were free to question a lot of things and we weren't given this message that there are these fixed things in the world that always are and you always have to think this way, or people are always this or always that but that people are (7:56) complicated. I don't know how deliberate it was on the part of my parents, but as children, I can remember in very simple ways them saying things like "You know, sometimes bad people can do good things and good people can do bad things". This notion of "They're bad, we're good" was just never part of the equation; you had to understand people as a function of your experiences with them, that all of the stereotypes – the shoulds, the woulds – kind of breakdown at some point.

LG – And would you say that that was a part of your work from the very beginning? When you started out?

BG – When I started out as a psychologist I think in some ways it was, but I didn't start out as an academic psychologist so I wasn't thinking about it in pedagogical terms. It was just a matter of what I was doing on a day-to-day basis in my work with patients and public mental health. I wasn't thinking about what it was necessarily, I was just doing it. A lot of the reading helped me to think about first, why there is nothing written about this because I just assumed that people must know this, so somebody's written about it. I was asked to teach some seminars in the hospital that I was working in about training people from majority identities to work with patients with minority identities. I had to put together some lectures, so I literally started to do a lot more reading and writing about it and realized there really wasn't a lot that spoke specifically to those things or talked about the power analysis; that was something that feminism offered that was unique, that sort of core notion that discrepancies and social power are a cause of many mental health problems in women – they are a cause of many mental health problems in many people – but specifically talking about social power and where people are on the social hierarchy and why, and how that contributes to their mental health - wasn't as explicitly discussed in psychoanalytic studies. I thought there were some pieces missing and that's when I started, initially doing presentations around those issues, and then later being dragged, kicking and screaming, to writing about them [and] that's how it evolved in the work.

LG – Did you have any involvement with the feminist movement, or any feminist organizations in psychology?

BG – Aside from AWP [The Association for Women in Psychology] and Division 35 [The Society for the Psychology of Women], no.

LG – OK

BG – But I think that was it in feminist psychology.

LG – At the time, yeah – What about the feminist movement in general?

BG – In general, not formally, although certainly I supported the movement and if people asked me I would say, "Yeah, I'm a feminist. Don't you think women should be treated as equals to men?" I mean, that really is the core notion of what feminism is; that women

should not be treated in a devalued fashion because they're women. It's stupid, it's bad for people individually, it's bad for the country because you don't get the benefit of everyone's talents [and] that everybody should be the best that they can be and contribute to society. When you start deciding who's worthy and who isn't, aside from what it does (11:53) to them personally because it prevents them from developing as fully as they should be able to, it also denies society. Every person who doesn't get to fully become who they are denies us the richness – if you think of all the people who are artists and theoreticians and inventors – all of those things you don't benefit from if you decide a whole group of people aren't allowed to participate fully. It's destructive to everyone. It just seemed like this was a no brainer – what's the problem exactly? I still feel on some level that this is a no brainer [and] what is the problem here?

LG – Can you talk a little bit about what attracted you to psychology and how you merge your feminism with your psychological work? But if you want to talk more about how you merge your critical thinking and some of the other things you were talking about earlier, that would be fine too. If you don't want to call it feminism, you can define it any way you want, but how did you get attracted to psychology, and how do you combine these elements in your work?

BG – Well I think there is a way that I've always been a critical thinker and psychology sort of provided a home for that, just as feminism provided a home for that. I'm curious about people. I think that one of the things that was attractive about doing psychotherapy was [that] you hear narratives about how people became who they are and those narratives are just extremely powerful. The earlier parts of my work were with many people with hospitalized children and their families. You hear in people - who people don't expect much of - these sort of brilliant strategies for overcoming things that are just unthinkable; that sort of bolsters your faith in the human spirit and the capacity to overcome the unthinkable, the importance of stopping a lot of those things that happened that are unthinkable because of what they have the potential to do to the human spirit. Just people's stories, how they become who they are, how people construct what they make of the world, what they do with that information – that's what was appealing about psychology and using feminism within psychology to broaden that lens.

LG – You did your graduate work at NYU [New York University] and Adelphi [University] - can you talk about your training there and if there was room –

BG – Well, my graduate work was at the Derner Institute [The Gordon F. Derner Institute of Advanced Psychological Studies] at Adelphi, my undergraduate work was at NYU.

LG – Oh, I'm sorry I didn't understand that from your CV. Can you talk about your training there?

BG – Well, my graduate training was dominated by psychoanalytic thinking, which, at the time was – psychoanalytic thinking, as it is articulated in American psychoanalysis, absorbs a lot of the American mentality of dominance and subordination. That is not the whole of psychoanalysis; but at that time that was, at least in marginalized thinkers, that's how it was thought of. Unfortunately, many people in psychoanalytic community

behaved that way so it reinforced those assumptions. There wasn't a lot of room for looking at issues around women, around sexual orientation, around the role of race and how that is a part of the dialogue in psychotherapy, and how it changes the dialogue.

In the course of my training, there wasn't really much room to explore those things. I understood that that was the deal. I had no illusions that somehow – although I think many graduate programs are different now – that graduate training was a place where anybody was going to be interested in anything I thought, or my perspective, but that that was part of what getting a credential was about because then you do have license to put your perspective out there in some way. That was how I thought about my graduate training and I wanted to go some place that I knew was rigorous because I think what therapists do is very serious business; you have the capacity to be really destructive to people if you are not well trained. I think training is an important component of being a therapist but I think temperament is also [as well as] having the capacity to step outside of your own dilemma and be comfortable with that and understand perspectives that are not like yours and understand that the world doesn't look to everyone else the way that it looks to you. It doesn't mean one perspective is more valuable than the other, although in broader society one perspective may be treated as if it's more valuable than another, and that's an important thing to bring into therapy, which is a part of feminist thinking: what goes on out there is not irrelevant to what is taking place in the therapy room, that everything that goes on out there affects who your patient is. If they are a member of a marginalized group, how that group is treated and how that affects this person and their understanding of it and what is going on in society that marginalizes them is an important piece to bring in to the work. Feminist therapy did that in ways that other therapies I thought simply did not.

Certainly, in Afrocentric therapies the importance of understanding racism was brought into therapy, but what was missing was how race is gender-coded; that racism is experienced differently for men than it is for women; how sexism, as an active component within African Americans as a group, also undermines the status of African American women that connects them to the undermined status of other women from around the world. Those were strands of things I was trying to bring together, but I didn't expect to be able to do that during my training. I knew that they weren't going to want to hear that, but my understanding of the reputation of Derner was that they gave you a really, really solid grounding in learning how to do therapy, and learning how to ask certain questions. I think one of the values of psychoanalytic thinking is its complexity, that is, if you really read the masters and think back to a lot of the original things that Freud had to say: people aren't so simple, that culture is important. Freud had a great interest in anthropology, and so the notion that that's out there and you don't bring it into the room – a lot of that is about looking at the theory as if there is one theory and everybody agrees about it. One of the values about being educated at Derner was also coming to understand [that] there is no one theory that everybody thinks is the last word; there are a lot of different psychoanalytic perspectives for looking at people and the world that are different, that people have intense disagreements about. That was also helpful.

The most enlightening aspect of my training was my work with a supervisor [named] Bill Johnson, who is an African-American psychoanalyst who Derner – there were no people of color on the faculty then, or for a long time – but there were two adjunct faculty members: [First,] Nancy Boyd Franklin who taught a family therapy course and as an African American family therapist, gave you a very different perspective on families than the typical views of family therapy because she actively incorporated cultural understanding into that, and [second] Bill who taught a course on racial transference and counter-transference in psychotherapy. I was fortunate enough – I remember selecting a supervisor for my psychotherapy practicum who someone else (20:32) selected and [who] was not available and it opened the opportunity for me to ask if I could work with Bill (although Bill was an adjunct) and I was able to do that. That was a transformative period in my training because you get a lot of didactic information in graduate school and at some point you have to begin to translate that into what does that look like in the room? What do you do with that? You know, when that comes up, how do you understand that? I think Bill was able to sort of widen that lens around what psychodynamic and psychoanalytic understandings have to offer people who are marginalized because one of their great life tasks is to sort of – to use a metaphor from someone’s book, swimming with barracuda or something like that – you’re sort of constantly surrounded by some sort of toxic soup. How do you survive, and not internalize it? To do that means, in therapy, having to talk about the broader ramifications of this condition that you’re in and how do you be in it but apart from it enough to say, “Yeah, but that’s your idea of me – that’s not me” [or] “That’s your idea of them and I can see that that serves a purpose for you, but, that has nothing to do with what that is for me.” That’s something that I think resonated with what our parents taught us.

My parents were very clear about having to teach my siblings and I about racism; that this was a reality that we were going to confront [and] that we needed to have some preparation for understanding. Somehow or other there was a very clear message that there are people out in the world that need to see us in a particular way that was nothing to do with who we are. It has to do with their need to exploit us in some way, or their need to feel better about who they are, and they seem to only be able to do that by putting down somebody else and we happen to be one of those groups that they want to put down. I think I already had a kind of sensibility around that, and working with Bill helped me to frame that in both theoretical and practical terms that I could use in therapy to help other people understand what an expansion of what therapy does in general - if it’s good therapy - which is to say, how much of what you have been told about you is true and how much is not? What is it that you believe is true about you, and what don’t you believe, and how did you come to believe that this was true and this wasn’t? How is it that you go about making decisions about what is true and what is not true? Whose information have you decided is reliable, and whose isn’t?

And sort of looking at that and looking for places where people may be accepting information at face value about themselves and about the world from people who have distorted lenses; not that they’re bad necessarily, but that they’re distorted in a particular way. They may need to see a person in a particular way because of what it means for them, or they may need to see the world in a particular way to kind of justify the way

they make peace with something they struggle with but that it may not have anything to do with the person in question. If you broaden that lens to a societal lens then its sort of like if you have to ask that question about historic figures in your life, but also historic figures in the world and how that shapes how people see you as a part of a particular group, and what is true about that and what is not true, and who you believe and who you don't, and how you figure that out.

LG – Ok so you've kind of touched on the next question – you've answered a lot of these questions through this conversation but I'm just going to frame it and see if you want to add to it. The question is about the trajectory of your career, themes and topics of your research, and private practice and some policy work – how do they merge for you, and where did they come from? You've started to talk quite a bit about how they merge and (25:00) where they were based in. Would you say that – you can add anything you want to what you already said – but would you say also that some of the research themes you were working on were things you were seeing in your practice and bringing into the reading in writing because sometimes it goes the other way as well.

BG – Well, each informed the other but I'd have to say that, for the most part, I saw a lot in my practice that made me think “nobody is talking about this in training”. Sometimes just as a way of figuring out how to think about certain things, it helps me to write things down if I'm thinking them through. I just started writing things down that at some point I used as points of discussion in symposia and various things and in doing that I have to say that writing was not my idea; people started encouraging me and pushing me to do that. My experience in academia was, to use one of Bill's metaphors, crawling through on your hands and knees and it wasn't a place that I was thinking “and I want to go back there? I don't think so”.

LG – Can you speak to why? What made it so horrible?

BG – Some of it was personal, and some of it was the nature of graduate school and perhaps particular characteristics of Adelphi. The year I started at Adelphi I was diagnosed with the first of two brain tumors and I had to leave that spring –in March or so of my first year – for a 16-hour surgery and intracranial surgery is pretty debilitating. For the next year and a half I was just enormously fatigued and the demand of the work in graduate school is intense, and Adelphi was particularly intense. That's not a complaint –

LG – You were doing both? You didn't take any time off?

BG – I did. Well, I had surgery April of that year and came back to school in September. I was released by my doctor to return, and it wasn't like I had some villa on the beach to lay around for the next year while I sort of felt – you know, that just wasn't my reality. My feeling was, I was going to have to work anyway – there was no reason to not go back and continue school and I very much wanted to do that. Part of the challenge was [that] I was physically exhausted; the healing brain uses an enormous amount of energy and so that was part of what made it challenging, and because it was a challenging place. It was an intense workload and I think you're just working all the time: there were 3 days

a week where classes were held from 9 to 5, and 2 days – which I think is an outstanding feature of that program starting out in first year – where you are at a clinical facility and I was very fortunate. I had a fellowship in Mental Retardation at New York Medical College and that was a very rich experience. I learned a lot there; you're learning a lot of theory, testing and application, but there is a way to see how that is applied very early on in training and I think that's very valuable because you have to be able to make those translations. There are certainly people who can learn the didactic material very well but can't translate that into something they are able to use their person to do in the enterprise we call therapy. It's a different activity.

When I was talking about temperament earlier, you really have to be able to step outside yourself and have the kind of boundaries that you're comfortable enough in, that you don't think if you loosen them a little bit you're going to get lost some place. You have to be able to tolerate relatively high levels of stress; therapy is a stressful, challenging enterprise, and there are ways that it was overdone there at times, but, the stress of the educational process – what some of my professors would say is [that] this is very stressful business and we need to know what people do when they are stressed and anxious because if what you're going to do is something destructive, you need to know about that now, get into therapy, understand that that's your propensity and fix it or reconsider your career plan. I think that's valid; that you are preparing people to do work that is stressful where you are responsible for people in ways that are profound and you have to take that seriously.

LG – So you were talking about not wanting to go crawling on hands and knees, running, kicking and screaming so just to take us back to what you were talking about earlier and how some of these things merged for you and came out for you and in things you were seeing in therapy.

BG – I saw the things I write about. I saw people who, first of all, were not simply a pile of deficits or pathology but had much strength, despite, for many of them, a lot of pathology. I also saw in my work in public mental health, in full relief, systemic inequity and the way those power differentials and systemic inequity really do harm people in the ways it denies them care, in the way that care is structured so that it looks like people are getting something that they're not, in the ways that they are often blamed for whatever their dilemma is, and the structural inequities that keep them locked in to certain places are not given any attention and those things came up in the course of treatment plans for a lot of patients. At some point I started incorporating those ideas into the things that I was writing because I thought, “Yeah, they all have this stuff here but there is something that goes on every time they have to get care for themselves, that there are all these obstacles that would make a sane person crazy.” And someone who is already compromised, “Well, what would you expect?” You blame them that they give up on something that's crazy making to do.

LG – Can you talk a little bit about policy, about some involvement in task forces that are APA? I was looking through your incredibly impressive CV, “The Mental Health of Ethnic Minority Women and Diversity in Clinical Psychology Task Force” Can you talk

a little bit about what that was like for you, what the process was, or any other task force or policy making you were involved in that stands out for you?

BG – I’m one of those people who is a proud member of APA because I think APA does a range of things that seek to better the conditions of marginalized people. They may have had to be pushed, kicking and screaming, to do it because they haven’t always been doing it, but there has always been a core of folks in APA and in its structure who work towards social justice, and that’s really important.

To be a part of something that becomes part of an amicus brief (33:06) that APA files on behalf of some discriminated-against group to me is the highest calling, I suppose, in terms of how we use research; that it’s not there just to feed the intellect but it’s there to make the world better in some way. It’s there to make peoples lives better, and to be able to use it in that fashion – those were rewarding experiences. I mean, they’re time consuming, but I do them because I think it’s very important for those of us who believe in those things to bring that which we know into that enterprise.

LG – Have you seen those policy practices put into action and to practice?

BG – Yeah, actually when the Iowa Supreme Court recently ruled that prohibiting same-sex marriage was a violation of its constitution, one of the documents that it used was the report from the task force on same-sex marriage and same-sex families and adoption and the use of psychological research that demonstrated that this is harmful to people; that denying people certain rights has an outcome in terms of their mental health and the mental health of their families, and that this is harmful. And they said that that was one of the reports that really had an impact on them. I think we forget when we do this work all the time, that there are certain things that we take for granted that are part of our knowledge base that other people are simply not aware of and being able to see that work being used in that way is really important.

LG – You’ve had a prolific career in publishing books and articles – I mean, there were so many of them I didn’t even pick any out – sometimes I’d just pick out a few. I’ll just open it up to you to say what publication are you most proud of, and/or which you think has had the most impact? Maybe they’re not the same two publications....

BG – I have no idea what the impact is.

LG – Ok!

BG – I’m still surprised when people I don’t know come up to me and say that they’ve read something - really? You did?

LG – Yeah, of course.

BG – Well, it’s not. When you’re writing something you put it out there and people are aware of you in a way that you’re not aware of them so it’s not an “of course”. Sometimes it’s just a little strange, it’s sort of like “you saw that?” And of course, it’s out there and of course people see it -

LG – Yeah, that’s what I meant by –

BG - But it doesn’t mean I’m not surprised. I’m not connected to that when I’m writing it, I’m just sort of involved in the process and there is something that I want to say, and often saying it helps me to think about it. It helps, because I teach and I’m training therapists. It also clarifies my thinking about how to frame that in the training of clinical psychologists that I’m involved in. I don’t know what has had what impact – I know that people read it.

LG – Maybe one that you’re most proud of? Or you feel really good about? Maybe not most proud....

BG – There are a few I feel really good about. The book with Leslie Jackson on *Psychotherapy with African American Women*. I’m particularly proud of it because it may be the only book out there that is written entirely by psychodynamically-oriented psychotherapists who are also black women about therapy with black women. It was challenging to do because black women don’t easily see themselves as writers and people whose thinking has something to contribute. Unfortunately, people who are practitioners, because of the elitism of the academy, don’t necessarily see themselves as having something to contribute either. But, both of us felt that a lot of innovative work – taking traditional psychodynamic paradigms and making them usable for therapies with African American women – was going on in many places we knew of, but it never finds its way into the literature and certainly in any academic discipline if something is not in the literature it didn’t happen or it’s not worthwhile. That was what we sought to do, and I thought just giving visibility to those voices and to that thinking was something I was very proud of.

Unfortunately, Guilford, (37:57) in their less than infinite wisdom, has taken the book out of print. I think those are the kinds of things that I strive to do. I think that one of the privileges of the academy is that you have the power to do that. You can give voice to people who don’t have a voice. I try to use my work, in some way, to articulate the concerns of people whose concerns are not generally articulated or cared about in the world and often, in the field.

LG – How do you think psychology can become more politicized? Should psychology become more politicized – Maybe I should ask that question first.

BG – I’m not sure what that would mean, because I think it is. I think it always has been. In the early part of the last century when psychology was using IQ and tests to decide who should be allowed to immigrate and who shouldn’t – that’s politicized. When (39:03) ETS [Educational Testing Service] makes tons of money creating and developing tests that decide who gets into law school, who gets into graduate school and all of those things – that’s political. The use of tests is political because who gets included and who is not included is a political decision. We know that tests don’t ultimately tell us what somebody is ultimately going to do; they’re not infallible. Often samples of previous behavior tell us more than what a test is going to tell us and they’re notoriously poor

predictors for women and for many people of color but they're used anyway – well, that's political.

LG – Let's reframe the question: So how do we make psychology more aware of the fact that it is inherently, always political?

BG – I think there are some people that might say that they are not aware of that, who would retreat behind the "This is just science" but how science is used is political. How you constructed this thing you're calling a piece of science, and who was included in your sample and who wasn't and how you went about studying whatever you're studying, and even the very question that you're raising is political, or why would we be talking about it? If it has no implications for anything then what's the point? Why would we be using our resources in that way? I think while there are people who would say psychology should be just science and not political, there are enough people that would say that that's nonsense because everything we do as a science – our science gets used. The IQ tests were used to talk about if Head Start – if 5 years later kids don't have higher IQs, then why should we fund it? Because Head Start wasn't designed to increase IQ, it was designed because there was a feeling that it kept kids in school longer and it did do that. You can use "We're a science" but science can be used to create more social justice, or it can be used to continue to marginalize people; it always has been. Science is not pure. I don't think people don't know that in psychology; psychology is a reflection of society. There are people whom have privilege, or majority identities, or identify with such and/or need to be out of touch with that and would like to deny those things. That's no different than Joe the plumber, who liked to deny – perhaps despite his disadvantage – that he has the privilege of being white and male in a society that is racist and sexist. Those are privileged identities.

LG – Do you think psychology should have an explicit ontology?

BG – Such as?

LG – I don't know, that's the question – such as always working towards social justice – that all research should work towards social justice. That would be an example of ontology.

BG – I wouldn't want to say that if someone's curious about something and they want to study it just for the sake of studying it that that is inappropriate – it's not. I think that part of your responsibility, as a scientist, is to be very damned aware of how what you're saying could be used. If you think it should not be used in that way, be very clear about why that would be a misrepresentation or distortion of its use because when you put it out there it is going to be used in some fashion. Perhaps a political awareness among psychologists about how what they do has political implications is important. But again, I'm sure there are some psychologists who are not interested in social justice and who believe that the social hierarchy is exactly what it should be.

LG – I haven't actually ever heard anybody say that in quite that way before in any of the graduate training or – I'm in the critical area of history and theory of psychology feminism so I have awareness of all these things but it's interesting that I have never

heard of any graduate program that explicitly cautions what you put out there and how you put it out there. It's a really good thing that should be incorporated as part of the pedagogy.

BG – But you also have to understand that the majority of this field is still comprised of people with majority identities who don't think of this on a day-to-day basis because they don't have to. Their lives have not necessarily been shaped by inequity. For people whose lives are shaped by it, they are forced to think about it.

[During] the Senate Judicial Confirmation Hearings of (44: 16) judge Sonia Sotomayor - I'm watching one Senator in particular from Alabama asking her [if] she thinks the wise Latina woman, she thinks she could be wiser than a white male – basically how she can be unbiased as a judge. I thought, “Here is this privileged character coming from a state that had to be dragged, kicking and screaming into the 21st century around race, that not until December of 2001 took the laws criminalizing interracial marriage off of its books, and I don't remember him being active in that struggle.” With an identity in that context over the last 50 years, at approximating his age, made him among the most privileged of his context, with an obliviousness to the reality that people who are situated out on the margins have to understand the margins and the center and move back and forth between it with an agility that people who sit at the center or are never going to see anything else, do not have to move around it. Therefore, they do not have as wide a lens with which to view the world.

I think that's a kind of consciousness that people come from experiences that pull the potential to allow them to see the world from a wider lens. We know there are many people who come through those experiences and they do not see the world through a wider lens; it can also do the opposite. But at least there is that potential that you don't necessarily see among those who are more explicitly privileged because they don't have to look at or think about those things. In the rarefied area of academia where often depending on the institution there's no support for suggesting that this research, or that research – what are the political implications of this? How might this be misused? That isn't there, but the push is that you have to get x-number of publications out then people don't think about that. Sometimes it's just that. I think there are a range of different things that inform that kind of behavior and sometimes just malevolence and mean-spiritedness. Psychology is not apart from the human condition – everything that human beings are, psychology is.... Only with the tools of psychology to do various things.

LG – I have lots to think about. You've been given dozens of awards and honors – which would you say is the most meaningful to you and why?

BG – I don't know, I'm not always quite sure why I get them.

LG – [laughs] OK....

BG – I'm serious. It's certainly gratifying to be seen that way but I'm not always sure what it is about my work that is important to people. I'm happy that it is, and if it's helpful that is certainly gratifying.

LG – Is there one in particular that stands out for you that was really meaningful?

BG – It’s hard to say because I’m not always sure – again, I know that sounds stupid – It’s sort of like, “Now, why am I getting this?”

LG – It doesn’t sound stupid, it sounds humble.

BG -Because that’s not a driving force in what I do. I look up and there are piles of publications. I feel very fortunate that I get to do a kind of work that I really enjoy, and I’m well suited to do. That is also a privilege; not everyone gets paid to think and create scholarly work. I suppose awards for things I’ve written. I’m not sure why but it seems more tangible than people have read that and think whatever they think about it. I also know that maybe if a different group of people read it somebody else would have gotten the reward.

LG – Can you speak about the ways in which – and maybe this isn’t true for you, maybe it is –your values, religion, spirituality may have influenced your work?

BG – They’re somewhat irreligious in terms of formal institutional religion. I was raised in the Baptist Church because that’s the Church that my family is in, but I spent most of my childhood growing up in northern New Jersey, and my family is from the Deep South. Church was always a central feature of what they did in terms of involvement in boards of the Church and activities, but it wasn’t particularly doctrine-driven. Our minister was a very humble man who – I look at these mega churches now and I can remember times when I would be sitting with him and he’d put his feet up and he has holes in his shoes. He didn’t have a car, but he was Boston University educated and he was more of a Martin Luther King kind of Minister. He used to say, “I’m not a preacher, I’m a Minister and the role of Ministers is to minister to the congregation and the community and churches are not places where you dress up and come on Sunday to see who can out dress who, or who can outdo who in terms of who has this kind of car or material things, but it’s a place where people come together to try to figure out how they can help people who are less fortunate.”

For him, the spirit of Jesus was more like what Cornel West has called Prophetic Christianity, which West says, has its origins in Judaism which is to the extent that you are indifferent to the needs of people who are basically trash to society, who are poor, downtrodden, and having a hard time, is the degree to which you insult your maker. If you really are interested in emulating the life of Jesus then you’re interested in making a difference in the lives of people who are suffering, and alleviating [that] suffering. That’s the goal of Christians; to alleviate suffering, not to impose more suffering on people that you happen to disapprove of for one reason or another. That’s not what Jesus did.

I think I came out of it with an awareness that was also fostered by our parents, who made us go to Church up until a certain point – that this is important because you learn things from different people, you get to see another slice of the world, you get to participate in things that are important for community sake and not just for the sake of your relationship with God per se, that it was an important building experience, but not because people in Church were better than people who weren’t. My mother would say

today, “Some of the biggest devils are sitting up in Church every Sunday and they can (52: 53) recite all the platitudes and all the scriptures and all that stuff but in the way they behave towards other people that they are not Christian at all.” It was part of that complexity that I think for not well educated people that my family represented there was a sense of just because people are in that place – these simple equations about who is good and who is bad don’t hold up – that people are more complicated than that.

This is somewhat (53: 06) tangential, but related to the question. My father grew up in rural Mississippi, which had some of the harshest segregations of the last century. I’m sure he saw lynchings and really brutal kinds of realities where doing the wrong thing, or misstepping, could lead to your death very quickly, where black people simply had no rights whatsoever and had to accommodate to that. I couldn’t imagine accommodating that constantly. My mother grew up in Georgia where, at least in the area where she grew up, it was somewhat less rigid. She had a friend early on who was white – that sort of life and death rigidity wasn’t necessarily segregated. If you crossed those lines, it didn’t mean someone would come and shoot you, or set your house on fire, or take your children and you’d never see them again. I remember during the period when Martin Luther King was murdered, it struck a really deep chord in my father because he said, “If people can kill someone like that, where’s the hope?” and I never really heard him speak that way and he was talking about his experiences growing up and those kinds of things that he’d never told us. I was in High School at the time and I said, “How come you never told us about that? That’s really horrible treatment” because my parents had friends who were white and didn’t generally teach us that being separatist was the way to go and in that moment I couldn’t understand why he wouldn’t have gone to that extreme and he said, “I wanted you to make decisions about people yourself; that all white people are not the enemy and all black people are not going to be your friends and you can’t sort of go through the world making that kind of an assumption and then assuming you know people on that basis – because you don’t.” That sense of people being complicated and all of the simple descriptors that are used to decide who is this and who is that really don’t hold up.

Knowing what his experience was, I thought, “Well that’s a profound statement coming from someone who, by all reasons, should hate white people” but who – he said, “If I did that, look at all the people I have in my life who have really helped me to do things, and who care about me – that I wouldn’t have.” If you are using those kinds of descriptors to decide who you have in your life and who you don’t, you will exclude sources of potential love and support, even though you may exclude potential sources of hate. The idea is to try and understand people on the basis of how they treat you, not if you’re this, [then] this must be the outcome.

That was also their ethic around religion: that being able to chant scripture back and forth means nothing if, at your spiritual core, you don’t have a sense of generosity and willingness to extend yourself to people, that religion is supposed to comfort people and not scare the hell out of them, that it’s not your place to judge, that somehow somebody who is evil and doing whatever it is they do, you don’t allow them to do it with you but it’s not your job to take care of them, that somehow there is balance in the universe and that what goes around comes around. You give to somebody who doesn’t give back to

you, but somebody may give to you who you never gave a thought of so there is that kind of balance and within that sphere you just do the best that you can do.

LG – Ok.

BG – I don't know if that answered your question.

LG – No, it did, it did. You totally answered the question – and related to giving – do you have a teaching philosophy?

BG – Probably not.

LG – Ok. What's the best part about being a supervisor, or teacher, or mentor – the worst part?

BG – The worst part is preparation. Prepping courses is an insane amount of work and people who don't teach have no idea how much time it takes to prepare what looks like you just stand up there, like you're talking off the top of your head. That, I really don't like. Whenever I think, "Gee, I wish I didn't have to teach this course" it's about the prep because whenever I'm with the students or supervisees I really do enjoy it. I understand what I got from the best supervisors that I had and the pieces of them that I internalized that really helped me to see, and to help clients and I hope that that's what I give to students and supervisees – a safe place to learn. Meaning, that people can acknowledge what they don't know; that you can't learn if you don't acknowledge what you don't know. One of the things about our field [is] that the demand for places in graduate programs far exceeds the number available. And, you're talking about – our program at St. John's [University] – we had maybe 300 or 350 applicants last year for 12 slots. When you have that kind of competition, what you breed is competitive behavior and the sense that you get ahead by having the answers, because that's what gets rewarded. You have to have the right answers in school to get the right grades, and you have got to have the right answers in that interview so that people read you in the way that you want to be read. Acknowledging that you don't know something becomes very difficult for people to do once they are in those programs. I don't know if we do enough in those programs to assure people that they really do not know a lot, and that's really ok because if they knew it all they wouldn't need to be there. It really is important as a therapist to do the opposite of what you do as a student, and that is to begin with the assumption that you really don't know anything. You have to learn from the client – who they are, and what their struggle is. You can make certain kinds of assumptions that lead you to rule in a certain hypothesis, or rule out certain things just so you have a framework of general questions that are important to ask as well as the questions you have to ask that are a part of medical/legal requirements. Beyond that, to know this person and to understand their experience requires having a skeptical intelligence where you're not making assumptions about what you already know about them but that you want them to tell you. You are facilitating the unfolding of their narrative.

LG – That sounds like a teaching philosophy.

BG – Ok, if that’s what it is so be it – but that’s what therapists do. Therapists who assume they know things don’t ask questions, and therefore never figure out that they don’t know what they thought they know. Whenever I do that, and make those assumptions – when I ask clients questions about something I assume I know, the answer is never what I assume it is. It has taught me that it is important to always ask those questions.

LG – What would you like to see happening in the field of psychology, in terms of the research that you do?

BG – More of the same; that it can be integrated into curricula more fully, that a lot of these ideas aren’t in the cultural diversity class, or the class about this group or that group, but are a formal part of psychological thinking because in reality, they are. There’s this principle of generalize-ability of findings that’s part of psychological thinking that says if something wasn’t represented appropriately in the group you studied, you can’t make generalizations.

----- Interruption in recording-----

LG – That was a good transition point because the next part is about the intersection of feminism and your career. The first question is, what kinds of barriers, obstacles, or discrimination have you experienced because of your feminism? Or being a woman?

BG – I don’t know.

LG – Ok – nothing overt?

BG – No, it’s not been overt. I think maybe the closest it came to being something overt was when I was interviewed for a position and one of the articles I had written was something about feminist psychotherapy among heterosexual and lesbian African American women and the person interviewing asked me if I was trying to be provocative with the title. I said, “Excuse me? What’s provocative about the title?” and it dawned on me, “You mean, because I used the L word?” and she said – this was many years before the L-word – “Yeah, were you trying to be provocative?” I said, “The article is about heterosexual and lesbian women...”

LG – Did she read the article? [laughs]

BG – [smiling] I said, “Did you read the article?” “Well, no I just sort of...” and I said, “Well, you might want to read the article” so I clearly think that was an issue. It’s possible that in some of the things that I have been interviewed for and not gotten – that that was a factor, but I always assumed it was probably more about the gay and lesbian stuff I write about and not so much the feminist or ethnic piece, or just because I’m a woman.

LG – Ok, how have you balanced the demands of your personal life with your professional life?

BG – It's challenging, but I've been fortunate in that I've had a very large and supportive family. Somehow, I just always knew to take time to spend time with family, to spend time when I'm in relationships – that you have to have that balance. It's important to not just recharge your batteries – I mean I have had two brain surgeries, two life-threatening events. In those times, the things I had feelings about being a potential loss to me were primarily people that I would not have time with. I think when you have a life-threatening event early on in life – I was 24 [and] there's a way that if you use the experience – you kind of put bullshit in perspective. It is what it is, [and] you have to deal with it – but you don't let it take over your life because your life is too important. The people that are important in your life, it's important to spend time with because your existence is not a given and the loss of time with them is the thing that you regret when they're gone or when you're gone. Are there other professional things I'd like to do? Sure there are, and those things are important to me, but they are not as important to me as people.

LG – Can you tell me about the role of mentoring in your career? Who were your mentors? What role did you play as a mentor?

BG – I was very lucky. I was actually talking to one of my colleagues last night about our experiences in college and she was saying most of her peers had a really, really hard time in college; that they really didn't have mentors – this is another African American woman – people treated them as if they really didn't really know very much and they weren't so welcome. That was challenging for her. I had a sense, when I went to college that that's what I expected. I didn't think anybody was going to value what I thought so I wasn't seeking that out so I can't say I really had many mentors as an undergraduate.

In graduate school, I was struggling. I don't know that if I went back and asked anybody from that period if they thought I'd be doing what I'm doing today that they would say yes. I wasn't one of those people who were among the stars who are writing articles in graduate school – I was doing everything I could to get through graduate school. I can't say I really had them there, with the exception perhaps of my supervisor, Bill. I don't know if he was intending to be a mentor, but he certainly was. He has certainly influenced how I see clients and given me a much broader lens with which to see people in therapy. He gave me part of my language for asking certain difficult questions and I would say probably he and one other graduate professor are the only two people I can ever remember. We were talking about a client once and I was explaining something I thought was going on with the client and he looked at me and said, "You know, you're kind of bright at this therapy business." He, and maybe one other professor – the professor who taught the Rorschach course who was seen as a very difficult person by most of us at the time – was giving me some feedback about some question I had asked and in my review he said something about, "You know, there are some glimmerings of clinical creativity that she has." Now, nobody there helped me develop them.

I would say the most profound mentor I had was my supervisor who was the Chief Psychologist at the (1:09:40) Kings County Hospital at the Child Inpatient Psychiatry Division, Dorothy Gardner (who is now since retired) but who, in some extraordinary way very early on in my employment there, insisted that I start teaching a seminar to – we had a large training program of psychology interns, externs, social worker interns and

externs, art therapy students, child psychiatry fellows, interns and externs, and residents – all of whom we had to create this didactic course for. She initially asked me if I'd like to teach this course talking about white therapists treating predominantly African American populations. Dorothy is Jewish, and initially I said no because I thought, "I don't know anything about that." What would I say? She sort of kept pestering me about it, and I kept saying, "No, I don't want to do that" because I'm not interested in teaching, and second of all, it's not like I'm going to get more money to do this, and this is extra work. Why would I want to do extra work for the same salary? At some point she invoked her authority as a supervisor and said, "You're going to have to teach this seminar. This needs to be a part of our training program – you're the most capable person to treat it so start working on developing it."

I kind of dragged my heels and tried to get a couple of my colleagues to do it with me, and they didn't want to do it either. At some point I said, "I'm going to need some time during the course of my workday to go to the library and research this – its not like I can do this at the top of my head" and she said, "Fine, go do that." I started pulling together lectures to that effect and it was an enormous amount of work, and at some point I thought, "I need to get something out of this other than teaching this seminar." I remembered, among the readings in my first year of graduate school, was the complete introductory lectures on psychoanalysis that was Freud's first publication and I thought, "Oh, so lectures can be modified in this way that makes them papers" and I started putting together lectures with the idea of "Ok, I need to follow up with these references here, and structure this in a particular way so that it could be a paper" and presenting those things in various places thinking [that] if there's an opportunity to publish it some place, I will. But I didn't really pursue that end of things. At some point she asked me if she could read my dissertation, and I thought, "I certainly don't want to look at it again, I can't imagine why anybody else would" but I gave it to her. My dissertation was about looking to see if there was cognitive reversal in patients who had low pressure hydrocephalus who had surgical procedures to implant a (1:13:00) shunt to drain off that fluid – if some of the dementia they had experienced reversed itself after surgery. It was a neuropsychology-based paper and she said, "I didn't know anything about that when I started reading this but I understood completely the syndrome, what the neurological implications are – you know, you actually write really well. Have you ever thought about-" and I said, "No because when I finished this I thought that was the last time I'd do anything like that." She said, "Well, writing papers about stuff you're interested in is not the same" and I said, "Dorothy, you're pushing your luck."

She kept pestering, and pestering, and pestering and around the same time two of my colleagues, (1:14:00) Rita Dudley and Maxine Rollins were putting together a special issue of the Division 29 [Division of Psychotherapy] *Journal of Psychotherapy* on Psychotherapy with Ethnic Minorities and I had a paper I pulled together that I was using as one of the lectures for my course, and I think it was passed the date of submission and I thought, "I'll send it in, why not" and it was accepted. Not long after that I was at a conference that the Feminist Therapy Institute sponsored – two actually. One was on Mothers and Daughters, and I had been doing some thinking [based on] my interactions with feminists about their mothers and there was often a great deal of resentment and

they didn't want to be like their mothers; that they tolerated a lot of things that they thought didn't make them good role models and my experience among black women was that black women really value their mothers. There was a sense of, "Our mothers had to put up with a lot of crap" and somehow balanced all the stuff they had to balance and still be loving and supportive, and in some way encourage us to go out into the world and try to do whatever it was we tried to do but still prepare us for the reality that there were people who were not going to be very tolerant of that and who might try to hurt us, and how difficult that must be as a parent to do.

I put together a couple of presentations that talked about that – that part of this issue of when you're talking about an issue for women – well, which women? That this isn't the way that black women typically regard their mothers, that often black mothers play a pivotal role in the racial socialization of their children, and that it is an invisible thing that people don't see, but it is a very active piece of what black mothers have to do, and do well. That concept that their backs become our bridge and (1:16:14) Laura Brown, and Ellen Cole, and Adrian Smith started pestering me about writing papers. I think Adrian wanted me to write something about ethnic minority lesbians and gay men of color – that I hadn't written anything about before. Ellen and Laura both wanted a paper for an issue they were doing on women in therapy and it was a presentation so I was sort of like, "I don't know if I want to spend the time... whatever" and somehow I did it because they wouldn't leave me alone – in that way that Ellen and Laura could, if they decide to get after you about doing something – and Adrian – they would not leave you alone. I thought, "Ok, I'll do this and they will just let it rest." Of course, they didn't but I realized that I enjoyed the process and that there was something to be said for being able to pull those ideas together in a coherent way. Again, it helped clarify my own thinking about, "Ok, this is what this looks like and this is what I'm doing and how I see this process" but also it's important for people out there to know something about what black mothers had to do. It's important for people to know something about this if they are, at all, inclined to. I have to say, after that I was very fortunate because I got a lot of opportunity; people were asking me to write things.

I look back at some of the things I chose not to write because I thought – (1:17:51) Sarah Dworkin asked me to write something for her book on gay and lesbian psychotherapy or something about ethnic minority gays and lesbians and I thought, "I don't know anything about that" and of course I did, but it wasn't in this organized, thoughtful distilled way that I could tell somebody else. I didn't do that one but I kept getting asked to do that, and I thought, "You need to sit down and think about this and just do it" and so I started writing about those things as well.

Those were people that mentored me at very key points in my career because then – at the time I was working at King's County [in] 1985 – others started trickling out such that by the time I was looking to leave public mental health - and thought seriously if I wanted to continue writing because of what was happening in public mental health - I'm going to have to get an academic position. As mismanaged care gradually eroded its way into the public sector any activity that you couldn't bill for wasn't something they were prepared to let you do, so I couldn't get any research time in any place that would allow

me to do research. At that point I had accepted a number of commitments to do books and a range of things that there was no way I'd be able to do if I hadn't made that move. It was Laura who was instrumental in getting me to co-edit the Division 44 [Society for the Psychological Study of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Issues] series, Psychological Perspectives on Lesbian and Gay Issues – I was within the trajectory of the series when I thought, "I'm going to have to reluctantly look for an academic position" and St. John's had a position. I wasn't sending resumes to them, I was sending resumes elsewhere and I saw the ad and thought –

LG – Why not? [laughs]

BG – Yeah, it's just another CV [Curriculum Vitae] and their Chair (1: 20: 16) Jeff Fagen called me and I thought, "Yeah, sure." I just didn't think they were interested because I'd never known them recruiting African American faculty and perhaps, for the right or wrong reasons, I look at schools in New York City and say "Don't tell me you can't find African American faculty; there are black psychologists spread all over the city, that's just absurd. If you wanted to, you could find them and if you're not finding them it's because you're not really invested" and I had that attitude about St. John's. When Jeff called me, he wanted me to set aside two days for an interview and I said, "Two days? Are you joking? Are you really interested in me, or are you just doing this because you need to show you're interviewing a certain number of people of color? Because I don't want to waste two days if that's what it is." In retrospect, I can't believe I said that but I had it with that and two days was going to be two days of vacation time – and I didn't want to waste my time there. To his credit, he said, "No, this is not what it is, it's a real interview. We're really interested, would you come? I'd like you to meet the faculty, to give a presentation" and I did. I have to say I was surprised that most of the people I had met during the course of the interview were just nice folks. St. John's is not this kind of cutthroat crazy psychology department in the way many of them are; people are generally supportive and helpful and when colleagues are having trouble, they are understanding about that. That was certainly unique and I sort of thought, "Gee, this is actually a possibility." [and] eventually I was hired, although getting tenure was another hurdle. I have to say, both Jeff and the then (1: 22: 30) Dean Dave O'Connell, who is now President of Catholic University, were both very instrumental in protecting my time and working with me toward tenure. At some point when I was initially denied [tenure] they took the lead to the Board of Trustees. Certainly, behind the scenes, the President of the University was also instrumental in that, as well as the Provost at the time. In many ways they were mentors not in the way you typically think, but they understood that they had to protect my time from a lot of nonsense if they wanted me to publish enough; I wasn't coming from an academic background and I had a lot of publications for someone who didn't start out in academia. But, it was about making sure I could do what I needed to do around tenure so certainly they had a role in that. But, most of my mentoring came [from] post-graduate school. I can't say there was much of anything prior to that, but I also didn't expect there to be so whatever I got, whenever I got it, I was pleasantly surprised.

LG – Ok... What advice would you give to a feminist woman working in psychology now?

BG – I don't know. There are a lot of feminist-friendly places to be. In my department, I wouldn't say that there are people there who would call themselves feminist, but they are. Their work on, and respect for, the lives of women and sensitivity to gender discrimination and those kinds of things make them feminists. I think there is a way that people do the work but don't necessarily think about the label; they are just doing the work that, at its core, would be considered feminist. Certainly, there are people on our faculty – women – who do research in unusual areas; Alice Powers does neuroscience research and studies the brains of turtles but she was married, has raised a couple of children during the course of her life as an academic, and certainly provides an important role model for how this can be done [and] one can do this. One of our newer faculty members, Robin Wellington, is an African American who is a neuropsychologist and again, it's about broadening the lens about what women can do and have lives, and all of those things at the same time. Now, I have a department that's not crazy – if you have a department that's crazy it's much harder to do anything. I think, for any reason, if people are in a department that's crazy and (1: 25: 45) Michelle Fine would say groups of people are finding themselves – if everybody finds that they are buying those inserts for their teeth because they are grinding at night – then you need to think about finding another job because you shouldn't be in a place where the atmosphere is so toxic. And when you start taking that in, it's very difficult to undo the effects. My sense is, when I've worked in places that were toxic, let's start looking at the want ads because I'm not sticking around here.

LG – What do you think remains to be accomplished in the field?

BG – Which field?

LG – In terms of feminist psychology, [or] psychology in general. You can interpret it the way that suits you.

BG – I don't know. My guess is we probably need to know more about the different conditions of women around the world and use our paradigm to understand that something that may be important for women in western industrialized society isn't the same for women who are not; that there are conceivably some women who have to dress in a particular way to conceal themselves in some countries who may feel protected by that. If they feel protected by it, they are not acquiescing to something demeaning if they choose to do it, but that the issue is that it should be about a women's choice and not about something that is imposed on her.

I think the connections between literacy among women and religious fundamentalism and the use of religious fundamentalism to oppress women because I don't think it's necessarily about religious doctrine. I think it's about the way doctrine is used and if people who are privileged are using doctrine, they are using it to support their privilege and to continue to subordinate people who are less privileged. Certainly, that gets recapitulated within marginalized groups; the more privileged are certainly willing to use doctrine whenever necessary to assert positions that relieve them of the burden of conscience around the harm that they are doing to people because it's God's will so therefore I can do this thing that by any stretch in the imagination would be seen as

inappropriate, (1: 28: 17) egregious. Understanding those things I think is important, understanding the role of spirituality in women's lives, and I wouldn't say that feminism per se takes a dim view of that, but I think it's one of the more neglected areas. And just continuing the work around looking at the differences between women who share a common condition as women but whose other identities shape the nature of what their lives look like very differently, and shape the way we need to respond to them very differently.

LG – Ok. Two more questions – I'll put them together. What inroads have feminists made in psychology and what roadblocks were made? How has psychology as a professional discipline change since you started working?

BG – Psychology is incredibly more open since I started working. Discussions about the idea of having an APA basically having an association resolution that says essentially that there is no scientific basis for homophobia and it's harmful. To say that discrimination against women is harmful, that these things have psychological effects that harm people; that is something that has drastically changed since I have been in the field.

I think when I was in graduate school there wasn't even a – the Division of Gay and Lesbian Issues was just coming into formation because I think I signed a petition as a Charter Member. A lot of that has just burst in that time that wasn't there. Feminism certainly has pushed the envelope in terms of the way women are seen, and the importance of understanding, again, the role of discrepancies in social power and how those play a role in mental health problems of women and in other people. When you put people in subordinate positions and deny them a range of opportunities, it harms them; there are clear psychological effects and that the kinds of things that were being looked at, that were being attributed to peoples' character pathology – they are inferior and this is an expression of their inferiority – no, this is an expression of their being treated as an inferior group. That you can see in many ways across groups that those are not discussions we could have had in graduate school – even talking about how a practitioner's bias and internalization of how our society views black people influences therapy wasn't a discussion we could have.

I have to say that in recent years I sometimes present at places where, in audiences of some predominantly white therapists, the notion that you have the potential for recapitulating racism in the consulting room isn't always something people want to hear, nor do they necessarily want to think about. I think there is still a lot of work to be done in that area, similarly for treating gay and lesbian patients. Therapists are essentially socialized in an extremely homophobic society, and can't assume that they are free of homophobia, that they have to actively question the kind of assumptions that they make, that they have to be better educated in what is now a wealth of psychological literature that offers information about people's lives that is very different from what it was when I came into the field. Certainly, there is room for growth; a lot of these things exist in the ghetto of LGBT psychology, in women's psychology, that have not necessarily influenced the mainstream and that's one of the places we need to go. But, it is certainly leaps and bounds beyond what it was when I was coming in and I think somewhere in that period there was an opening for this to emerge. I happened to be at the right place at

the right time where the things I was interested in were being valued differently; ten years before I don't think that would have happened.

LG – Ok, I think those are all the questions that I have. Is there anything else that I mentioned, or I haven't mentioned that you think is important for me to know? Or anything to expand on, or things I haven't touched on that are important?

BG – Nothing that I can think of. I have to say that the people I mentioned that were some of my mentors – those are people who are leaders in feminist psychology. I don't think that that's a coincidence. I know that Ellen Cole has talked about one of her missions during that period – she was editor of *Women and Therapy* with (1: 33: 57) Esther Rothblum - was to get more women of color's voices in the literature and that she actively went about trying to do that. I know that Laura Brown in her work actively sought to get gay and lesbian women, women of color, get more people's voices in the discourse and to talk about the complexity of identity and certainly that she was a feminist psychologist I don't think was coincidental either – Adrian Smith as well. I think there are things that feminist psychology has done directly, but it's also influenced the way people think and move about as professionals in the field so that those feminist principles get infused, not just into our work, but also into relationships and that we, in more strategic ways, look at “Well, we have this publication – how can we use it as a vehicle to get more of these voices in from the margins” and I do think that despite some of its narrow beginnings, feminist psychology has had a major role in that.

LG – Ok, well thank you so much.

BG – You're welcome.

LG – It's a really great interview, thank you and I appreciate the time you took.