

Psychology's Feminist Voices Oral History Project

Interview with Carla Golden

Interviewed by Alexandra Rutherford, PhD

Ithaca, NY

August 22, 2013

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CG: Carla Rappaport Golden

AR: Alexandra Rutherford

CG -My full name is Carla Rae Rappaport Golden and I was born on September 6, 1950 in Philadelphia, PA.

AR -We're going to kick off our interview with our primary question: Tell me a little bit about your feminism, how you developed your feminist identity.

CG - Am I allowed to refer to my notes?

AR -Absolutely.

CG - You know, that was a really interesting question for me because I would say it wasn't in college, it wasn't even really in graduate school. I was in college between 1968 and 1972 and I was in graduate school from 1973 'til 1977. At the time I was a believer and supporter of women's liberation, but that had a very narrow meaning to me. After I graduated from college I got married. I believed myself to be in an egalitarian marriage – and that meant just two very simple things to me. It meant that I was going to have a career, my own career, and that I was not going to be a traditional wife and there was going to be some kind of egalitarian distribution of responsibilities. I wasn't going to do all the cooking and even at during that time I was committed to doing things I didn't know how to do, like changing oil in a car. But, as I'm fond of saying to my students, I'm not a subscriber to the belief that you are a feminist if you don't call yourself one. So a lot of my students say things like, "Well, my mom's a feminist, but she doesn't call herself that," or "my friend," or "my boyfriend." And I think feminism is something you have to consciously identify with. So the reason I would say that I wasn't really such a feminist in college or graduate school is because I wasn't consciously identifying as one. And of course the movement was at a very different place. I came from a fairly progressive family. And I even remembered in thinking about this interview that in high school, that would have been in the late 60's ('64 to '68), I had debates with a conservative friend of mine about abortion. But it wasn't embedded in a feminist context.

AR -It wasn't framed in terms of "feminism" per se, it was more of a general progressivism?

CG - Yeah! I don't think I understood what it meant in terms of women's rights at the time. It was just a political issue. I mean it was very much a political issue, you know, visible. I became politicised really around the war in Vietnam. It was really heating up right at that time. So '68 to '72, there were a lot of protests in Washington, there were protests on campus (I went to the University of Pennsylvania). It was in the midst of that that many older women, I think, became feminists, in realizing the way they were

treated by the Left. But I was just a college student figuring things out. So, I guess the answer to {2:48} the question is: I was aware of women's liberation as an issue especially as I moved into the graduate school. But unlike my current students I had no benefit of ever of taking a Psychology of Women course as an undergraduate or a graduate student.

So I think it wasn't really until I took my first job, which was in Smith College. And I was asked to teach the "Psychology of Women" course. The course might have actually been called "The Psychology of Sex Roles" that's how long ago it was – it was in 1978. It was in that context that I began to learn about feminism and I, of course, then began to identify and go to marches and protests and consider myself part of a movement. So it was the teaching of the course, which was definitely one aspect of how {3:38} I came to identify as a "feminist," and also during that period I fell unexpectedly into a lesbian relationship. The marriage was sort of dissolving - just because I was pursuing my career and he was pursuing his - and then I fell into a lesbian relationship. Each of that served as a consciousness raising experience. So I went through my consciousness-raising really in my years at Smith and in Northampton, Massachusetts.

AR -Ok and this is obviously a pivotal moment. But before we get there, I want to take you back a little bit. So you say you were brought up in a fairly "progressive" family. Can you describe that a little bit more in terms of what that mean in your upbringing?

CG - Well, my parents were both Jewish and culturally Jewish, not religiously Jewish. So that meant we celebrated holidays, and I have a very strong sense of Jewish cultural identity but not particularly religious identity. I was a child in the '50's, my parents were very, you know, good liberal-hearted, white people who tried to educated me about what was going on in the south, in the 1950's. One of the earliest parts of my education was sitting in front of the television, watching raging mobs of white people throwing eggs and tomatoes at black children trying to go to school. I do remember being four, five, and six ('cause I was born in 1950), with this...and I think it was exactly what my parents wanted to engender in me - just saying "Why are they doing that?" And my parents tried to explain: "People are ignorant, it's because these people have different colour skin." So I was born and raised with ideas about the civil rights movement. I had two older brothers, one of whom had friends who went down to do the Freedom Rides in the South. And that's another one of my vivid memories I have as a child of one his friends coming home after having been at all those Rides and talking about what he had encountered. And then I was a high school student. So it meant being aware of civil rights, political issues.

My father was something of a radical. So neither of my parents were college educated. My father actually worked as a tradesman. He worked in the factory, factory workers setting linotype. Back in the days when they made phone books by hand, he set the type. But he was a really smart man. He would read Herbert Marcuse and all these people, so he enchanted my college friends. Because many of them were middleclass/upper-middleclass kids whose parents were college educated, who were from wealthier families, but I would bring them home to my little row house in Philadelphia and they would be enchanted by my father in particular.

AR -What about your mother?

CG - That's a very interesting story, my mother -talk about sexism. I think growing up, I was very enamoured of my father. He and I are very similar - physically...in lots of ways. And I was very taken with

our similarities. And very proud of him. Even back in those days, when you were in college, you {4:40} had a day when you could bring your parents in- I would bring my father in. I didn't have a bad relationship with my mother. In fact I was much closer to both of my parents than many of my friends. I never had big adolescent rebellion because they were so progressive and open minded about everything. But it wasn't until maybe even my 40's and 50's that I recognized that I had a lot of similarities with my mother as well. My father died young. He died shortly after I finished graduate school. He had cancer and died in 1979. So I was only 29 years old and that was really devastating for me because we were super close and very much identified. And because I was so close to him and enamoured of him, he was a man, I think when I related to both of my parents and told them all my stories and it was the connection with him that I was after. So after he died, it really must have been in my 30's that I began to realize, that – you know, my mother is really a fabulous person and I have a lot in common with her as well. {7:48} She's very empathic, very warm, and very, very, very interested in other people. Always asking questions, curious about other people, she loved all my friends, very, very open minded. We became incredibly close such that when she was about 80 she moved to Ithaca.

AR -From Philadelphia?

CG - My father died in 1979 and my mother moved up here probably about 1999. She was getting older, she was somewhat declining and she was at that point in her life where she was making a decision about moving into some kind of an assisted-living kind-of facility. She was looking at these places in Philadelphia and I knew enough to say, "Mom, if you move into one of those places then – it's far away! Why don't you come to Ithaca?" Actually we had become very close and I had kept saying to her, "Come to Ithaca." She loved my friends and very, very easy to be around. She was a big birder and she said, "I'm not going to come to Ithaca –it's inland. She lived in Philadelphia– that meant she was near the shore, the Jersey shore, the Delaware shore, Maryland. She just went on these bird trips all the time. But by the time she was in her 80's, it was getting harder to travel. I prevailed upon her to move to Ithaca. There is a really great community called "Longview" it's associated with the college and she moved there and lived there for probably about 8 or 9 years.

She died last year at age 92. So she came when she was 80, she was here for 12 years. The first 5 or 6 years were kind of amazing because I was going to have this completely new relationship with my mother as a friend. She was very much a part of my life. Then she started to decline a little, then she declined more. Her decline was always, in one sense, easy on me; she was always extremely appreciative of what I did. She was aware of what I did for her. At one point when I was very worried about her (she really shouldn't have been living independently) I said, "Mom, something needs to change here. I either have to get you an aide for a longer period of time (she had an aide in the morning, to help her shower) or we need to think about a different place for a higher level of care because I'm just worried. This is the kind of person my mother was (she had no awareness that she was really declining), she said "Well I'm really fine here. I'm happy here and I'm fine. But I can see that you are anxious. I trust you and if you are worried about me, I'll do whatever it is that you think I should do." Then I said to her, "there are two possibilities. There is a higher level of care here or there is Oakhill manor which is a local nursing home which has a really good reputation. She said, "No, I don't want to go to a nursing home." I think then I said, "So you could either stay here and I could get you an aide or you could move to this other place." She said, "Well, I'll stay here and get an aide." So we did that for a while, but then she fell. She fell a lot of times, but she finally fell and broke her hip had to go to the hospital to have it reset. They sent her to Oakhill for rehabilitation. And within a month of {11:08} being

there – and I said “Mom, you need to practice and do your PT and you can go back to your apartment and meanwhile”...this isn’t really relevant to my life as a psychologist exactly, except it sort of is.

There was a period of enormous stress for me because I was so worried about her. I didn’t have 24 hour aide for her – it is really, really expensive. So I was always worried and she was declining. I was a wreck. I was anxious and distraught, but I was paralyzed. I just didn’t see my way. I went to Oakville manor and visited a couple of times, this is when she was still living independently, and I thought “could I...could she?” – because she had said that she didn’t want to be in a nursing home. I went there and said “these people are too far gone.” I really didn’t know what to do, I was a wreck. Her falling and ending up at Oakhill, just temporarily, was a catalyst for change. She was there for a month and she seemed fine and I said, “Mom, just do your PT and you’ll go back to Longview.” And she said, “Where? Go back where?” I said, “Your apartment where you lived, Longview.”

I’ll never forget this because it changed my life, she said, “Do I have to move anywhere because I’m really comfortable here and if I don’t have to move I’d rather stay here.” And I thought, “Ok, she just isn’t clear today.” I waited 3 months and she was really happy there. It turned out to be a really lovely place. It became a second home to me because it’s right down the hill. I visited there probably every other day on my way home from work. I got to know the women who worked there. They were [poor] {12:49}, local women who worked there from the local community. Hearts of gold, they were so wonderful. They gave my mother wonderful care. I loved them, they loved me, and they loved her. It was just a really lovely thing. In the last five years of her life – it was a very unique, lucky, fortunate way of aging. She did show evidence of dementia. She never forgot who I was, who my brothers were, or who my partner is. She remembered stuff from long time ago. She was completely content and happy. When she had her total wits about her, she was a bit of an anxious and self-conscious person.

She was very worried that she had not gone to college. This blew me away that even into her 80’s when she would introduce me to people at Longview she would say, “that one: she went to college.” My mother’s obviously a really smart woman but that was an inadequacy that she really felt and she was anxious about everything. In her five years at Oakhill, in her moderately demented state she was happy, free of that. We had the loveliest, sweetest relationship. When she was at Longview I prepared her medications, her food, her everything. And when I moved her to Oakhill, the very first night, I went to the head nurse and said, “Here are her medications.” She said, “No, we’ve got it all under control” - it totally freed me up. We had a very lovely interaction I so much enjoyed.

Something important that I realized which formed my feminism, my sense of who people are. If she hadn’t gone and broken her hip, I would have done everything I could have to keep her at Longview with an independent aide. She was actually way better off at Oakhill because it was a communal living experience. There were other old people there that she really related to and there were aides, multiple aides. When she was living at Longview, and I had an aide for her, she didn’t happen to hit it off that well with that particular woman, she felt that someone was in her space. At Oakhill people were in and out, kibitzing with her and there were other people and she loved having other people around. It really changed my own idea of nursing homes, elder care. I came to appreciate her. I was overly focused on my father and I really came to appreciate my mother. Luckily I had a very long time with her.

AR - Let me go back to this notion of your mother being so proud of your college education. You mentioned that neither of your parents were college educated. You had two older brothers. In terms of you getting to college, you went to a very prestigious school. {15:41}

CG - That was a given. Their goal being Jewish-education oriented, that was their total goal. Interestingly, my mother while the kids were young, she got trained as a medical technician. She worked at Jefferson Hospital. Those were back in the days - in the 60's. I have an oldest brother who is very brilliant. He is an MIT professor. He went to high school in Philadelphia – if you were first or second in your class you got an automatic scholarship to Penn or Temple, he actually went to Temple. When it time for my other brother to go to college my mother switched from Jefferson to the University of Pennsylvania Hospital. She got a job there. Back then were the days when there were both full-staff and faculty scholarships, if your kid got in. So my older brother Eric and I got into Penn and we both went to Penn on the back of my mother's staff scholarship. That was another very cool thing. I had all these hippie male friends who didn't want to go to barbers and my mother, in her laboratory, set up her thing and used to cut all my friends' hair.

AR - That's cool.

CG - It was never a question that I would go to college.

AR - And there was never any question that your brothers would go and you wouldn't?

CG - No, not at all. From a very young age, I was professionally oriented. One of your questions was about how I got into psychology. I think as a young child I had the idea of helping (the idea of helping is so cliché). There was an early point where I thought I was going to be a social worker. There must have been a social worker at school whom I met. But then it very quickly became evolved into, "I want to be a psychiatrist."

The one message that my father did pass on to the kids (he was not your typical Jewish middle-class/working-class parent who stressed the importance of making money - be a doctor or lawyer). My father's view is really interesting: the ideal life was to be an academic. Not quite sure what he knew about academia. But his vision of being an academic was a person who read books, was engaged with the mind, and had intellectual debates and discussions. He did convey to us that being a college, mainly a university, professor was the ultimate job. So it's not surprising that my oldest brother went from Temple to MIT and never left -did his graduate work there, became a full professor there, and he's still there.

My middle brother got caught up in the draft in Vietnam era. In order to get a deferment he pursued the Peace Corp, which my mother really discouraged him from doing. He was also into science and he majored in chemistry and then pursued being a chemistry teacher and hated being in the classroom, which is a big contrast to me. And then the message he got was, "I'm not going to get a PhD or be a college professor. There is nothing else in life worth doing." He dropped out, got into drugs. He has since found himself. I think my father's message hit both my older brother, Saul, and myself. So I quickly evolved from social work to psychiatry to being an academic. And what happened was I went to Penn. I started to take all the requisite science courses to go to medical course. Also, because of the Gen Ed requirements, I also took a philosophy course and English course. {19:30} END of tape 1.

I was taking chemistry, physics, philosophy, English, and psychology, five courses. Psychology, English, and philosophy were great. I did fine in chemistry and physics, but they were not that exciting to me. Very quickly, I said, "I'll just become a psychologist. So I'll become a psychology major." My idea of psychology was to do clinical work. {20:15}

AR - As it was my idea too. I think that that was what comes to mind when we think of “psychology.” So during your undergraduate, you took psychology – do any particular courses stand out for you?

CG - Yes, I took my intro course with Henry Gleitman, who wrote that great book and his daughter teaches here and we are very good friends. I should talk about Henry and Lila, she’s a big psychologist too. She did great language stuff. He was wonderful. I think about this a lot - I took that course, I remember the hall that we were in, there were four or five hundred students in the class. He was a figure up on a stage, very dramatic. He was German, spoke with an accent. I loved his lectures. It was totally lecture. Then after class, a bunch of students would flock around him like little bees around a flower and walk down Locust Walk (that’s where his office was) and he would continue to expound. We would just be in awe of the brilliant professor. It is so different than the way I teach now or the relationship my students have to me. But that kind of education worked for me. So my education at Penn was all in psychology, all big lecture classes. My smaller classes were English and other kinds of courses that I took. I do remember a lot of my courses– Rochel Gelman whom I took Developmental Psychology with. What happened was, when I was a junior, I bought into the ideological value system of academic psychology. And I thought, “clinical: lower level stuff.”

I took “Physiological Psychology” with Philip Teitelbaum. He was one of these inspiring, genius, wonderful professors. Again, lecture hall - somewhere I have my very careful, hand-written notes. I didn’t get a lot of mentoring at Penn. I don’t even remember if I had an academic advisor. But somehow I knew to go to him and say, “I want to do research.” Of course he had a lot of graduate students and he said, “Sure.” He hooked me up with his graduate students. I worked for a semester doing hypothalamic lesions on rats and putting it into this stereotaxic equipment. Mostly it was interactions with his graduate students, but it I just thought “I’m doing Science.” I met with him a few times, not a lot. I don’t remember the details, but I think he asked me to write a paper on what I was doing. I went to him and I said, “I’m a much better talker than a writer (which actually isn’t really true – I’m a great writer).” I think it was the time commitment of the writing that bothered me. I said, “Let me have a conversation with you about what I’m doing.” I proposed that to him and he accepted it.

It may have been a bad move on my part. Writing is time consuming and I’m a person with a lot of interests. I think that might be significant in terms of later things. I did work with him and I was enamoured enough with physiological psychology. When it came time to apply to graduate school, I applied to physiological psychology – that you don’t see anywhere in my resume.

The story there is that I had a boyfriend at Penn. He was a year older than me so he graduated the year before I did. He hung out at Penn to wait for me. During my senior year (this is very relevant to my feminism), I decided that maybe I would go to law school. I mentioned going to law school and Steve said “I waited here in Philadelphia for a year and I’m not going somewhere else of your choosing to wait for you for another three years.” He wasn’t sure what he wanted to do. He wasn’t as academically inclined as I was. My feminism was such at the time that I said, “Steve won’t go with me somewhere so I can’t do it.” I tell this story to my students because what they know about women in the world and their own roles and possibilities was way more than I knew at that age. He didn’t want to follow me to law school and that got put on hold. And then I followed the dream of his and it was definitely a dream of his. He had a dream of hiking the Appalachian Trail from Georgia to Maine. I loved the out of doors, that’s something I learned from both of my parents. They were big nature people. I had done some hiking, but never backpacking like that. And I thought to myself, “He’s not going to do the whole {25:10}

thing, it takes four months!” But I thought the experience of long distance backpacking would be fun. So I said, “Yeah, we’ll do that.” He said, “The thing is to start it in Georgia and get to Maine by mid-October when the Mount Katahdin is not hike-able anymore. You really got to start in Georgia in April.”

I couldn’t miss my graduation, it was really important to my parents. So I said, “Go start without me, fly down to Georgia and I’ll join you right after my graduation where ever you are.” So I did. I did my graduation with my parents and I hopped on a plane and flew down to Asheville, NC. He had walk about 250 miles from the start of the trail in Georgia to Asheville. It was kind of a dumb thing to do in the sense that in the first couple hundred miles, you’re really getting broken in and he was totally broken in and there I am. But what? A couple of hundreds of miles, I caught up to speed and we walked the whole damn thing. He hiked the whole damn thing, I missed the first 250 miles. So I’ve still got it in my mind somewhere, “if someone wants to walk the first 250 miles with me....” ‘cause I’m not technically an End to Ender.

Anyway, we did that, and then we moved to the country. He was from a fairly wealthy family who owned a bunch of land in the Catskills. They essentially said, “Come live here, you can live in the house.” But it was clear that we should be formally married in order to live there. Those were the days where [people said] – “What’s a marriage certificate?” that’s a silly thing. This was 1972 – “we don’t need to be married, we love each other, committed to each other, lived together as seniors in college.” But we did get married, we got married on the trail – it was very cool. We moved into this little town in the Catskill Mountains called Olivebridge, New York. I worked, of all things, in a daycare centre. He worked for the park service. Then he got his inspiration for what he wanted to do for work. He decided he wanted to study forestry. He applied to Yale and the State University of New York at Syracuse. Being a good little dutiful girlfriend, “wife” now - but I kept my name, I was “Carla Rappaport” (I worked hard for a good year or two to keep my name) - I applied to Syracuse University and to Yale. Remember the law school story, he wasn’t ready to follow me to law school, but now that he was ready to go to forestry school then I could go do psychology. So I applied to both programs and got into both. He was very anti-elitist. He was already from a very upper class family. He didn’t like his wealth, he wanted to make his own name, so he wanted to go to SUNY. So that’s what decided it for me, I had gotten into Syracuse.

I went to Syracuse, this was 1973, nine months after living in the country. So I applied to the Physiological Psychology program, got in. There was a man there named Matthew Wayner. He’s probably passed away. I’m going to say it, because there is just too much of protecting male academics who abuse their power. So I went there and he had a bunch of people in his lab in upper levels. They were all men in the upper levels. I somehow found out that there had been women in his laboratory – he basically was a sexual harasser, both verbally and physically. I was shocked. I was this innocent little 23 year old person. What was important about that 9 months that I lived not in the realm of academia; I discovered that there are lots of things that I’m interested in: cooking, growing food, reading all kinds of things outside the realm of psychology. But I also was still interested in learning so I wanted to go to graduate school. One of my earliest conversations with him, he said, “So I see you’re married, what are your intentions?”

“What are my intentions? I applied to the program, a PhD program, I intend to do research and get my degree and pursue a career.” He said, “Yeah that is all very nice and good but I know about women. I see that you’re married, you have a husband.” He asked me what program what my husband was in. It was a

two year Master's program in Forestry. He said, "I don't like to invest in you because I'm not sure {30:19} that you will really pay off." I was sort of shocked! Then he said something which was very troubling to me. He said, "But I will. Here's what I demand. Science requires a hundred percent commitment. You have to be in this lab all the time doing your research, that's what graduate school is all about." And I found my little voice and I piped up and said, "But doesn't a scientist need to be well rounded too? What about other interests?" I had discovered that I had other interests and I didn't think it would be healthy to be pursuing your work 100% of the time. And I'll never forget what he said, "I don't care about other interests. Serious and good scientists are totally committed. I expect you to be in this laboratory doing your work 99% of the time. I don't care what you do with the other 1%." That really shook me up. Then I thought that maybe I'm not cut out for academics, maybe you do have to be single-mindedly committed like that. I was thinking I wasn't. And then he started making disgusting comments about what women earned and deserved. And those were the days of super short skirts and I was right up there with the next one wearing very short skirts. He would stand at the bottom of the steps and look at you. He would insist on driving me from the lab to this building and insist that I sit right next to him with a male...It got so bad.

This was 1974-5. The term "sexual harassment" didn't exist, I don't think it had been a coined term yet. But I knew something was wrong. So I marched to the chair of the department at Syracuse. There was a very nice older gentleman. His name was Eric Gardiner {32:05}. I did find my voice and said, "I can't work with this guy, he's just not okay. You may not believe me, but he did this, he said this, and I feel uncomfortable with it." The chair said to me, "I totally believe you. I understand, I've heard this story before." I said, "I want funding to work with someone else." He said, "I'm really sorry but he controls all the funding in Physiological." He was a big grant getter. He said, "But what I can do for you is I can fund you out of other funds as a general graduate student for a year. But you'll need to make a connection in either developmental or social in order to have someone else pick you up as part of their program."

So that led to quite a dilemma. If that's what science requires, I'm not ready to do that. But, nonetheless, the first year of study you took basic stats, social, developmental seminars. I don't know what I did about the physiological seminar, whether I stayed in it - I don't really remember. But I took a seminar with Dan Smothergill, he was the developmentalist. He was a decent human being. I thought "Steve, my husband, is here. I loved the life I was living in the Catskills. If I'm not in graduate school then I'm just a graduate student's wife, and I didn't like that." So Dan Smothergill took me on. I did ask myself, "Is this a serious shift for you? You were interested in physiological psychology, in the brain, doing research with animals. Now you're switching to developmental, this is a whole different arena." But even back then I said to myself, "You know, Carla, what you really want to do is teach. That's your major love and passion." Anyway, I went into that program.

AR - Can I just ask a quick question to flesh out the context here? Were there any female faculty at the time?

CG - One and she was obviously in a very difficult position. There were no female faculty in physiological and there was only female graduate student, older than me...it was that [strategy of] pitting women against each other.

AR - There was no collective.

CG - No. There were only men around me. I think even the female faculty member that I'm mentioning came during my time in developmental. We didn't talk openly about those things. I basically {34:46} made a decision, Dan Smothergill is a good guy. He's not going to say disgusting things, he's not going to touch me. He's interesting, he's nice. So I took on with him. Then, I did two years of course work. I started and completed a Master's thesis under him. I started teaching in my third year.

After two and a half years, Steve got his degree. And then he got his dream position with the National Park Service, in Boston. Syracuse and Boston weren't that far apart and I was pretty much finished my course work and set to teach. He moved to Boston and said, "Come on, let's go." I said, "I want to be teaching. I really want to do this." He said "You don't need to be there, you've finished your course work. All you need to do is work on your dissertation. There are great libraries in Cambridge. There are a million places you could work." I said, "I really want to be teaching." He said "there are millions of schools here." I said, "I'm not a graduate student at those schools, I don't have any 'in' there. Let me just do one semester of teaching."

I immediately fell in love with it. I just think that teaching is suited to me on every single level: intellectually, personally, socially, and temperamentally. It meshed with me, I loved it. Nonetheless, I taught for two semesters and then went to Boston for the summer. It's a little vague now. And then all of a sudden, before I even started my dissertation, a guy who was in my program and also a fellow student of Dan Smothergill – who had a better relationship – Dan with Allen. He was a perfectly nice guy, Dan Smothergill, maybe a little socially awkward. I didn't click with him personally, Allen did - so I think Allen got a lot more mentoring than I did. Allen – this is so mind boggling to think of this, this was the 70's – he brought me a three by five card. He copied it out of some "Chronicle of Higher Education" or whatever it was. It said, "Smith College, looking for psychologist to teach Psychology of Sex Roles and Developmental Psychology. Starting salary, blah, blah. Send materials to so and so." I thought, "Smith College in Northampton, MA is closer to Boston, why not go for it?" And so I applied and was interviewed. This was Jacqueline (Eccles) Parson's position. I did not realize it was a temporary position. She was leaving to go to Michigan on a temporary basis. Things weren't working that well for her at Smith. She was going there and they needed a temporary replacement. I did not realize this.

I was in the middle of my interviews – and this says so much about the state of feminist psychology at the time, it was probably 1976 – someone was saying to me, "How would you teach the Psychology of Women? You don't have course background in this." In those days there wasn't a feminist psychology program or anything like that. I said, "This is one of the reasons I was attracted to this job. I know there is field of feminist psychology. I haven't had the opportunity to do course work in it, but in teaching any course, I read broadly and avidly and I can't wait to immerse myself in the literature." And there was a literature at the time. I said, "I want to immerse myself in it and I'll do such and such." And it became clear in the course of talking that that job was beginning in January, 1977. I was interviewing in November or December. I was talking about all the work I was going to do in the winter and be prepared for the fall semester. And the person interviewing me said, "No, no. The job starts in January." There was this awkward moment and bless his heart, "You know, we should stop the interview right here. You seem like a great candidate, but you are not going to take this job. You haven't started your dissertation, you're not coming here for a year and a half. You will never finish it." I said, "It's Smith College, I would like to finish the interview if I can." So I finished the interview, I made a hit with the students. Then it was a temporary position and they said, "If you are willing to come here for a three semester gig, we'll give you the job. The students are crazy about you." And so I did, I went there. {40:02}

I finished my dissertation. This is what's so horrible about most academic research. I did a metalinguistic analysis of kindergarteners' and first graders' understanding of language – syntax and semantics. I conceptualized it over the winter break. I collected the data over the summer and wrote it up and produced a dissertation in a very short period of time. In the meantime, Jackie gave notice that she wasn't coming back and the Smith position opened for a national search. That was really intense. When I started, I was an anxious wreck. I had such a case of imposter syndrome. Who am I to be teaching at Smith College? But I just got into it, I loved it.

AR - Tell me some more about teaching the Psychology of Women course; what that was and what that did for you.

CG - Somehow this related to some of the questions or the timeline. There's a lot to say here so it jumbles together. Because of this trajectory – my PhD is dated '78 – I really feel like I wasn't in the very first stage of feminist psychologists, nor was I in the stage of young people who were studying under those people. So I fell into this netherland. I never really had mentors. Dan Smothergill wasn't...As soon as I fell into feminist psychology, I said, "I love this stuff. This is really what interests me."

AR - Do you remember what you started reading?

CG - I absolutely do. There was teaching Psychology of Women. The two books that came to my attention are Jean Baker Miller's *New Psychology of Women* and Maccoby and Jacklin's *The Psychology of Sex Differences*. Those two books were fascinating to me because they're really rather diametrically opposed. Jean Baker Miller is saying, "Women have a relational way of being" and Maccoby and Jacklin were saying, "No, no. We've surveyed the entire literature and aside from these four cognitive-realm differences, all these things that people believe in, in the social, emotional, relational realm, don't exist and here are a couple of other things that we need research on." This appealed to me because I love reading, learning, and thinking. Jean Baker Miller even at the time, that was not in the tempo or tenor of feminist academic psychology. And yet, the early chapters where she talks about inequality, temporary and permanent inequality, and systems of power is really, really important. There was none of that in Maccoby and Jacklin. Maccoby and Jacklin were just doing psychology, analyses, not meta-analyses based on gender, whereas Jean Baker Miller was really thinking in a feminist kind of way. So those two books were really intriguing to me because they were very different.

In the seventies, women's studies was such a new discipline that you could really know the ovular work in feminist anthropology, feminist history, or feminist politics was. You could really read broadly. I remember seeing in a bookstore, a book that came into my attention: Nancy Chodorow's *The Reproduction of Mothering: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender*. I remember pulling that book off the bookshelf, and I think one of the ways I found books in those years was to go into the library and there was a nice independent bookstore and go to the women's or feminism shelf, and that book was there. As you can see, I love books, but I'm very particular about my books. I will not buy certain books, for example, John Gray. I'm very proud to say, I've read every page of that book but I do not own it, I would not buy it. So here I am, psychoanalysis had a very, very negative view within psychology in general and feminist psychology in particular. But somehow that book compelled me. I sat in the bookstore reading it, and literally after 3 hours, I said to myself, "Carla, You can buy the book, you can read it at home, even though it has 'psychoanalysis' in the title." That book fascinated me and that triumvirate of books: Chodorow, Jean Baker Miller, and Maccoby and Jacklin -they spoke to each other. In fact they were in dialogic argumentation with each other. {44:57}

Chodorow's essential argument having to do with ego development and women being more relationally inclined and men having more developed autonomous egos. I don't know why that appealed to me so much. It wasn't particularly reflective of my own experience. I've always been an assertive, autonomous, forceful girl and young woman. I'm thinking that maybe the book appealed to me because of what I was reading at the time and trying to make sense of feminist psychology which was saying very clearly: there are no meaningful psychological differences between women and men. If you picked up any Psych of Women textbooks at the time, and there were several good ones, they gave prominent and central coverage to Maccoby and Jacklin and the argument that women and men were not different. And then you've got Chodorow and Jean Baker Miller. In trying to make sense of this for myself, I started to do these professional training seminars, at AWP [*The Association for Women in Psychology*] and then at APA. Some of my early reputation was based on that. I was very intrigued. In doing a full day pre-conference training seminar, I got to put it all together. That was some of what I was reading.

A lot of the names on the timeline, of course I've read. Sandy Bem and Naomi Weisstein. I read all of those things, but it was weird. I wasn't in those women's cohort, they were older than me and yet I wasn't in the cohort of women slightly – I don't know - I didn't have mentors.

AR - You found your own way through this reading. But I also want to know how you got hooked up to AWP.

CG -How did I get hooked up to AWP? I don't know if I know the answer to that.

AR - You said you started to do the training seminars...

CG - The very first academic feminist conference I went to was the NWSA [*National Women's Studies Association*], in 1978, in Lawrence, Kansas. Transformative, amazing. I don't know if you remember your first feminist conference, but for me, not having been able to study with people, it was, "Wow, there's a whole world out there, a whole community!" I went to sessions and they were fascinating. This was in the mid 70's so people were really breaking silences, talking about abuse, incest, discrimination, and harassment. That was amazing. It must have been when I said, "I've got to find psychologists who are doing the same thing." Very shortly thereafter, I found the AWP. I think I marked down the first year I went to it – whenever I went with the people to Nairobi to present that feminist agenda.

I found the AWP and there found a home. But it was a home mostly of peers, although there were certain people I looked up to. For example, I met through AWP Bonnie Strickland. I did meet people who were older than me, who came to know my work, who were very influential in writing for me when it came time for tenure and promotion to full professor. But by then I already had something of my own identity as a feminist psychologist. The NWSA meeting is the one that is prominent in my mind, but I went to the AWP and then I never missed year – except when I was travelling abroad, I was in India one year when I missed it. But I found a group of people there that I could relate to.

In the early years, the meetings were just incredible. I went to sessions, I was learning about stuff I didn't know. But as time wore on, it was really the personal connections that were most important to me. But I always thought of it as a professional body that I could really relate to. I brought my interests there, I did most of my presentations there. I have not been involved in any way with Division 35.

AR -What do you see as the difference? {49:33}

I'm not an establishment type of person. There was something about APA meetings that always put me off. The posturing, the egos—certainly it was among the men. It was just too big, too formal, and too difficult to make inroads. So I did go to APA regularly when I was on the Implementation Collective of the AWP, but that really felt like my home. I guess I'm more of a grassroots type of person than an organizational gal. There was something about the formal organizational structure of [*the APA*] that never drew me.

AR - Here's just something I've observed people saying over the years, that AWP has been a friendlier place for lesbian psychologists. I don't know if that plays any part in your story or not.

CG - That's a really interesting question.

AR - We haven't really gotten to that point.

CG - We haven't....It certainly felt like a more welcoming place. There appeared to be more lesbians...well, in Division 35 there were plenty of lesbians. I think it's about professionalism. APA at Division 35 just seems the height of professionalism.

AR - People use it to climb a ladder too, right?

CG - Yeah. People are aiming to make themselves more visible within a professional structure. AWP seemed less like that to me. It was more about making personal connections, growing intellectually yourself, learning from other people. It might be a bad thing that I was never drawn to being part of any formal organizational structures. AWP had to really say, "Hey, come on, you've been so active, why don't you become more a part of the Implementation Collective?" "What do I do? I hate meetings. I like math, I like numbers, so I said, "Okay, I'll be treasurer." I was treasurer for number of years. And then eventually I found my way to the publication award committee. It was perfect for me.

AR - I want to go back to Smith and I want to ask you to talk a little bit about how the students reacted to that course.

CG -The Psych of Women?

AR -Yeah, the Psych of Women.

CG - Oh wow. I must have grown and developed over the years as a teacher. But I loved teaching from the beginning. It moved me. I was passionate about it. I knew nothing then compared to what I know now. I am so much more knowledgeable now. I've read so much more. I know so much more. But I don't know if that made any difference to be honest. I was young, fresh, and incredibly enthusiastic. I taught a course that was very different than the courses that I teach here. Those were still back in the days of lecturing. It was a popular first year course, it drew many students, it kept growing bigger and bigger. Even back then I had some inkling that it was important for students to discuss, to be in smaller groups. It was a large lecture class, a very lovely lecture hall. But large lectures at Smith had sixty to seventy people. I recruited students who had taken the class the year before to be discussion group leaders or TA's. I probably have my syllabi for back in those years. I created maybe eight groups on: motherhood, women and work, sexuality...what were the other ones? It's funny that I can't think of them. Maybe: women and the law, women and sports. {53:39}

These students at Smith were fabulous. The brightest, best students wanted to be TA's. I gave them some articles and the groups would meet. The class met maybe twice a week for lecture, but then they met for small group discussions. I travelled around and visited those. It was a very creative teaching format. I didn't have any set requirements. It was like, "Here's a menu of items and you can do whatever work suits you best." The highlight of the course was, at the end of the semester the different groups did presentations. They were so great. The students were creative and smart. They felt empowered in these presentations. I do remember one really, really interesting presentation. There was group on lesbianism, maybe there was even a separate group on bisexuality. The lesbianism group did a great thing. They had a class day, and as everyone worked into the room, they had people put on a little sticky that said, "I am a lesbian." This was before 1983, very different years. It's hard for different people to remember how different these years were. They did that to raise people's consciousness about, "How would you feel leaving this room with that that on? You'd be pretty sure that you'd rip that off because you don't want to be walking around campus wearing a sign that says 'I am a lesbian.'" They did other things in the class, but apparently a student forgot to take it when she went about her business. She went to have a meeting with her advisor in the psych department, Bob Teghtsoonian – very old school learning psychologist. He apparently couldn't stop staring at it and said, "What's that?" She ripped it off and said, "Oh my god! Carla Golden made me wear this! It was for Carla Golden's class. She made me wear that." He never came to me to ask me anything about it.

A year later, the way they did their pre-tenure reviews at Smith -I actually respected it, pretty much - they reviewed your file, and then you got called in for a meeting with the senior faculty. They asked you any questions they wanted to know about your work, teaching, your whatever. And Bob Teghtsoonian very politely said to me, "I know nothing about it -a student came in for an office hour and she was wearing a sign saying 'I am a lesbian' and she was very mortified when she saw I was looking at it. And she had said that you made her wear it, can you explain that?" And I said very calmly, "I had these groups, it was a very educational consciousness raising act that the students did." He said, "Okay." But another thing that came out of that meeting, there were several before I was denied my final reappointment, which would have brought me to tenure. So I wasn't actually denied tenure at Smith, I was denied the last appointment which would have brought me to tenure. They did a full tenure review for that. They sought eight outside evaluations, it was nutty.

At any rate, how did students respond? I think they responded really positively. There was an element at the school of "that's dyke-psych". It became known a course that lesbians felt comfortable coming to. I'll say something later about my own sexuality development during that time. It was a very popular course and I was becoming very passionate about teaching. I was developing there, at Smith, my notion that teaching is scholarly activity. What's this stuff about "there is scholarship and there is teaching?" Teaching is very scholarly.

So I wrote a couple of papers that I don't think got published. But there were working drafts and I put them in my file at Smith. Bob Teghtsoonian said, "What is this? This is not to be conflated. You're not publishing enough. If you expect to get tenure here, you need to publish." I had studied the tenure and promotion guidelines and there was a clause for exceptional teaching. I can remember it was 2A, 2C, "In cases of exceptional teaching the demands for scholarship are different." The person just has to make the case. It's a little hard to believe that that was even in there, even in the 70's. But I brought that up. I said, "I guess I was hoping to go through the tenure process under the 'exceptional teaching clause.' I suppose this is a good time to discuss that." He said, "I'd be happy to discuss it. Speaking for {58:18}

myself, but I think it reflects the views of the department” - this is seared in my memory. He said, “There’s no question that you are an exceptional teacher. I’d be willing to say that you are the more exceptional teacher in the department. You are exciting students, doing incredible things. You could do half or three-quarters less than what you are doing and you’d still be better than the rest of us. I care not a whit about teaching. Smith is an institution of higher learning and the purpose of a college environment like this is to push forward the boundaries of the discipline through the research that we do. Teaching students is just part of the thing we have to do in the process of doing research. I will not vote for you for tenure if you have not published a lot more. I’m not denying that you are an exceptional teacher, I’ll grant you that. I’m just not going to follow that clause.”

I was denied that last appointment and I think this is important, my understanding of why that was – because one of your questions was, “Have you ever been discriminated against [*because of your*] gender, sexuality, ethnicity?” This is how I understand what happened to me at Smith. Smith is a very old, esteemed certain kind of a place. There was just so much different that you could be at Smith. Most of the faculty there were older, white, Christian, straight males. There were women on the faculty, but in the psych department, there weren’t that many women. I was probably the only Jewish person. I think very difficult for them, I came to Smith as a married woman. Over the course of my time there, I separated from my husband and became involved with a woman in the department. It was a different time. We were not public about it. I wasn’t going to lie about anything. People in the department knew that we were living together. But I certainly did not breathe a word of this in classes. Students who were lesbian wanted to know, knew. But it was hard to remember what those days were like. {1:00, END Disc 1}

Disc 2, {39:34}:

CG - One of your questions was, “How have you merged your feminism with your work as a psychologist?”

AR - Yeah.

CG - For me, feminism *is* my work as a psychologist. I teach students, I use psychology as a vehicle for teaching them. In contrast, some of these colleagues who want to teach APA style and want their kids to go on, they teach psychology. I feel like what I do is teach students and I use psychology. I’m all about citing research and looking at the findings of the field. And in teaching students, I use feminism to help them navigate their lives. I think it is useful theoretical mode of analysis for boys, girls, everybody. {40:18, END Disc 2}