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Guide to the Institute for Research on Women, Gender, and Sexuality Oral History Collection 11594421

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Oral History Archives at Columbia

Table of Contents

Summary Information 3

History 4

Scope and Content 5

Arrangement 6

Administrative Information 6

Related Materials 8

Controlled Access Headings 8

Collection Inventory 8

 Interviews 8

 Additional Material 51

Summary Information

Repository:	Oral History Archives at Columbia
Creator:	Columbia University. Institute for Research on Women and Gender
Title:	Institute for Research on Women, Gender, and Sexuality Oral History Collection
ID:	11594421
ID:	OHAC
Date [inclusive]:	2014-2015
Physical Description:	35 Volumes transcripts: 2554 pp.
Physical Description:	285 Gigabytes 1,462 digital files
Language of the Material:	English .
Abstract:	<p>The Institute for Research on Women, Gender, and Sexuality (IRWGS) at Columbia University is an interdisciplinary institute for feminist scholarship and education. It was established as the Institute for Research on Women and Gender (IRWAG) in 1987. Anticipating its 25th anniversary, the Institute for Research on Women, Gender, and Sexuality (IRWGS) approached the Columbia Center for Oral History Research (CCOHR) in 2012, about an oral history project to document the history of the department and the growth and development of feminism at Columbia. The IRWGS Oral History Project was conducted with funding from the President's Office and was the first project undertaken by CCOHR in its new home at the Interdisciplinary Center for Innovative Theory and Empirics (INCITE). Interviews with current and past directors of IRWGS, affiliated and allied faculty, administrators, and students were conducted between 2014 and 2015. The Institute for Research on Women, Gender, and Sexuality Oral History Project is comprised of interviews with 36 individuals involved in the founding and development of the Institute for Research on Women, Gender, and Sexuality (IRWGS) at Columbia University. Interviewers conducted these interviews over 68 sessions, creating over 90 hours of recordings. Nine of these sessions were recorded on video, and interviews have been transcribed. Interviewers were guided by a set of research questions, which emphasized the role of IRWGS as a political actor within the broader context of Columbia</p>

University, agitating for the inclusion of feminist analysis and practice. As the project progressed, questions expanded to explore issues of generation, activism, the developments within feminism(s), evidence of increasing support of IRWGS by the university, and the challenge of addressing diversity, sexuality and other forms of social difference theoretically and as professional practice.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

History

The Institute for Research on Women, Gender, and Sexuality (IRWGS) at Columbia University is an interdisciplinary institute for feminist scholarship and education. It was established as the Institute for Research on Women and Gender (IRWAG) in 1987. The foundation of an institute for feminist studies at Columbia occurred late compared with peer institutions, due in part to the fact that Columbia College did not accept female undergraduates until 1983.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

History

The Institute was first headed by Carolyn Heilbrun of the English Department as the university initiated the search for a director. After a yearlong search from 1988-1989, Martha Howell was appointed as a Professor of History and the Director of the Institute. Funding from the Ford Foundation supported the initial design of undergraduate coursework, and at first the Institute relied heavily on Barnard College's course offerings.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

History

In 1989, IRWAG received a grant from the Ford Foundation to integrate race and gender into its curriculum. By 1990, two students were awarded the university's first degrees in Women's Studies. In 1995, an Academic Review Committee called for the cross-appointment of four senior faculty lines, which were filled between 1998 and 2004. In 2007, an Academic Review Committee report on the Institute supported the establishment of the Center for the Study of Social Difference to serve as the research arm of the Institute and operate in conjunction with

the Institute for Research in African American Studies, the Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race, the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society, and the Barnard Center for Research on Women. The Institute's name was changed to IRWGS in 2013.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

History

Disciplines represented by Institute faculty have included History, English and Comparative Literature, Anthropology, Law, and Philosophy. Directors of the Institute have included Carolyn Heilbrun (1987-1989), Martha Howell (1989-1994), Victoria de Grazia (1994-1996), Jean Howard (1997-1999), Rosalind Morris (1999-2000, 2001-2004), Christia Mercer (2000-2001), Lila Abu-Lughod (2004-07), Marianne Hirsch (2007-2008, 2015), Elizabeth Povinelli (2008-2011), Saidiya Hartman (2011-2013), Alondra Nelson (2013-2014), and Patricia Dailey (2014).

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Scope and Content

The Institute for Research on Women, Gender, and Sexuality Oral History Project is comprised of interviews with 36 individuals involved in the founding and development of the Institute for Research on Women, Gender, and Sexuality (IRWGS) at Columbia University. Interviewers conducted these interviews over 68 sessions, creating over 90 hours of recordings. Nine of these sessions were recorded on video, and interviews have been transcribed. Three documents prepared by the Columbia Center for Oral History Research as a part of the project are also included in the collection: a timeline of the history of IRWGS, an overview of the collection, and project design documentation.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Scope and Content

Interviewers were guided by a set of research questions, which emphasized the role of IRWGS as a political actor within the broader context of Columbia University, agitating for the inclusion of feminist analysis and practice. As the project progressed, questions expanded to explore issues of generation, activism, the developments within feminism(s), evidence of

increasing support of IRWGS by the university, and the challenge of addressing diversity, sexuality and other forms of social difference theoretically and as professional practice.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Scope and Content

The narrators include directors of IRWGS, affiliated and allied faculty, administrators, and students. Interviewed individuals are Lila Abu-Lughod, Rachel Adams, Annie Barry, Marcellus Blount, Sarah Chinn, Laura Ciolkowski, Julie Crawford, Patricia Dailey, Victoria DeGrazia, Mario DiGangi, Joan Ferrante, Melissa Fisher, Eric Foner, Farah Griffin, Hilary Hallett, Robert Hanning, Marianne Hirsch, Jean Howard, Martha Howell, Alice Kessler-Harris, Shamus Khan, Gillian Lindt, Ellen MacKay, Sharon Marcus, Christia Mercer, Maya Meredith, Rosalind Morris, Alondra Nelson, Greg Pflugfelder, Victoria Rosner, Barbara Simon, Gayatri Spivak, Vina Tran, Karen Van Dyck, Priscilla Wald, and Patricia Williams.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Arrangement

Arranged in two series. Interviews are arranged alphabetically by last name of narrator, followed by Columbia Center for Oral History Research project documentation.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Administrative Information

Publication Statement

Oral History Archives at Columbia

Revision Description

xml document instance created by David A. Olson EAD was imported spring 2019 as part of the ArchivesSpace Phase II migration. 2015-10-23 2019-06-08

Access Restrictions

This collection is located on-site.

Access Restrictions

Most interviews are open. Certain interviews in this collection are closed, and audio for certain interviews is conditionally closed. Access restrictions are described at the interview level.

Acquisition

Columbia Center for Oral History Research Transfer 2015

Custodial History

Anticipating its 25th anniversary, the Institute for Research on Women, Gender, and Sexuality (IRWGS) approached the Columbia Center for Oral History Research (CCOHR) in 2012, about an oral history project to document the history of the department and the growth and development of feminism at Columbia. The IRWGS Oral History Project was conducted with funding from the President's Office and was the first project undertaken by CCOHR in its new home at the Interdisciplinary Center for Innovative Theory and Empirics (INCITE). Interviews with current and past directors of IRWGS, affiliated and allied faculty, administrators, and students were conducted between 2014 and 2015.

Processing Information

Finding aid written by David Olson, Rebecca Breslaw, and Kelsey Decker, with adaptations of description by Sarah Dziedzic and other CCOH staff, and including faculty biographies collected by CCOH-R. 10/2015

Restrictions on Use

Copyright held by Trustees of Columbia University in the City of New York.

Restrictions on Use

Certain interviews in this collection have additional use restrictions, which are described at the interview level.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Related Materials

Related Material

Additional historical information and interview excerpts can be found at the Columbia Center for Oral History Research's website www.irwgsoralhistory.org.

Columbia University Libraries has been capturing and preserving snapshots of this website since 2016 using Archive-It. This archival content can be viewed at the URL https://wayback.archive-it.org/1914/*/http://irwgsoralhistory.org/.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Controlled Access Headings

- Feminist theory
- Feminism and higher education -- United States
- Interdisciplinary approach in education
- Gay and lesbian studies -- United States
- Oral histories (literary works)
- Interviews
- Columbia University -- Faculty -- Interviews
- Columbia University -- Alumni and alumnae -- Interviews
- Columbia University. Institute for Research on Women and Gender

Collection Inventory

Interviews

Title/Description	Instances
Lila Abu-Lughod, 2015 January 30, 2015 May 21	box 1

Scope and Content Note

In this interview, Abu-Lughod describes her time at Williams College, the Institute for Advanced Study, and New York University. Abu-Lughod cites her appointment at Williams—where she attended a reading group with Catharine A. MacKinnon, Adrienne Rich, and Wendy Brown—as her first engagement with women's studies. Abu-Lughod describes the impact

this had on her early work, *Writing Women's Worlds*. Abu-Lughod then discusses her time at the Institute for Advanced Study, where she worked alongside scholars such as Judith Butler, Evelyn Fox Keller, and Donna Haraway. She goes on to summarize her time at New York University, during which she participated in a Ford Foundation Grant effort to internationalize women's studies.

Scope and Content Note

Abu-Lughod recalls the institutionalization of IRWGS and the birth of the Center for the Study of Social Difference (CSSD). She describes her role as a transnational feminist scholar at IRWGS, the inception of her post-9/11 essay entitled "Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving?" (2002), the essay's expansion into her 2013 book *Do Muslim Women Need Saving?*, and the role the IRWGS community played in the creation of both works. Abu-Lughod goes on to explain the hiring practices of IRWGS; she cites the Diversity Initiative and the Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty Diversity and Inclusion as instrumental to the hiring of scholars like Saidiya Hartman and Alondra Nelson. Abu-Lughod then describes how the CSSD emerged through a partnership between IRWGS, the Center for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, the Barnard College Center for Research on Women, and the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society. Abu-Lughod chronicles the creation of the Women Creating Change Project by CSSD and Columbia's Global Centers and also provides a description of the four projects in conjunction with the "Gender in the World" curriculum in Columbia's Global Centers. In broader terms, Abu-Lughod discusses the goals of the CSSD and the recent achievements of IRWGS. She describes the limitations facing junior faculty and the importance of mentoring within IRWGS.

Scope and Content Note

Interview conducted by Kristen L. Murphy.

Biographical / Historical

Lila Abu-Lughod is the Joseph L. Buttenwieser Professor of Social Science in the Department of Anthropology. Her work is strongly ethnographic and mostly based in Egypt. It focused on three broad issues: the relationship between cultural forms and power; the politics of knowledge and representation; and the dynamics of gender and the question of women's rights in the Middle East. Her first book, *Veiled Sentiments*, was about the politics of sentiment and cultural expression in a Bedouin community in Egypt. Her second book, *Writing Women's Worlds*, framed as a feminist ethnography, used individual

stories to make a larger argument about "writing against culture." Her third ethnography, *Dramas of Nationhood: The Politics of Television in Egypt*, a contribution to the anthropology of nations and to media ethnography, explored the tensions between the social inequalities that bedevil nations and the cultural forms that aspire to address them. Her writing and teaching has focused on questions of gender and modernity in postcolonial theory, of anthropology and global media, and of violence national/cultural memory.

Rachel Adams, 2015 January 14

box 1

Scope and Content Note

Adams begins this interview with a recollection of her arrival at Columbia in 1997. She describes the interviewing and vetting process, the completion of her dissertation, and her experience settling into New York City. Adams characterizes IRWGS at that time as a center of leaders. She discusses the feminist pedagogy course she co-taught with Julie Crawford. Adams reflects on the students of IRWGS, the institute's hierarchy, and Columbia's institutional environment. She gives examples of academic support within IRWGS, including her first presentation in the Feminist Interventions Series and the formation of a faculty writing group which included Kristina Milnor, Sandhya Shukla, and Julie Crawford. Adams chronicles her interest in Masculinity Studies, her co-authorship of the *Masculine Studies Reader* with David Safran, and the limitations of the field.

Scope and Content Note

Adams concludes the interview with a discussion of her tenure process. She elaborates on the financial and temporal challenges facing faculty with children. Adams cites her position as a disabilities scholar and advocate as a product of her scholarship regarding freak shows and the historicization of disability as well as her role as the mother of a disabled child. Her book *Raising Henry: A Memoir of Motherhood, Disability, and Discovery*, chronicles her experiences as a parent of a child with Down Syndrome. Adams concludes this interview with her hopes for the future, including wider support for service learning and increased accessibility.

Scope and Content Note

Interview conducted by Sarah Dziedzic.

Biographical / Historical

Rachel Adams is a professor of English and Comparative Literature. She received her B.A. from the University of California, Berkeley in 1990, M.A. from the University of Michigan in 1992, and Ph.D. from the University of California, Santa Barbara in 1997. Adams specializes in 19th- and 20th-century literatures of the United States and the Americas, media studies, theories of race, gender, and sexuality, food studies, medical humanities and disability studies. She is the director of "The Future of Disability Studies" Project, and also holds an appointment in the American Studies Program. Her most recent book is *Raising Henry: A Memoir of Motherhood, Disability, and Discovery*, published by Yale University Press in 2013. She is also the author of *Continental Divides: Remapping the Cultures of North America* (University of Chicago Press, 2009) and *Sideshow U.S.A.: Freaks and the American Cultural Imagination* (University of Chicago Press, 2001). She is co-editor (with David Savran) of *The Masculinity Studies Reader* (Blackwell Press, 2001) and (with Sarah Casteel) a special issue of *Comparative American Literature* on "Canada and the Americas." She is editor of a critical edition of Kate Chopin's *The Awakening* (Fine Publications, 2002). Her articles have appeared in journals such as *American Literature*, *American Literary History*, *American Quarterly*, *Minnesota Review*, *Camera Obscura*, *GLQ*, *Signs*, *Yale Journal of Criticism*, and *Twentieth-Century Literature*. She has also written for *The New York Times*, *Salon*, *Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Gastronomica*, the *Times of London*, and *The Huffington Post's* blog. In 2010 she was the recipient of the Lenfest Distinguished Columbia Faculty Award.

Annie Barry, 2015 May 15

box 1

Scope and Content Note

In this interview, Barry reflects on her arrival at Columbia University in 1985. She begins by describing her upbringing in Butler, New Jersey, citing the challenges of being one of nine children and a student in an overcrowded small town high school. Barry goes on to describe her time at Gettysburg College and her pursuit of a Master's degree in history at Columbia. Barry reflects on her decision to move to New York. She shares her experience of coming out and her subsequent encounters with homophobia. Barry characterizes her participation in IRWGS and recalls her efforts in GABLES, the Gay, Bisexual, and Lesbian Employees and Supporters group, which existed from 1993-1997 and arose to combat the inaccessibility to married housing, health benefits, and life insurance for queer couples at the University. Barry describes

the limitations of GABLES in a larger discussion of the long and difficult process by which queer women, transgender, and LGBTQ people of color struggled at the University.

Scope and Content Note

Barry chronicles her time as an administrator in the religion department and her work with Gillian Lindt. She concludes the interview with a description of her job at the Human Research Protection Office, a brief discussion of campus sexual assault, an explanation of involvement with IRWGS at the time of the interview, and a reflection on Columbia University's progress in terms of queer acceptance.

Scope and Content Note

Interview conducted by Sarah Dziedzic.

Biographical / Historical

Annie Barry is Assistant Manager at the Columbia University Human Research Protection Office. She has also worked as an administrator for Columbia's Physics Department and worked for 19 years in the Department of Religion.

Marcellus Blount, 2015 April 2, 2015 April 16

box 1

Scope and Content Note

In this interview, Blount describes his cultural upbringing in New York City, detailing his experience with segregation in high school and his decision to attend Williams College. Blount goes on to discuss his exposure to African American literature at Williams, citing Melvin Dixon as a mentor. Blount provides an account of his graduate work in American Studies at Yale University, and his addition to the faculty of Columbia University in 1985, serving as one of Columbia's five African-American professors at the time. Blount discusses his experiences of marginalization and the strategies he has used to overcome structural obstacles, including his development of alliances with feminist scholars within the English department. Blount names colleagues Susan Winnett and Carolyn Heilbrun as early allies. Blount discusses his longstanding advocacy for a more inclusive Columbia Core Curriculum, including his 30 year petition in favor of adding Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* to the syllabus. Blount talks about his 1987 arrest during a campus protest demanding resources for African-American students. He recalls his emotions at the time, how it affected his work, and the University's response to the incident. Following this incident,

Columbia established lines in African-American Studies and created the Intercultural Resource Center.

Scope and Content Note

Additionally, Blount describes how the African-American Studies Department and the Institute for Research in African-American Studies (IRAAS) were founded. Blount describes the early community ties, conventions, panels, and successes of IRAAS. He discusses his engagement with IRWGS and sexuality studies more broadly, especially in reference to his personal identity. Blount explains how his experience with IRWGS has forced him to deconstruct his masculinist training and describes his book *Representing Black Men*. Blount reflects on his involvement in community organizations such as the Audre Lorde Project and the Gay Men's Health Crisis. Blount defines the HIV/AIDS crisis as the bridge between his activism and scholarship.

Scope and Content Note

Interview conducted by Sarah Dziedzic.

Biographical / Historical

Marcellus Blount has taught at Columbia since 1985, where he teaches American and African-American literary and cultural studies. He has held fellowships at the Carter G. Woodson Institute at University of Virginia, the University of Pennsylvania where he was a Rockefeller Fellow, and Harvard University at the W. E. B. Du Bois Institute. More recently he was the Sterling Brown '22 Visiting Professor of English at Williams College. His articles have appeared in a range of journals, including *PMLA* and *Callaloo*. He co-edited *Representing Black Men* and, more recently, has completed "Listening for My Name: African American Men and the Politics of Friendship." His current project is a study of issues related to race and marriage equality.

Sarah Chinn, 2015 April 14

box 1

Scope and Content Note

In the first session of this interview, Chinn discusses her adolescence after moving to New York City from London at age 15. Chinn describes the political campaigns she was involved with in London, as well as the youth culture of downtown New York City in the 1980s. Chinn attended Yale University for her undergraduate studies, and discusses impacts of the AIDS epidemic and student organizing on the New Haven campus. Chinn talks about the challenges she faced as a graduate student at Columbia University

and her subsequent creation of the Queer Studies Group. Chinn names Patrick Horrigan, Mario DiGangi, and Liz Wiesen as core organizers of the Queer Studies Group, and Judith Butler and Eve Sedgwick as attendees. Chinn describes the interest in work being done around gender and queer studies even without a formal curriculum.

Scope and Content Note

In the second session of this interview, Chinn describes her experience teaching at Columbia University, Randolph Macon College, and Trinity College before arriving at Hunter College, where she sat as Chair of the English Department. Chinn moved back to New York, and began to do work for the National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League (NARAL) while teaching at SUNY Purchase. Chinn describes her experience starting a family without maternity leave and the subsequent challenges of being a professor with young children. Chinn explains how she prioritizes her students and takes her role as a mentor seriously as a result of the challenges she has faced in academia. Chinn names the New York Chapter of the American Studies Association as a site of academic camaraderie and mentorship. Chinn spends the final portion of the interview discussing her teaching and parenting goals. She explains her recent return to activism, citing Occupy Wall Street and Black Lives Matter events. Finally, Chinn discusses the differences between private and public institutions and the departmental politics she has engaged with at Hunter College since her appointment in 2001.

Scope and Content Note

Interview conducted by Sarah Dziedzic.

Biographical / Historical

Sarah E. Chinn got her PhD in English from Columbia University in 1996, and was co-founder in 1991 of the Lesbian and Gay Studies Reading Group, which held their meetings and events at IRWAG. She now teaches American Literatures and Cultures and is the Chair of the English Department at Hunter College, CUNY. Her work primarily explores questions of race, sexuality, and gender in U.S. literature and culture, particularly in the 19th century. She teaches a wide range of courses from Nineteenth Century Women Writers to Early American Drama to Literary Theory to Post-1945 Lesbian and Gay Narratives. She is the author of *Technology and the Logic of American Racism: A Cultural History of the Body as Evidence* (Continuum, 2000) and *Inventing Modern Adolescence: Children of Immigrants in Turn-of-the-Century America* (Rutgers University Press, 2008). In

2017, her book *Spectacular Men: Race, Gender, and Nation on the Early American Stage, 1780-1830* was published by Oxford University Press. From 2007 to 2011, she was the Executive Director of the Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies at the CUNY Graduate Center.

Laura Ciolkowski, 2014 October 16

box 1

Scope and Content Note

Ciolkowski begins this three session interview by discussing her undergraduate years at Columbia University as part of one of the first co-ed graduating classes. She describes the attitudes on campus and the relationship between Barnard College and Columbia. While Ciolkowski cites an internship with Kate Wittenberg before college as her first introduction to feminist figures and politics, she names Anne McClintock as a crucial mentor in her early experience with feminist scholarship. Through McClintock, Ciolkowski engaged with New York Women Against Rape (NYWAR). Ciolkowski discusses the decision to pursue a graduate degree in English, her development at Brown University, her subsequent experience as a faculty member of Yale's Women's Studies Department, and her decision to move back to NYC and leave the academy. Here, Ciolkowski describes her experience freelance writing, speech writing, and researching for the Center for Reproductive Law and Policy.

Scope and Content Note

Ciolkowski describes her time at Wesleyan University and New York University's Gallatin School, and her ultimate return to Columbia. Ciolkowski discusses the challenges of childrearing while in the academy, the collaborative nature of IRWGS and the Barnard Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies department, and the benefits of her position as an administrator within IRWGS. Ciolkowski then focuses on her experience collaborating with Barnard College and the Center for the Study of Social Difference. Ciolkowski describes the early projects of the Center for the Study of Social Difference (CSSD), including those by Farah Griffin and Claudio Lomnitz. Ciolkowski discusses how CSSD allows IRWGS scholars to go beyond gender as their primary category of analysis. Finally, she reflects on the work IRWGS has done with No Red Tape, an anti-sexual violence group on campus, and the unique position of IRWGS on campus.

Scope and Content Note

Interview conducted by Sarah Dziedzic.

Biographical / Historical

Laura Ciolkowski is has been the Associate Director of IRWGS as well as the Associate Director of the Center for the Study of Social Difference since 2007/08. She is also an Adjunct Associate Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia, as well as a writer and book critic whose reviews appear in the *NY Times*, et al. She has taught at Yale, Wesleyan, NYU, Barnard and Columbia and her teaching and research interests include women's studies, nineteenth- and twentieth-century literature and culture, and travel literature. She was in the second cohort of women admitted to Columbia College in 1984 and had a positive experience with the Core Curriculum.

Julie Crawford, 2014 December 18

box 1

Scope and Content Note

Crawford begins this interview with a discussion of her time as a junior faculty member at Columbia University and her experience working within a union at Simon Fraser University. She explains how this experience increased her awareness of unfair institutional practices and contributed to the subsequent creation of the Junior Faculty Committee to empower faculty. Crawford talks about joining IRWGS, being respected as an individual, and the challenges of being a female professor. She cites Jean Howard as a mentor. As the Chair of Lit Hum, Crawford describes the Feminist to the Core Series, and how to transform classroom debate into fruitful discussion. Crawford discusses the ways in which IRWGS has become more interdisciplinary, and the titular recognition of "sexuality" in IRWGS. Crawford discusses her close relationship with Katherine Franke, and the importance of intellectual and institutional support among IRWGS faculty. Crawford continues with a discussion of thinking globally, the relationship of feminism to global justice, and Third World Feminism. Crawford also talks about the Title IX complaint filed against Columbia University and No Red Tape's shortcomings, her own experience with activism as an undergraduate student, the importance of intellectualism in activism, and how she was affected by the death of Trayvon Martin. She goes on to discuss the benefits and limitations of the internet for contemporary feminists, IRWGS's relationship to Columbia's CORE curriculum, and how to minimize misogyny on campus. Finally, Crawford describes the size of the university administration and number of faculty appointments during her career at Columbia.

Scope and Content Note

Interview conducted by Sarah Dziedzic.

Biographical / Historical

Julie Crawford works on sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English literature and culture. She has written on Shakespeare, John Fletcher, Margaret Cavendish, the Sidneys, Anne Clifford, Margaret Hoby, and Mary Wroth, as well as on post-Reformation religious culture, the history of reading, and the history of sexuality. Her book, *Marvelous Protestantism: Monstrous Births in Post-Reformation England*, was published by Johns Hopkins University Press in 2005, and her book *Mediatrice: Women and the Politics of Literary Production in Early Modern England* was published in early 2013. In 2015, she was completing a book entitled *Margaret Cavendish's Political Career*.

Patricia Dailey, 2014 December 18, 2015 June 16

box 1

Scope and Content Note

In the first session of this interview, Dailey explains her introduction to medieval studies, the benefits of graduate studies, and her activism as the Director of IRWGS. Dailey discusses her graduate studies at the University of California, Irvine in Comparative Literature under Jacques Derrida and Jean-François Lyotard. Dailey discusses how she developed her own literary approach and considers her work to be a reaction to the first wave of feminist medieval scholarship. She cites Caroline Walker Bynum's book, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast*, as a particularly inspiring work. Dailey goes on to describe her role as Director of IRWGS, including her introduction of a University seminar on affect studies, and the involvement of professors from EALAC (East Asian Languages and Cultures), such as Hikari Hori and Mana Kia, with IRWGS. Dailey also describes the creation of the Junior Faculty Advisory Board. Dailey describes the challenges of single parenting and the pressures of the academy, naming Alondra Nelson as a mentor throughout these challenges.

Scope and Content Note

In the second session of this interview, Dailey discusses the ways IRWGS has changed since 2000, citing the increase in interdisciplinary programming and the desirability of non-traditional majors. Dailey goes on to explain the origin of an IRWGS class entitled Genealogies of Feminism, and how she understands feminism as a set of practices. Lastly, Dailey offers insight on the origins of Queer Studies within IRWGS, explaining the roles of Greg

Pflugfelder, Rosalind Morris, and David Kurnick in its creation.

Scope and Content Note

Interview conducted by Sarah Dziedzic.

Conditions Governing Access:

Conditions Governing Access

Certain pages of transcript closed until 2030-01-01.
Transcript in Box 1 has been redacted by Columbia Center for Oral History Research.

Biographical / Historical

Patricia Dailey received her B.A. from Sarah Lawrence College and in 2002 received her Ph.D. from the University of California, Irvine, and LMS from the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies (2005). Patricia Dailey joined Columbia faculty in 2004 after holding a Woodrow Wilson Postdoctoral Fellowship at Northwestern University (2002-2004). She specializes in medieval literature and critical theory, focusing on women's mystical texts, and Anglo-Saxon poetry and prose. Her book *Promised Bodies: Time, Language, and Corporeality in Medieval Women's Mystical Texts* (Columbia University Press, 2013) examines the relation between gender, temporality, the body, and language in medieval mystical texts, with a focus on the thirteenth century mystic Hadewijch. Her next book project, *Responsive Subjects: Affect and Anglo-Saxon Literature*, focuses on Anglo-Saxon literature and the use of affect in medieval pedagogy. She is also the co-editor, with Veerle Fraeters, of *A Companion to Hadewijch* (forthcoming, Brill). Recent articles include, "Riddles, Wonder, and Responsiveness in Anglo-Saxon Literature," in the *Cambridge History of Early Medieval English Literature 500-1150* (2012); "The Body and its Senses" and "Time and Memory" in the *Cambridge Companion to Christian Mysticism* (2012); "Children of Promise: The Bodies of Hadewijch of Antwerp," in *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* (Spring, 2011); and "Questions of Dwelling in Anglo-Saxon Poetry and Medieval Mysticism: Inhabiting Landscape, Body, Mind," in *New Medieval Literatures* (vol 8, 2006). Other articles have appeared in *Women's Studies Quarterly*, Witness Issue (2007), *Le Secret: Motif et Moteur de la Litterature* (1999), *Les Imaginaires du Mal* (2000), the PMLA's special issue on Derrida (2005), and *Routledge's Women and Gender in Medieval Europe: An Encyclopedia*. In addition to her work in medieval literature, she has translated works by Giorgio Agamben (*The Time That Remains*, Stanford 2005), Jean-François Lyotard, and Antonio Negri. She is the founder of the Anglo-Saxon Studies Colloquium

and co-founder of the Affect Studies University Seminar.

Victoria DeGrazia, 2014 July 8

box 1

Scope and Content Note

In the first session of this interview, De Grazia discusses her early academic experiences at Smith College as an undergraduate and her subsequent enrollment in Columbia's Graduate History program. She characterizes and explains her involvement with the *Radical History Review*. De Grazia discusses her time teaching European History at Lehman College and Rutgers University in the late 1970s. De Grazia cites the birth of her child in Italy as a turning point for her scholarship, as it made clear the prevalence of fascist practices surrounding femininity in Italy that inspired her first book, *How Fascism Ruled Women: Italy, 1922-1945*. De Grazia describes her involvement in the Rutgers Center for Historical Analysis. Empowered to pursue new projects, De Grazia began studying issues of consumption and gender with Michael Taussig and Ina Merkel, which resulted in her 1996 volume entitled *The Sex of Things: Gender and Consumption in Historical Perspective*. De Grazia describes the camaraderie of faculty and the union presence at Rutgers. In 1994, De Grazia joined Columbia's faculty and she offers an organizational comparison between Rutgers University and Columbia University. Finally, De Grazia discusses the development and financial support of IRWGS in the late 1990s.

Scope and Content Note

In session two of the interview, De Grazia focuses on the development of IRWGS, from the early years of its creation into present day. De Grazia describes the struggle for departmental funding and the tenure in IRWGS, naming Gayatri Spivak as an early faculty advocate. De Grazia recalls the importance of solidarity, and describes a petition regarding Nadia Abu El-Haj. De Grazia also discusses the precarious position of junior faculty within IRWGS, and the formation of Q Fac to address these issues. De Grazia concludes with a discussion of the centrality of Barnard College to the success of IRWGS and the dynamism of gender and sexuality studies.

Scope and Content Note

In the final session of De Grazia's interview, she describes her global approach to women's studies. De Grazia goes on to describe the 'old left' attitude of the history department, the way Lila Abu-Lughod's work informed hers, and organizing faculty against the

invasion of Iraq. De Grazia concludes with a discussion of her interaction with student life and her present role as Director of the European Institute.

Scope and Content Note

Interview conducted by Sarah Dziedzic.

Biographical / Historical

Victoria de Grazia is Professor History at Columbia University, where she has taught since 1993, and served as the Director of IRWAG from 1994-1996. As Director, she engaged the Institute on topics of nationalism and worked to increase the community and camaraderie between faculty and graduate students. Her research has dealt with contemporary relations and exchanges between Europe and the United States, including the ways national and family politics shape women's lives. Before becoming a professor at Columbia University, she taught at Lehman College of the City of New York (1974-76) and at Rutgers University (1976-1993). While a graduate student in History at Columbia (1970-1976), she was a member of the founding collective of the Radical History Review.

Mario DiGangi, 2015 May 20

box 1

Scope and Content Note

DiGangi begins this interview by discussing his decision to attend Columbia University, stating that he began to engage with New York City's LGBTQ subculture as a high school student. DiGangi describes initial exposure to gay studies and feminist theory in an undergraduate class with Professor John Archer. From there, DiGangi attended an IRWGS course co-taught by Jean Howard and Martha Howell. As a graduate student at Columbia, the field of sexuality and LGBTQ studies was expanding, and DiGangi and others sought a space to address it. Out of this need arose the Lesbian and Gay Studies Reading Group. With immense support and encouragement, the Lesbian and Gay Studies Reading Group accrued speakers ranging from Martin Duberman, the first director of the Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies at CUNY Graduate School, to theorists and critics such as Eve Sedgwick, Wayne Koestenbaum, Douglas Crimp, and Judith Butler. DiGangi describes the ways in which the Lesbian and Gay Studies Reading Group became a legitimate institution within the Columbia community, and the resources it provided to queer students navigating the academy. DiGangi discusses how, in 1995, he helped to organize a conference on

activism and academia, and defended a gay student dismissed from the PhD program.

Scope and Content Note

Interview conducted by Andrea Crow.

Biographical / Historical

Mario DiGangi is a professor of early modern English literature at the CUNY Graduate Center and Lehmann College, where he has taught since 1998. He was present for a many of the major shifts in attitudes towards gender at Columbia: as an undergraduate (1984-88), he was in the second graduating class to include female students, he was attending Columbia when IRWAG was established and, during his PhD studies at Columbia (1988-1994) he was heavily involved with the Gay and Lesbian Studies Reading Group, which found its initial support through IRWAG. His research deals with early modern English theater and the history of sexuality. After graduating from Columbia in 1994, he taught at Indiana University before moving on to Lehmann College in 1998.

Joan Ferrante, 2014 June 9, 2014 September 11

box 1

Scope and Content Note

In this interview, Ferrante describes the campus environment for female faculty members of Columbia University in the 1960s, including: the student body, the disparities in pay, the challenges of gaining tenure, and common experiences with the administration. She addresses the different viewpoints between male and female scholarship with a focus on the value of the different approaches to research and inquiry that women have. She discusses her work with and relationship to Carolyn Heilbrun, as well as Heilbrun's significant departure from Columbia University. Ferrante characterizes the English department with particular attention to its shifting power dynamics, hiring processes, decisions in granting tenure, and prevalence of an "old boys' network." She shares her experiences with the Columbia University Senate, the Ad Hoc Faculty Committee, the Ad Hoc Committee on Women and, later, her involvement with IRWGS. She lists some goals of these organizations on campus, including: increased availability of childcare, availability of maternity leave, salary equity, stronger policies against sexual harassment, and measures against discrimination in tenure decisions. Ferrante discusses Columbia College's decision to become a co-educational institution and how she argued for Barnard College to remain as a separate institution. Ferrante also addresses her personal scholarship,

including the significance of her book *Women as Image in Medieval Literature: From the Twelfth Century to Dante*, her translation of *The Lais of Marie de France*, and her shifting focus within the field of medieval studies. Ferrante both looks to the past to share her knowledge of female mentorship throughout history and towards the future as she addresses the work that still needs to be done.

Scope and Content Note

Interview conducted by Sarah Dziedzic.

Biographical / Historical

Joan Ferrante received her B.A. from Barnard in 1958, her M.A. from Columbia in 1959, and her Ph.D. from Columbia in 1963. At Columbia since 1963, Professor Ferrante has also taught at Swarthmore, Fordham, Tulane. She has received fellowships from the American Council of Learned Societies and NEH and is a Fellow of the Medieval Academy of America. She has served on the boards of *Speculum*, *Lectura Dantis Americana*, and *Dante Studies*; has served on Executive Councils of the Medieval Academy and MLA, and as President of the Dante Society and the national Phi Beta Kappa Society, and as President of the Medieval Academy. Her field is medieval comparative literature, specializing in Dante, Provençal lyric, medieval allegory and romance, and women in the Middle Ages. She has published many articles and several books, including *To the Glory of Her Sex: Women's Roles in the Composition of Medieval Texts* (1997), *The Political Vision of the Divine Comedy* (1984), *The Lais of Marie de France*, a translation and commentary written with Robert Hanning (1978), *Woman as Image in Medieval Literature* (1975), *Guillaume d'Orange, Four Twelfth Century Epics* (1974), and *The Conflict of Love and Honor: The Medieval Tristan Legend* (1973). In 2015, she was working on a database on medieval women's letters, called *Epistolae*, which is available online through the Columbia Interactive.

Melissa Fisher, 2015 February 24

box 1

Scope and Content Note

Born in an academic family located on the Upper West Side, Fisher spent her early years around the campus of Columbia University, later moving to an affluent Westchester suburb. Fisher attributes early awareness of feminist concerns to her mother, grandmother, and grandfather. Fisher also recalls attending student protests with her father in 1968. Fisher then describes her experience as a Barnard College student in the 1980s and the benefits of

attending a women's college. Fisher describes her informal exposure to feminism at Barnard, tensions between Barnard and Columbia, and the early years of Columbia College as a co-ed institution. Fisher discusses her undergraduate internship at Performance Space 122 in the East Village, which became a major influence on her work. Having first attained her master's degree at Wesleyan University, Fisher decided to pursue a PhD in anthropology with an integration of women's studies and dance at Columbia. Fisher describes the early development of IRWGS under Martha Howell and the generational differences in IRWGS. Fisher cites professors Jean Howard and Elaine Combs-Schilling as sources of support and as female scholars who paved the way for future feminist scholarship at Columbia. Following a more general discussion of IRWGS, Fisher describes the development of her graduate research and how it evolved and transformed over time. Fisher describes her interest in issues of gender, work and inequality. She discusses women and finance at length, citing IRWGS training as a tool used to anticipate the advent of corporate feminism. The interview concludes with a discussion of Fisher's teaching experiences and a summation of her continued presence within IRWGS. Fisher describes her time teaching anthropology at Georgetown University and her position at the time of the interview at New York University's Department of Social and Cultural Analysis. Fisher remarks on her continued participation in IRWGS and the Center for the Study of Social Difference (CSSD) through a group entitled "Social Rights After the Welfare State" with Alice Kessler-Harris.

Scope and Content Note

Interview conducted by Mary T. Freeman.

Biographical / Historical

Melissa Fisher is a Visiting Assistant Professor in the Department of Social and Cultural Analysis at New York University. Her book, *Wall Street Women* takes a groundbreaking in-depth look at the first generation of women who began working in Wall Street finance in the late 1960s. Fisher traces their careers and their professional and political associations as they took leading positions in their companies in the 1990s and looks at how their late careers and retirement activities were affected by the 2008 financial collapse. Fisher argues that these women produced a "market feminism" that shaped their success in financial careers as well as their broader political and economic outlooks. Her current research takes a global and urban approach to examining the rise of the "shared economy" after the 2008 financial crisis.

Fisher received her BA from Barnard College in 1985, and she went on to study anthropology at Columbia University, receiving her PhD in 2003. She first came to Columbia as a graduate student in 1989, and she was involved with IRWAG throughout her graduate studies in the 1990s. Fisher's first job was in the anthropology department at Georgetown University, and she now teaches at NYU. She is also a visiting fellow at the Center for the Study of Social Difference at Columbia, where she has been involved with the Women Creating Change project in the "Social Rights after the Welfare State" group led by Alice Kessler-Harris.

Eric Foner, 2015 March 23

box 1

Scope and Content Note

In this interview, Eric Foner describes his experience at Columbia University, first as a student and later as a faculty member. He begins with a description of Columbia at the time of his undergraduate and graduate years, from 1959 to 1969. Foner discusses the state of the history department during this period. After his return to Columbia in 1982, Foner describes the arrival of Professor Elizabeth Blackmar, the first female history professor at Columbia. Foner recalls early conversations with Blackmar regarding the integration of women's studies into the history curriculum and names Blackmar as the crucial connection between history and IRWGS. Foner locates these goals within a larger shift at Columbia, citing the inclusion of female undergraduates in 1983. Foner continues to see institutes such as IRWGS, the Center for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, and the Institute for Research in African-American Studies as crucial agents in diversifying Columbia's intellectual community.

Scope and Content Note

Foner continues with a recollection of his personal involvement with IRWGS, including his position on a search committee for IRWGS' first director. As the only man on the committee, Foner recalls this unique opportunity as illuminating of the systemic inequalities faced by women at Columbia. Foner concludes this interview with a discussion of the continued relevance of faculty organizing for social change. Foner describes the crises of the 1990s—including labor disputes, the Iraq war, and the controversiality of Middle Eastern and ethnic studies—as inspiration for the formation of Q Fac. Originally created by Victoria De Grazia and Rosalind Morris, Q Fac was composed of 150 liberal faculty members devoted to addressing current events both on and off

campus. Foner concludes this discussion by urging tenured professors to exercise their freedom of speech.

Scope and Content Note

Interview conducted by Mary T. Freeman.

Biographical / Historical

Eric Foner is the DeWitt Clinton Professor of History at Columbia University. He received his BA from Columbia College in 1963, and he went on to study United States history at Columbia, receiving his PhD in 1969 under Richard Hofstadter. He taught at Columbia for a few years after receiving his PhD and then went on to work as a professor in the department of history at City College and the Graduate Center at the City University of New York from 1973 to 1982. In 1982, Foner returned to teach in the Columbia history department, and he received the DeWitt Clinton professorship in 1988.

Foner's work has focused on the political and social history of the nineteenth century, particularly the Civil War and Reconstruction era and topics associated with slavery and race in the politics of this time period. Some of his most well-known books include *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party Before the Civil War* (1970), *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877* (1988), and *The Fiery Trial: Abraham Lincoln and American Slavery* (2010), which won the Pulitzer Prize for History. Foner is also the author of a popular U.S. history textbook, *Give Me Liberty: An American History*. In early 2015, *Gateway to Freedom: The Hidden History of the Underground Railroad* was released.

Foner was a major force behind the hiring of women and African American faculty members in the 1980s, and he drove the shift in the department to account for themes of gender, race, and class in scholarship and curricula. He was involved in the early development of IRWAG, serving on the search committee that resulted in the hiring of Martha Howell in 1989, and he has remained peripherally engaged as a supporter of the Institute since its creation. In addition, Foner was also fundamentally engaged with the creation of the Institute for Research in African American Studies at Columbia, and he is widely known as a supporter of progressive causes on campus.

Scope and Content Note

In this interview, Farah Griffin begins by discussing her early life in South Philadelphia, her love of reading, her relationship with her father and how he was impacted by racial prejudice, the demographics of her neighborhood, and her personal study of women's history and black history. She talks about her early education at an integrated Philadelphia magnet school and the Baldwin School. She goes on to address the origins of her admiration for Toni Morrison, her decision to attend Harvard University as an undergraduate, and her mentors at Harvard: Nathan Huggins and Werner Sollors. Griffin talks about her intellectual interests, including Black feminism, Black feminist literary studies, jazz studies, gender and sexuality, and literature. Griffin discusses her PhD program in American Studies at Yale and cites the classes and professors that influenced her. She briefly addresses her time at the University of Pennsylvania and her own activist work. She characterizes the climate of the English department when she arrived at Columbia and how she was immediately embraced by IRWGS and by the Institute for Research in African-American Studies (IRAAS). Griffin talks about her mentorship with Jean Howard and her involvement in diversity initiatives. She discusses her book *Harlem Nocturne*, novelist Ann Petry, and her work spreading black women's intellectual history. Griffin concludes the interview by reflecting on how the student body has changed during her time at Columbia. She specifically addresses generational differences between herself and her students, especially regarding the election of President Barack Obama, the backlash after his election, the shooting of Trayvon Martin, the protests in Ferguson, Missouri, the Black Lives Matter movement, and anti-sexual violence activism on campus.

Scope and Content Note

Interview conducted by Mary T. Freeman.

Biographical / Historical

Farah Griffin received her B.A. from Harvard in 1985 and Ph.D. from Yale in 1992. Professor Griffin's major fields of interest are American and African American literature, music, history and politics. The recipient of numerous honors and awards for her teaching and scholarship, in 2006-2007 Professor Griffin was a fellow at the New York Public Library Cullman Center for Scholars and Writers. She is the author of *Who Set You Flowin': The African American Migration Narrative* (Oxford, 1995), *If You Can't Be Free, Be a Mystery: In Search of Billie Holiday* (Free Press, 2001) and *Clawing At the Limits of Cool: Miles Davis*,

John Coltrane, and the Greatest Jazz Collaboration Ever (Thomas Dunne, 2008). She is also the editor of *Beloved Sisters and Loving Friends: Letters from Addie Brown and Rebecca Primus* (Knopf, 1999) co-editor, with Cheryl Fish, of *Stranger in the Village: Two Centuries of African American Travel Writing* (Beacon, 1998) and co-editor with Brent Edwards and Robert O'Meally of *Uptown Conversations: The New Jazz Studies* (Columbia University Press, 2004).

Hilary Hallett, 2014 October 6

box 2

Scope and Content Note

Hallett begins this interview by discussing her background in film production and history, citing David Nasaw as her mentor at CUNY. Having worked as a film producer and editor, Nasaw encouraged Hallett to explore the role of women in early Hollywood, a theme running throughout her scholarship. Hallett characterizes her position as a cultural historian within the Columbia University History department, and the ways in which she incorporates feminism into the classroom. She describes her favorite course to teach: Gender History and American Film.

Scope and Content Note

Hallett also discusses the position of IRWGS at Columbia and the challenges faced by the organization. Hallett addresses the impact of Alondra Nelson's and Alice-Kessler Harris' retirements. She characterizes IRWGS as a congenial intellectual environment and describes its dependence on the existence of strong female leaders. Hallett goes on to question the idea that all academics should be activists, citing the Feminist to the Core lecture series as a way for IRWGS to provoke a meaningful conversation within the academy.

Scope and Content Note

Interview conducted by Nick Juravich.

Biographical / Historical

Hilary A. Hallett received her B.F.A from the Tisch School of the Arts at NYU in 1990, and worked in film and theater before returning to the CUNY Graduate Center for her Ph.D., which she received in 2005. She specializes in nineteenth and twentieth century cultural history, both in the U.S. and in transatlantic perspective. Her research interests focus on the history of popular culture, comparative feminisms, and gender and sexuality. Her first book, *Go West Young Women! The Rise of Early Hollywood*, was published

by the University of California Press in 2013. *Go West!* demonstrates how the transformation of the American film industry into Hollywood influenced the development of Los Angeles and broader ideas about women and sexual modernism. Her current project in 2015, *The Syren Within: Elinor Glyn and the Invention of Glamour* (under contract with Liveright-Norton), explores the transatlantic networks that supported the success of the English author, Elinor Glyn (1864 – 1943). With the publication of *Three Weeks* (1907), Glyn helped to invent the most commercially successful, and critically reviled, genre of twentieth-century English fiction: romance novels with an explicit erotic edge. Glyn's success as a writer and celebrity author brought her to Hollywood as an "Eminent Author," where she became one of the industry's most influential personalities during the 1920s. In addition to serving on the IRWGS Executive Board, Hallett is a member of the Undergraduate Education Committee (UNDED) for the Department of History.

Robert Hanning, 2014 September 5

box 2

Scope and Content Note

Hanning begins this interview with a discussion of his early education at Brooklyn Technical High School and subsequent undergraduate and graduate studies. At age 16, Hanning enrolled in the Columbia University undergraduate class of 1958. Hanning reflects on his perceptions of the Core Curriculum and impressions of Lionel Trilling. After continuing his studies at the University of Oxford and then Columbia, Hanning joined Columbia's faculty and became a tenured professor in 1969. Hanning describes his wife's experiences in academia in contrast with his own; She was denied a fellowship at Yale University while Hanning had no female colleagues. He characterizes this as a catalyst for his political engagement while at Columbia. He describes his involvement with the Civil Rights Movement and the women's movement of the 1960s and 1970s. Hanning also describes two courses, taught in collaboration with David Rosand, which came out of this era.

Scope and Content Note

Hanning addresses the gender inequity of faculty pay, and his decision to publicize his salary in order to demonstrate this. He explains the subsequent formation of the Ad Hoc Committee on Women, including the group's primary objectives and his work with Joan Ferrante, Linda Bergley, Betty Jemmott, and Austin Flint. Finally, Hanning cites the controversy surrounding Carolyn Heilbrun's and Susan Winnetts' departures from Columbia. Hanning concludes his

recollections by describing his guilt over having complicity in and benefitting from the "old boys' club" in place, and how this contributed to his subsequent mobilization around inequality in academia.

Scope and Content Note

Interview conducted by Sarah Dziedzic.

Biographical / Historical

Robert Hanning grew up in Brooklyn and attended Columbia College (class of 1958), where his interest in medieval literature developed. He completed graduate studies in English at Columbia and Oxford and he began teaching at Columbia in 1963 and remained at Columbia for his entire career as a professor of Medieval Studies, eventually including classes on the construction of race and ethnicity. Since the late 1960s, he was actively involved, along with Joan Ferrante, in advocating for the rights of women on campus. He played a crucial role in drawing attention to salary inequity in the early 1970s by publicly revealing his salary, providing data for women on campus advocating for fair pay. He was also part of the Ad Hoc Committee on Women in the early 1980s, helping formalize issues that were raised during open sessions into more structured forums. As faculty in the Department of English and Comparative Literature, Hanning was an ally of women and supported the pursuit of feminist scholarship. Hanning retired in 2006.

Marianne Hirsch, 2015 April 28, 2015 March 31

box 2

Scope and Content Note

In the first session of this interview, Hirsch discusses her undergraduate experience at Brown University, including her involvement in anti-war demonstrations, her female professors, and her senior thesis. Hirsch joined a consciousness-raising group consisting of female graduate students and professors' wives in 1970. She explains how this exposure to feminism became a crucial element of her professional and personal development as a graduate student at Dartmouth College. Hirsch explains her role in helping to establish a women's program of mentoring and public speaking programs at Dartmouth in 1978, the first of such at any Ivy League institution. Building coalitions with the Brown Center for Research on Women and the Radcliffe (now Bunting) Institute at Harvard, Hirsch cites the importance of conversation and conflict in forming stronger alliances, especially in the 1980s, when categories of womanhood and white feminism were being called into question. Hirsch goes on to describe her familial background. Hirsch

characterizes feminism as a source of strength as a single mother and scholar. Lastly, Hirsch touches on her first marriage, her brief time teaching at Vanderbilt University, and her partner Leo Spitzer.

Scope and Content Note

In the second session of this interview, Hirsch recalls her early years at Columbia University, her introduction to IRWGS, and the creation of the Center for the Study of Social Difference (CSSD). She speaks of the challenges facing IRWGS and the importance of the broader New York City community in serving as a resource for IRWGS. Hirsch reflects on her first experience teaching at IRWGS as well as the institute's increasing orientation towards queer scholarship and global perspectives. She goes on to describe her experience within Engendering the Archive and Women Mobilizing Memory, two working groups of the CSSD. Hirsch summarizes her latest efforts to support IRWGS, including an initiative for graduate fellows, higher adjunct professor pay, and increased infrastructure for abroad programs. Hirsch concludes the interview by describing her concern and excitement regarding Columbia's Global Centers.

Scope and Content Note

Interview conducted by Andrea Crow.

Biographical / Historical

Marianne Hirsch is a professor of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University. She is one of several professors who were hired in the early 2000s with a joint appointment in the Institute for Research on Women, Gender, and Sexuality. Her work focuses on feminist theory and memory studies. Before coming to Columbia in 2004, she taught at Dartmouth College from 1974 to 2003. She did her undergraduate studies at Brown and began graduate studies there in 1970. She served as director of IRWGS from 2007-2008 and is one of the founders of the CSSD, including its global initiative "Women Creating Change," under the auspices of which she is currently co-directing the working group "Women Mobilizing Memory."

Jean Howard, 2014 July 17

box 2

Scope and Content Note

Jean Howard begins this five session interview by discussing her childhood on a farm in northern Maine. Howard recalls her early years as an avid reader, the innate feminism in her family, and her decision to attend Brown University as an undergraduate. Howard

talks about her mentor at Brown, Barbara Lewalski, and her time as a Marshall Scholar in London. Howard explains how these years inspired her pursuit of an intellectual study of the theater, and how Lewalski inspired a trend of female mentorship in Howard's life. Howard discusses her experience as a graduate student at Yale University, her years working at Syracuse University, her fight for maternity leave at Syracuse, and how she became a more politicized scholar. Howard then describes her transition to Columbia University and the climate of the English department when she arrived in 1987, including Carolyn Heilbrun's resignation shortly after. She also discusses the experience of female faculty members within the department and the English department's time on receivership. She touches on her position as Columbia's first Vice Provost for Diversity. Howard explains her year away from Columbia and why she returned. She goes on to talk about the creation of the Center for the Study of Social Difference and her students. Howard then discusses the establishment of IRWGS and the role it played in her scholarship. She talks about the formative decisions in the early days of IRWGS. She describes the early curriculum of IRWGS, its relationship to Barnard College, and the courses she co-taught with Martha Howell. She elaborates on the early goals of IRWGS, including an aversion to white feminism and an inclusion of queer studies. She further discusses the intersection between Marxism and feminism, the hiring process of IRWGS, the pursuit of global feminism, IRWGS as both an intellectual and social space, and the plurality of feminisms. She also touches on the origins and influences of her pedagogical style, sexual assault on campus, solidarity with and involvement in campus activism, the Pembroke Center at Brown, the university administration, and New York City.

Scope and Content Note

Howard goes on to explain how she was drawn to study the early modern Renaissance period and the theatre. She talks at length about her books *The Stage and Social Struggle in Early Modern England*, *Engendering a Nation*, and *Theater of a City*. She discusses women's representation and presentation in the theatre, as well as analyzing Shakespeare with both Marxist and feminist lenses. Howard addresses her analyses of early modern Renaissance theatre and speaks about her admiration for Tony Kushner, Caryl Churchill, and other contemporary playwrights.

Scope and Content Note

Interview conducted by Mary Marshall Clark.

Conditions Governing Access:

Conditions Governing Access

Certain pages of transcript closed until 2030-01-01.
Transcript in Box 2 has been redacted by Columbia
Center for Oral History Research.

Biographical / Historical

Jean Howard received her B.A. from Brown in 1970, M.Phil. from University of London (Marshall Fellow 1972), and Ph.D. from Yale (Danforth Fellow 1975). Professor Howard began teaching at Syracuse in 1975, where she received the first University-wide Wasserstrom Prize for excellence as teacher and mentor of graduate students; she has also received Guggenheim, NEH, Mellon, Folger, Huntington, and Newberry Library Fellowships. In 2010 she gave the Columbia University Schoff Memorial Lectures on "Staging History: Imagining the Nation" on playwrights William Shakespeare, Tony Kushner, and Caryl Churchill. Her teaching interests include Shakespeare, Tudor and Stuart drama, Early Modern poetry, modern drama, feminist and Marxist theory, and the history of feminism. Howard is on the editorial board of Shakespeare Studies and Renaissance Drama. She has published essays on Shakespeare, Pope, Ford, Heywood, Dekker, Marston, and Jonson, as well as on aspects of contemporary critical theory including new historicism, Marxism, and issues in feminism. Her books include *Shakespeare's Art of Orchestration* (1984); *Shakespeare Reproduced: The Text in History and Ideology*, edited with Marion O'Connor (1987); *The Stage and Struggle in Early Modern England* (1994); with Phyllis Rackin, *Engendering a Nation: A Feminist Account of Shakespeare's English Histories* (1997); *Marxist Shakespeares*, edited with Scott Shershow (2000); and four generically organized *Companions to Shakespeare*, edited with Richard Dutton (2001). She is a co-editor of *The Norton Shakespeare* and edition, (2007) and General Editor of the *Bedford Contextual Editions of Shakespeare*. A recent book, *Theater of a City: The Places of London Comedy 1598-1642* (University of Pennsylvania Press, (2007), won the Barnard Hewitt award for Outstanding Theater History for 2008. She published, with Crystal Bartolovich, a monograph on Shakespeare and Marx in the *Great Shakespeareans* series for Continuum Press (2012) and in 2015 was completing a book entitled *Staging History* that uses Shakespeare's history plays as a starting point for considering Tony Kushner and Caryl Churchill's use of history in framing debates about current political issues. A book on early modern tragedy is in the works. From 1996 to 1999 Professor Howard directed the Institute for Research on Women and Gender at Columbia; in 1999-2000 she was President of the Shakespeare Association of America; from

2004-2007 she served as Columbia's first Vice Provost for Diversity Initiatives; and from 2008-2011 she was Chair of the Department of English and Comparative Literature. Currently, as a Trustee Emerita of Brown University, she chairs the Brown University President's Diversity Advisory Council and serves on the Advisory Board of the Pembroke Center. She is also a Senator of Phi Beta Kappa.

Martha Howell, 2014 January 22, January 23, January 29

box 2

Scope and Content Note

In the first session of this interview, Howell discusses her years as an undergraduate student at Georgetown University; her time working in Germany as a research assistant, au pair, and translator; and her decision to pursue graduate studies at Columbia University. Howell describes her early involvement in the women's movement, volunteering for *Ms.* magazine, and joining consciousness-raising groups, before moving into a discussion of her graduate studies. As the first female PhD student in European Women's History at the Columbia history department, Howell describes the limited resources available to her at the time. Howell cites the Annales School as a source of inspiration, and describes her involvement in an informal reading group of the Core Curriculum literature, which became a locus for female graduate students.

Scope and Content Note

Howell goes on to discuss her experience teaching at Rutgers, during which time she developed an overtly feminist political stance. Howell describes the support she received from the community within the Rutgers Institute for Research on Women through the birth of her child and advancement of her career. Howell describes her decision to leave Rutgers and join the faculty at Columbia. She discusses her involvement with IRWGS and her changing roles over time. Howell also characterizes the relationship between Barnard's women's studies department and IRWGS. Howell continues with a description of IRWGS's institutional footing, and the subsequent integration of race and sexuality studies. Howell describes the challenges IRWGS faced as it evolved to include race as an integral category of analysis. Howell briefly describes her reforms within the history department during her time as chair of the department.

Scope and Content Note

Howell's final session focuses predominantly on the political implications of IRWGS, the rise of interdisciplinarity, and the future of feminism

at Columbia. Howell also describes generational responses to 9/11 and the work of Lila Abu-Lughod as arising from similar tensions and political diversity within the Institute. Howell cites the challenges she faced teaching at Columbia, including the political impasses and the limitations of the Core curriculum. Howell then moves on to a larger framing of her work as a feminist historian, addressing history as an empirical discipline through which theory is constructed and gains significance. Howell concludes this interview with a description of her vision for IRWGS moving forward.

Scope and Content Note

Interview conducted by Sarah Dzedzic.

Biographical / Historical

Martha Howell, Miriam Champion Professor of History, specializes in social, economic, legal, and women's history in northern Europe during the late medieval and early modern centuries, concentrating on the Burgundian Netherlands, northern France, and Germany. She received her bachelor's degree from Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., and both her M.A. and Ph.D. from Columbia. Before joining the Columbia faculty in 1989, she taught at Rutgers University in their Women and Gender program, and from 1989 to 1995 she served as Director of the University's Institute for Research on Women and Gender.

Alice Kessler-Harris, 2014 December 18

box 2

Scope and Content Note

Across this four-session interview, Alice Kessler-Harris discusses her research and early career which emerged from the women's movement of the 1970s. Kessler-Harris discusses her role as a lead witness in the 1986 case brought against Sears, Roebuck and Company for gender discrimination, and her related 1990 publication *A Woman's Wage*. Kessler-Harris talks about the beginnings of her academic career, including her experiences teaching at Rutgers University, Sarah Lawrence College, and Hofstra University. She also discusses the guidance she received from Rutgers historian Warren Sussman and her work with District 65 of the United Automobile Workers union before accepting a position at Columbia University. Kessler-Harris discusses the introduction of gender as a category of analysis in the 1990s and, upon her arrival at Columbia, the transition within the women's studies department from activist scholarship to public intellectualism, and the increasingly post-structural, theoretical direction of women's studies. Additionally,

Kessler-Harris describes what she sees as a decline in student activism while also acknowledging the role of students in helping her create safe spaces for transgender students. Furthermore, Kessler-Harris discusses her program "Social Justice After the Welfare State" at the Center for the Study of Social Difference, and the role of intersectionality in the future of IRWGS.

Scope and Content Note

Interview conducted by Nick Juravich.

Biographical / Historical

Alice Kessler-Harris is the R. Gordon Hoxie Professor of American History. She is also Professor in the Institute for Research on Women and Gender. Dr. Kessler-Harris specializes in the history of American labor and the comparative and interdisciplinary exploration of women and gender. She received her B. A. from Goucher College (1961) and her Ph.D. from Rutgers (1968). Her published works include: *In Pursuit of Equity: Women, Men and the Quest for Economic Citizenship in Twentieth Century America* (2001); *Out to Work: A History of Wage-Earning Women in the United States* (1982); *A Woman's Wage: Historical Meanings and Social Consequences* (1990); and *Women Have Always Worked: A Historical Overview* (1981). She is co-editor of *Protecting Women: Labor Legislation in Europe, Australia, and the United States, 1880-1920* (1995) and *U.S. History as Women's History* (1995). Some of Kessler-Harris' essays in women's labor history are collected in *Gendering Labor History* (2007). Her book *A Difficult Woman: The Challenging Life and Times of Lillian Hellman* was published in 2012. Kessler-Harris came to Columbia in 1999, and was the first person to be hired with a half-line in IRWGS.

Shamus Khan, 2015 May 11, 2015 May 20, 2015, May 11, 2015 May 20

box 2

Scope and Content Note

Shamus Khan begins this interview by describing his childhood and early academic achievements at St. Paul's School, Haverford College, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Khan recalls stories of his parents' immigration process and briefly reflects on how his undergraduate experience was impacted by his sexuality. Khan discusses the origins of his interest in racial inequality in the classroom and the apprehensive reactions of his colleagues at UW-Madison. After reading the work of Tamara R. Piety, Khan began examining his experience at St. Paul's School. Only a few chapters into his dissertation,

Khan joined the faculty of Columbia. He cites limited access to music, art, and a larger queer community as motivating factors for his move to New York. Khan discusses his first book, *The Production of Privilege*, and acknowledges the role of the 2008 Recession and the Occupy Wall Street movement in its success. Additionally, Khan acknowledges the role of his family's wealth in securing his ability to take academic risks, such as his focus on studying the wealthy. Khan goes on to describe his position as the Chair of the Sociology Climate Committee, which is devoted to issues of social difference in the classroom. In the second section of this interview, Khan discusses sexual assault on campus and the activism surrounding it. He talks about the relationships amongst the administration, the faculty, and student activists, especially those in the organization No Red Tape. Khan goes in depth with his discussion of campus politics and how to change the system. He explains the filing of the Title IX complaint against Columbia University and its repercussions; trigger warnings; and Emma Sulkowicz's *Mattress Performance (Carry That Weight)*. Khan also discusses the Sociology department's lack of response to the 2014 racial unrest in Ferguson, Missouri. Khan concludes the interview by discussing his involvement in IRWGS and SHIFT (Sexual Health Initiative to Foster Transformation).

Scope and Content Note

Interview conducted by Sarah Dziedzic.

Conditions Governing Use:

Conditions Governing Use

Columbia University may only use image, voice, and personal characteristics of Khan contained in the interview with expressed written consent of Khan.

Biographical / Historical

Shamus Khan is a professor in the Department of Sociology at Columbia University. His work is primarily within the areas of cultural sociology and stratification, with a strong focus on elites. He is the author of *Privilege: The Making of an Adolescent Elite at St. Paul's School* (Princeton 2011); *The Practice of Research* (Oxford 2013, with Dana Fisher), and as of 2015 is completing *Exceptional: The Astors, Elite New York, and the Story of American Inequality*. With Dorian Warren, he is the director of a Russell Sage Foundation working group on "The Political Influence of Economic Elites"; He also serves as the principal investigator on a Andrew W. Mellon Foundation project using the New York Philharmonic archives to uncover the character of their subscribers from the 1870s-present. He also writes about gender theory,

deliberative politics, and research methodology. He has served as an opinion columnist for *Time* magazine and continues to write about sociology in the popular press.

Gillian Lindt, 2014 December 19

box 2

Scope and Content Note

Lindt begins this interview with a discussion of her time as chair of the Columbia University Ad Hoc Committee on Women's Studies. Lindt describes the emerging questions concerning women in academia in the mid- to late-1980s at Columbia. Lindt talks about the formation of IRWGS, the procedural challenges facing the young institute, and the impact of IRWGS on Columbia's academic environment, including a new examination of the Core Curriculum. Lindt then moves into a discussion of the Breslow Committee, a panel created in 1980 to consider the implementation of co-education at Columbia. Lindt cites her experience on the Breslow Committee as one which further motivated her to advocate on behalf of women in the academy. Lindt describes the inequality evident in the classroom following the admission of women, and the silence of both Barnard and Columbia College students. Lindt discusses the dilemma of teaching versus research experienced by faculty. She also discusses issues of sexual assault at Columbia and the ways that women's studies addresses sexual violence and harassment.

Scope and Content Note

Interview conducted by Mary T. Freeman.

Biographical / Historical

Gillian Lindt is a professor emeritus in the religion department at Columbia University. She taught at Columbia from 1973 until her retirement in 1998 due to macular degeneration and the onset of blindness. Lindt served as dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences from 1984 to 1989, during which time she chaired the Ad Hoc Committee on Women's Studies that recommended the formation of the Institute for Research on Women and Gender. Lindt also served as the dean of the School of General Studies at Columbia from 1994 to 1997, and returned to GSAS as the interim dean for a brief period in 2001. Lindt first came to Columbia as a graduate student in sociology in 1955. She earned her PhD at Columbia and won the Bancroft Dissertation Prize in 1965. After teaching at other universities including Rutgers and Howard, Lindt was recruited by the religion department at Columbia. In addition to her service as a dean, Lindt also served on the Breslow Committee

in 1980, a panel that considered the question of co-education at Columbia College. Lindt wrote a minority dissenting opinion to the committee's decision to implement co-education, arguing that the university should take time to assess and prepare for the impact of admitting women.

Ellen MacKay, 2014 December 30

box 2

Scope and Content Note

In this interview, Ellen MacKay discusses her early life including her high school studies, her undergraduate years at Barnard College, and her appreciation of the theater—all of which helped direct her course of study. MacKay details her most influential courses and instructors, including an undergraduate Feminist Text course with Ellen Chesler and a graduate course on early modern theater with Jean Howard, which led to her personal pursuit of a greater knowledge of history, literary criticism, and feminist theory. Jean Howard, along with Julie Crawford and Rachel Adams, became both a mentor and role model for MacKay and led her to pursue a graduate certificate at IRWGS. MacKay discusses the inspiration and guidance she received under these women and others. Additionally, MacKay addresses the influence IRWGS's Feminist Pedagogy workshop had on her career.

Scope and Content Note

MacKay goes on to discuss her experience pursuing tenure at the Indiana University and the challenges she faced doing so after the birth of her child. MacKay then addresses the divisions amongst scholars about childbirth, the barriers between faculty and administration, and the necessity of gender studies. MacKay also discusses the value of institutions like Barnard College and IRWGS, which place identity questions at the forefront and help frame cultural difference through their interdisciplinary nature.

Scope and Content Note

Interview conducted by Sarah Dziedzic.

Biographical / Historical

Ellen MacKay attended Barnard College and earned her PhD in 2003 from Columbia University from the Program in Theater within the English Department. She worked closely with Jean Howard, IRWAG Director 1997-1999, and also earned the Graduate Certificate from IRWAG in 1999. In 2014, she was a tenured professor in the English Department at Indiana University -Bloomington and Director of Graduate Studies. Her research and writing focuses on

early modern English drama and public culture and Western theatre and performance. Her dissertation at Columbia became her first book, *Persecution, Plague, and Fire: Fugitive Histories of the Stage in Early Modern England*, which examines historical disasters and catastrophes that afflicted the theater.

Sharon Marcus, 2015 January 29

box 2

Scope and Content Note

In this interview, Marcus discusses the relationship between IRWGS and Columbia University. She characterizes this relationship as mutually supportive by comparing the IRWGS curriculum to the Columbia Core curriculum. She also addresses how IRWGS provides a space for students and faculty to collaborate across departments and how the institute cooperates with other centers on campus to address issues of race, gender, ethnicity, and class. Marcus compares the state of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at Columbia to that of other institutions like Brown University, Johns Hopkins University, and the University of California, Berkeley. Marcus goes on to discuss the difference between institutes and departments and how it affects the operations of IRWGS. Additionally, by addressing problems of sexual assault on Columbia's campus, Marcus explains the nature of institutional change and examines the relationship between IRWGS and activism.

Scope and Content Note

Interview conducted by Andrea Crow.

Biographical / Historical

Sharon Marcus is a professor of 19th-century British and French literature in the Department of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University, where she has taught since 2003. She was the Director of Graduate Studies for IRWAG from 2005-2008 and served on the Institute's Executive Committee from 2004-2009. In 2014 she became Dean of the Humanities. Prior to coming to Columbia, she was a professor in the Berkeley English department from 1994-2003, where she served on the Women, Gender and Sexuality program and acted as the Director of the LGBT Studies minor program. She did her graduate work at Johns Hopkins University and her undergraduate work at Brown. Her research has focused on urbanism and architectural history, gender and sexuality, reading practices, and theatrical celebrity.

Christia Mercer, 2015 March 12, 2015 June 11

box 2

Scope and Content Note

In the first session of this interview, Christia Mercer discusses her PhD program at Princeton University and the campus's intellectual environment for women, many of whom experienced "imposter syndrome" at the time. After being hired by Columbia University, Mercer found a mentor outside of the Philosophy Department in Jean Howard and subsequently started teaching at IRWGS. She addresses her approach to teaching the IRWGS seminar *Feminist Texts I*. Mercer also returns to earlier memories to recall the culture growing up in Texas and the gender roles she observed there.

Scope and Content Note

In the second session of this interview, Mercer elaborates upon the challenges of pursuing tenure while raising her young children. Mercer explains that, after gaining tenure and finishing her first book *Leibniz's Metaphysics: Its Origins and Development*, she was able to develop her class Philosophy and Feminism, accept a short directorship at IRWGS, and chair the Literature Humanities part of the Columbia Core curriculum. During this time, Mercer helped further open IRWGS to queer studies and bring feminist perspectives to the Core curriculum. Mercer emphasizes the merits of Mary Wollstonecraft, Virginia Woolf, and Toni Morrison as well as Plato, Augustine, Virgil, and Dante and how all courses of learning can benefit by using gender as a tool of analysis. Mercer also addresses the experiences of feminist scholars on campus, the political inclinations of Columbia students, the influence of the IRWGS Feminist Interventions lecture series, her experiences teaching a Theorizing Activism course, and her time teaching incarcerated students through Columbia's Center for Justice. Mercer discusses ways to think about change and justice, especially with the election of Barack Obama, the cases of Trayvon Martin and Eric Garner, the unrest in Ferguson, Missouri, and the Black Lives Matter movement. Additionally, Mercer talks about the political engagement of IRWGS, particularly in relationship to sexual assault on campus, the Title IX complaints against Columbia, and the student activist group No Red Tape.

Scope and Content Note

Interview conducted by Sarah Dziedzic.

Biographical / Historical

Christia Mercer is the Gustave M. Berne Professor of Philosophy at Columbia University. Born and raised in Fort Worth, Texas, she studied art history

and then philosophy before receiving her Ph.D. in philosophy from Princeton University in 1989. She has been at Columbia University since 1991. Since publishing *Leibniz's Metaphysics: Its Origins and Development* in 2001, she has published papers on early modern Platonism and its centrality in early modern thought. Her most recent awards include: Sobern Fellowship, American Academy, Rome, Italy (2010); Senior Fellowship, Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel, Germany (2013); Resident Fellowship, American Academy in Rome, Rome, Italy (2013); and a Guggenheim Fellowship (2012-2013).

Maya Meredith, 2014 September 16, 2014 November 20

box 3

Scope and Content Note

Maya Meredith begins this interview by examining her personal history with feminism and her early exploration of it through blogs and publications like Jezebel. After arriving at Columbia University, Meredith began to take courses in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies (WGSS) and was persuaded to major in the discipline after Professor Hilary Hallet's course Gender History and American Film. Meredith discusses the role that reading the works of bell hooks, Simone de Beauvoir's *Second Sex*, and learning about the case of Sarah Baartman had on her education. Meredith addresses the common frustration with the lack of representation of both feminist texts and texts by people of color within the Columbia Core Curriculum. Meredith also explores the benefits and challenges of using blogs and social media to generate feminist discussion and debate. Further topics of discussion include: Meredith's role in the Philolexian Society; her experience with Q-House, a special interest community for queer students and allies; her relationship with campus activism; and Barnard College's relationship to the rest of the University. Meredith also addresses the personal and political history of her family, her reactions to the killings of Trayvon Martin and Michael Brown, and gender relations in her life.

Scope and Content Note

Interview conducted by Nick Juravich.

Biographical / Historical

Maya Meredith graduated from Columbia College in 2014 with a degree in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies (WGSS). She became interested in feminism and feminist writing through blogs and other new media in high school, and arrived at Columbia hoping to take courses in Women's Studies. She originally planned to major in English with a concentration

in WGSS, but found herself increasingly drawn to WGSS as a major because of its relevance to her daily life. She formally switched to a WGSS major with a concentration in English as a junior. As an African American woman, she was also drawn to coursework that investigated the intersection of racism and sexism. She wrote several papers that used feminist analysis to examine issues of contemporary relevance, including pop culture topics, and composed a senior essay that applied feminist analysis to the world of "foodie culture," of which she considers herself a part. While at Columbia, Maya was an avid participant in the Philolexian Society (a literary and debate society), and helped to lead significant shift in the leadership of that organization that incorporated many more women and queer people. As of 2014, she worked for a public relations firm in Chelsea.

Rosalind Morris, 2014 December 17, 2015 February 26

box 3

Scope and Content Note

Rosalind Morris begins this interview by discussing the status of the Department of Anthropology upon her arrival at Columbia University. She goes on to describe her interest in IRWGS's content and teaching style. Morris also discusses her role in the establishment of the IRWGS Feminist Interventions series. Additionally, Morris discusses the problems faced by IRWGS throughout her directorship including the crises of labor and energy, the institutional vulnerability of IRWGS' faculty, the ongoing debates about activism in the classroom, the relationship between institutional marginality and autonomy, and the Institute's relationship with Barnard College. Morris explains the evolution of IRWGS in its inclusion of queer studies, race studies, and third-wave feminism. She also focuses on the resurgence of misogyny and white supremacy in response to these ideas. Here she discusses 9/11, the war in Afghanistan, and sexual assault on college campuses, citing Emma Sulkowicz's *Mattress Performance (Carry That Weight)*.

Scope and Content Note

In the second session of this interview, Morris discusses her work in other mediums and disciplines, including: her poetry; her film *Brewsie and Willie*, an adaptation of Gertrude Stein's novella by the same name; and her work with poet Yvette Christiansë and composer Zaid Jabri on their opera, *Cities of Salt*, based on a series of novels by Abdul Rahman. Morris talks about the relationship of activism to art. She also addresses international feminism, touching on Margaret Mead and anthropological feminisms. Morris also addresses the legacy of Carolyn Heilbrun, the 25th year anniversary conference of Gayatri Spivak's

essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?", the financing of IRWGS, the creation of the Center for the Study of Social Difference, her involvement with the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society, the hiring and tenure process for women and minorities, and networking.

Scope and Content Note

Interview conducted by Sarah Dziedzic.

Biographical / Historical

Rosalind C. Morris is Professor of Anthropology at Columbia University. She was Director of IRWGS between 1999 and 2004, and Associate Director of the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society at Columbia between 2003 and 2009. A scholar of both mainland Southeast Asia and South Africa, she has published widely on topics concerning the politics of representation, mass media, the relationship between violence and value, gender and sexuality, and changing forms of modernity in the global South.

Greg Pflugfelder, 2014 December 10, 2015 January 29

box 3

Scope and Content Note

In the first session of this interview, Greg Pflugfelder explains how he was first inspired to study gender history through the instruction of Barbara Solomon during his undergraduate years at Harvard. He addresses his following years at Waseda University and Stanford University and the continuation of his research on gender history, including the publication of his first book *Politics and the Kitchen: A History of the Women's Suffrage Movement in Akita Prefecture*. Pflugfelder discusses how he began to research sexuality studies and what the intellectual environment was like for the study of queer history at that time. Pflugfelder describes his initial involvement with IRWGS after joining the East Asian Language and Cultures department at Columbia University in 1996, including his contribution of a focus on queer and sexuality studies to the Institute. In the second session of this interview, Pflugfelder explains his role in IRWGS's Executive Committee and his role as a male scholar within the Institute. He also explains how he, along with Lila Abu-Lughod, helped contribute to IRWGS's shift from a primarily Western perspective to a global one. Pflugfelder goes on to address the unique interdisciplinary space IRWGS is on Columbia's campus and its importance as both an intellectual and social community.

Scope and Content Note

Interview conducted by Nick Juravich.

Biographical / Historical

Greg Pflugfelder's work engages the construction of masculinities, the history of the body, and representations of monstrosity. He teaches courses on the cultural history of monsters, Japan's modern experience as seen through visual materials, and the longer historical trajectory of Japanese culture. His books include *JAPANimals: History and Culture in Japan's Animal Life*, coedited with Brett L. Walker (Michigan Monograph Series in Japanese Studies, 2005); *Cartographies of Desire: Male-Male Sexuality in Japanese Discourse, 1600–1950* (University of California Press, 1999); and *Politics and the Kitchen: A History of the Women's Suffrage Movement in Akita Prefecture* (in Japanese, Domesu, 1986). As of 2015, his latest writing project was "Growing Up with Godzilla: A Global History in Pictures." Pflugfelder received his BA from Harvard (1981), his MA from Waseda (1984), and his PhD from Stanford (1996). He began teaching at Columbia in 1996.

Victoria Rosner, 2015 January 23

box 3

Scope and Content Note

Victoria Rosner begins this interview by discussing her undergraduate years as a member of one of the first co-ed graduating classes at Columbia University. She addresses the underrepresentation of female professors and their experience both in the classroom and as employees of the University. As a graduate student of English Literature at Columbia she encountered more female professors and developed a close relationship with her advisor Carolyn Heilbrun, who resigned shortly after in response to the decision not to tenure Susan Winnett. Rosner addresses both the exciting and destabilizing nature of being a student at this time. Upon reading Nancy K. Miller's book *Getting Personal: Feminist Occasions and Other Autobiographical Acts*, Rosner developed a relationship with Miller as well as Columbia Professor Jean Howard. Rosner explains how these connections led her to adopt an interdisciplinary and feminist approach to her scholarship.

Scope and Content Note

Rosner discusses her time at Texas A and M University and her later return to Columbia University and transition into the administration. There, Rosner became involved with IRWGS after holding the conference "Writing a Feminist's Life: The Legacy of

Carolyn G. Heilbrun" and went on to participate in shaping IRWGS's curriculum. Rosner discusses the growing acceptance of feminist scholarship and the importance of maintaining IRWGS as a separate, but collaborative and interdisciplinary entity.

Scope and Content Note

Interview conducted by Mary T. Freeman.

Biographical / Historical

Victoria Rosner is a Senior Associate Dean at Columbia University's School of General Studies. She works with the Postbaccalaureate, pre-med program at GS and also works as an academic affairs coordinator. In addition to her administrative duties, Rosner also serves as an Adjunct Associate Professor of English and Comparative Literature, and she has taught courses in IRWGS. Rosner's research focuses on twentieth-century British literature, especially modernism, gender studies, and life writing. Her work has consistently had feminist and interdisciplinary aspects, with special attention to architecture, design, and material culture. Rosner's first book, *Modernism and the Architecture of Private Life*, won the Modernist Studies Association Book Prize. She also recently published an edited collection with Geraldine Pratt titled *The Global and the Intimate: Feminist Theory in Our Time* in 2012. Rosner first came to Columbia as an undergraduate, and she received her B.A. in Comparative Literature in 1990. She also earned her PhD in English Literature at Columbia in 1999. She then taught in the English department at Texas A and M University, where she received tenure. She returned to Columbia as a visiting professor in 2008, and went on to take the dean position in 2010.

Barbara Simon, 2014 January 21, 2015 March 11

box 3

Scope and Content Note

In the first session of this interview, Barbara Simon talks about her early involvement with the newly-established IRWGS upon her arrival at Columbia University in 1986. Simon talks at length about how IRWGS became a significant part of her scholarship at Columbia. At IRWGS, Simon says, she found scholars with similar ideas, gave a book talk after the publication of her first book *Never Married Women*, and participated in a grant-funded faculty seminar on intersectionality in feminism that continued to inform her work at the time of the interview. Simon also addresses the current state of IRWGS, applauding the institute for becoming more interdisciplinary and theoretically sophisticated, and for adding 'sexuality' to its name. Simon talks about the necessity of

studying both gender and sexuality. Simon discusses how she was drawn to the Columbia University School of Social Work (CSSW) and the challenges she has faced as a qualitative researcher, ethnographer, feminist scholar, activist, and an openly gay woman. Simon puts emphasis on the challenges which still remained at the time of the interview, including circumstances which make it very difficult for scholars to teach interdisciplinarily at centers like IRWGS. In the second session of this interview, Simon offers advice, imagines the possible future of IRWGS, and notes the continuing problems for feminism on Columbia's campus and elsewhere. Additionally, Simon addresses the administration's response to issues of sexual assault on campus and the relationship between IRWGS and Barnard College.

Scope and Content Note

Interview conducted by Nick Juravich.

Biographical / Historical

Barbara Levy Simon has been a full-time faculty member at Columbia since 1986, having taught previously at La Salle University in Philadelphia and the State University of New York at Stony Brook. At Columbia, she serves as liaison for students in the dual-degree master's program with Union Theological Seminary. Her teaching focuses on social work advocacy, community building, and the history and sociology of human service professions. In the doctoral program, she teaches a course on the transnational history of humanitarianism. Her research interests include the history of social work, social welfare, and human service and urban professions. She applies frameworks of analysis from women and gender studies to applied professional settings and postcolonial contexts of social work practice. In 1987, Simon published *Never Married Women* with Temple University Press; in 1994 she published *The Empowerment Tradition in American Social Work: A History* with Columbia University Press.

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 2015 February 18, 2015 May 19

box 3

Scope and Content Note

In this interview, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak discusses her decision to come teach at Columbia University, drawn by New York City, her friend and colleague Palestinian literary theoretician Edward Said, and IRWGS. Spivak shares the topics she explored at IRWGS—feminism and psychoanalysis, global feminism, feminism and de-colonization—and her role in the foundation of Columbia's Institute for

Comparative Literature and Society. Spivak discusses the nature of the discipline of comparative literature and its relationship to other departments. Spivak goes on to talk about gender studies and the climate for feminism at other institutions, including: the University of Pittsburgh, Emory University, University of Texas Austin, University of Iowa, and Cornell University. Spivak also discusses feminism in her childhood and her unconventional upbringing in India. Spivak addresses tokenism and the challenges of being a female professor of color. She also talks about her Rural Education Project, her activism, her mother's activism, and being inspired by Malcolm X.

Scope and Content Note

Spivak addresses her work with the writings of French philosopher Jacques Derrida, including a discussion of a seminar based on his work as well as the origins of her relationship with the work of Derrida and her undertaking of another translation at the time of the interview. This leads to a broader discussion of the current nature of translation, research, and higher learning. Spivak discusses the concepts of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary work in relationship to both individuals and institutions. Spivak speculates about the future directions of IRWGS, especially in relationship to its exploration of queer/LGBTQ studies, and IRWGS classes she would like to teach.

Scope and Content Note

Interview conducted by Kristin Murphy.

Biographical / Historical

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak is a University Professor at Columbia University, and a founding member of the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society. She received her B.A. in English (First Class Honors) from Presidency College, Calcutta, 1959 and her Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from Cornell University in 1967. Her areas of interest are 19th and 20th-century literature, politics of culture, feminism, Marx, Derrida, and globalization.

Vina Tran, 2014 November 19

box 3

Scope and Content Note

In this interview Vina Tran discusses her experience at IRWGS and the institute's relationship with other centers and departments. Tran addresses her personal intellectual development while at IRWGS by describing her dual role as a student and employee. Tran also discusses the ways in which IRWGS

responded to the shifting reliance on technology and the internet and her personal role in that transition.

Scope and Content Note

Tran talks about her desire to pursue more activist work and her subsequent move to Katherine Franke's Center for Gender and Sexuality Law. Tran then addresses the relationship between the Columbia Law School and IRWGS and the differences she noticed after having worked within both organizations. Tran returned to IRWGS in 2012 (drawn by the new initiative Women Creating Change through the Center for the Study of Social Difference) and explains how she played an active role in the collaborative budgeting process for the institute. In 2014, Tran followed Dean of Social Sciences Alondra Nelson to the Administrative Office of the Executive Vice President. She discusses how her work, even apart from IRWGS, continues to make sure that certain voices are heard.

Scope and Content Note

Interview conducted by Mary T. Freeman.

Biographical / Historical

Vina Tran worked as an administrator in IRWGS from 2005 though 2014. She has a BA in Journalism, with a minor in Women's Studies, from Penn State University and an MA from the University of Manchester, England in Gender, Sexuality, and Cultural Studies. Her MA research was on gender and film in Vietnam. She came to IRWAG as an administrative assistant after receiving her MA. She played an integral role in managing day-to-day logistics of the Institute, planning and advertising events, and increasing the web presence of IRWAG. In 2011, Vina moved to the Columbia Law School to work as the Assistant Director at the Center for Gender and Sexuality Law. She returned to IRWAG in the fall of 2012 to serve as the Finance Manager and CSSD Program Manager. Vina left IRWGS in the summer of 2014 after the director, Alondra Nelson, took on a new position as the Dean of Social Sciences. Vina followed Alondra, and as of 2015 works in the Administrative Office of the Executive Vice President.

Karen Van Dyck, 2015 February 11

box 3

Scope and Content Note

In this interview, Karen Van Dyck begins by discussing her early life and education. She particularly focuses on her first trip to Greece, which inspired her intellectual pursuit of modern Greek female

poets. In 1988, Van Dyck was recruited to begin a Modern Greek program at Columbia University and immediately became involved with IRWGS, both teaching and learning within the institute. She discusses the support network she found at IRWGS, particularly after the birth of her three children. All the while, Van Dyck explains, she was working to open up the Classics department to changes, including its collaboration with IRWGS. This was supported by the department chair Roger Bagnall but, Van Dyck notes, she was the Classics faculty member who was primarily relied upon to do this bridge work. Van Dyck discusses this experience and the nature of this work. Throughout the interview, Van Dyck discusses the differences in studying women and feminism at different institutions, particularly Columbia, Wesleyan, and Oxford. Additionally, Van Dyck ruminates over her generation's place, especially the place of female scholars, within larger institutional history and over the shifts and realignments of IRWGS in recent years. Van Dyck discusses the institute's growing emphasis on the social sciences. She discusses collaboration with the Institute as well as the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society.

Scope and Content Note

Interview conducted by Mary T. Freeman.

Biographical / Historical

Karen Van Dyck is the Kimon A. Doukas Professor of Hellenic Studies at Columbia University. Her work has consistently had a feminist angle, and she came to teach at Columbia during the first years of IRWAG's development. Her research involves Modern Greek and Greek Diaspora literature, poetry, gender studies, and translation studies. Her first book, *Kassandra and the Censors: Greek Poetry Since 1967* (1998) investigated the work of Greek women poets during and after the period of dictatorship from 1967-1974. She has also published several edited volumes and translations, and her current work investigates the role of multilingualism in Greek Diaspora literature. Van Dyck received her BA from Wesleyan College in 1980, after which she pursued an MA at Aristotle University in Greece in Modern Greek Literature. She received her DPhil from Oxford University in Medieval and Modern Languages in 1990. Van Dyck has served as the Director of Columbia's Program in Hellenic Studies from 1988 until the present. She has also served as a lecturer and affiliated faculty member for IRWGS since 1988, and for Columbia's Institute for Comparative Literature and Society (ICLS) since 2004.

Conditions Governing Access:

Conditions Governing Access

During her lifetime, interview is closed except with written permission of Priscilla Wald.

Biographical / Historical

Priscilla Wald obtained her PhD in English from Columbia in 1989 and returned to Columbia to teach in the early 1990s before coming up for tenure. Her early work dealt with narrative in literature and culture of the late-18th to mid-20th centuries and current work has expanded to include narratives of global health and challenges to the concept of the human being following the scientific and technological innovations in the wake of WWII. While not an active member of IRWAG during her time at Columbia, she was close with a number of its leaders and can provide an account of her time in the English department during one of its most contentious eras. Wald teaches at Duke University in English and Women's Studies.

Patricia Williams, 2015 March 3, 2015 February 10

box 3

Scope and Content Note

Patricia Williams begins this interview by discussing how she came to Columbia University in 1991, explaining how she both followed Martha Fineman, creator of the Feminism and Legal Theory Project, from the University of Wisconsin and was drawn to Columbia by IRWGS. Williams addresses her subsequent involvement with IRWGS and her shifting relationship between the Institute and the Columbia Law School. Williams describes how she entered into academia without any prior experience working in a law firm, how her commitment to writing defined her career despite her field (particularly in reference to the publication of her book *The Alchemy of Race and Rights*) and how she was the first and only black woman in nearly all of her workplaces. Furthermore, Williams discusses the changes in demographics of law school, both amongst students and the faculty. Williams analyzes IRWGS as an inclusive and interdisciplinary institute. Other topics that Williams addresses include: her early and continued devotion to writing; her time at Queens College, the Golden Gate University School of Law, and the School of Criticism and Theory at Dartmouth College; her mentorship with Derrick A. Bell, Jr.; political correctness; sexual assault on college campuses; and Emma Sulkowicz's *Mattress Performance (Carry That Weight)*.

Scope and Content Note

Interview conducted by Kristin L. Murphy.

Biographical / Historical

Patricia Williams received her B.A. from Wellesley in 1972 and J.D. from Harvard in 1975. She practiced as deputy city attorney at the Office of the Los Angeles City Attorney and as staff lawyer at the Western Center on Law and Poverty. Williams has served on the faculties of the University of Wisconsin School of Law, City University of New York Law School, and Golden Gate University School of Law. She came to Columbia in 1991. She was also a Fellow, at the School of Criticism and Theory, Dartmouth College, and at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences. Her publications have focused on the areas of race, gender, and law, and on other issues of legal theory and legal writing. Books include *The Alchemy of Race and Rights*; *The Rooster's Egg* and *Seeing a Color Blind Future: The Paradox of Race*. Williams has also served as a columnist for *The Nation*, been a MacArthur fellow, and served on the Board of Trustees at Wellesley College.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Additional Material	
Title/Description	Instances
IRWGS Institutional Timeline with Relevant University History, 2015	box 3
IRWGS Oral History Project Collection Overview, 2015	box 3
IRWGS Oral History Project Design, 2015	box 3
CCOH-R Research Materials on IRWGS, 1985-2014	box 4

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)