

CAROL CLOVER

Christina Maslach:

So when we start, I'd just like you to say your name and maybe a little bit of your background in terms of where you were born and grew up before you started getting into that academic trajectory.

Carol Clover:

Okay. My name is Carol Jeanne Clover, and I was born in July 1940 in Visalia, California. My father was a radio engineer from Los Angeles and in those years, he was working in radio stations in California. (During the war, that work related to civil defense.) The first place I really remember is Sacramento (where my two younger brothers were also born). As soon as the war was over in '45, we got out of there and moved up to rural Shasta County (lots of city people fled to the country after the war), where my mother's family lived. Cattle ranching country. So, I lived on a ranch from the end of the war until I left for San Francisco to go to college.

Christina Maslach:

I don't think anybody has talked about that, but yeah. Okay, that's great.

Carol Clover:

Some years ago I met an academic who had a very similar background and we bonded instantly. Neither of us could believe it—we were both so used to being singular in the academic world.

Christina Maslach:

Okay. So, you went to school there?

Carol Clover:

Yes. These were the glory years of California public education, even in elementary schools out in the sticks. I went to a one-room school for some years. We had a great teacher, Mrs. Steidley, who taught us all the basics. And the County provided various supplements. So, for example, the bookmobile would come once a week and we could check out books. A music teacher would come from the County Office and teach us singing and even the basics of reading music. And once a month or so, an instrument-mobile came! You could check out an instrument, any instrument you wanted. So, my

brothers and I checked out various horns, a flute, an oboe, and so on. That was California education in the 1940s and 1950s.

Christina Maslach:

In those days. Oh my gosh.

Carol Clover:

Yeah, pretty amazing. Governor Earl Warren. Anyway, I went from there to a smallish semi-rural high school (four years, 300 students) and it too was pretty great. It was brand new, so many of the teachers were fresh out of Berkeley or places like it—young, knowledgeable, idealistic, energetic, full of ideas. I could go on about a brilliant English teacher, our great biology field trips, and on and on. My last year up there was a bad financial time for my family because my father had switched jobs. So, I didn't go directly to college. I got a part-time job for a year as a secretary and salesclerk and I took a couple of courses at Shasta Junior College, which I really liked. And the following year I applied for and got a scholarship at San Francisco State University joint with the SF Conservatory of Music. Because music is what I always dreamed of doing. I'd grown up in a musical family, and we played/sang with other musical families. But it didn't work out. Three weeks into the semester, the freshman advisor called me in to discuss my plans—specifically, which line of study I wanted to pursue. Composition, I said (my lifelong dream was to be a composer), and he informed me that composition was for boys only, girls not allowed. My response was to be mortified at being such a hick that I didn't know this fact.

Christina Maslach:

Composing?

Carol Clover:

Composing. And I later found out that was true not just of the SF Conservatory, but of most music conservatories back then. So, I had the choice of performance or musicology, and I didn't want to do either of those. I resolved the situation by basically flunking out of everything, getting married and moving to Berkeley, where my husband had been accepted as a graduate student. After my daughter was born, I started taking classes again at Berkeley. I soon (in my junior year) had my second child. I got my B.A. in 1963 (when I was 23).

Christina Maslach:

So you were an alum at the event that you and I attended recently, as well as a distinguished Berkeley professor.

Carol Clover:

Yes, both. I got all three degrees here—the first as a wife and mother, the other two as a single mother. But here's a story about my undergraduate years. This goes back to early '63. I'd just had my second child and I was about to graduate from Cal. At that point, my idea was to get a PhD in Biology. Both my brothers had done biology and loved it, and as someone who grew up in semi-wilderness and who'd taken and done well in science courses, it seemed a natural path. Somebody advised me that before I applied to Biology, I should go over to the department and talk to them—bring myself to their attention. So, I made an appointment with either the chair or the graduate advisor (don't remember which), got spiffed up, and went to his office in LSB. There was a wait, but once I got in, I told the guy that I wanted to apply to graduate school in biology—how I'd gotten A's in all my science courses, had biologist brothers, etc. Without missing a beat, he said, Oh, you know, we think it's not fair to the taxpayers to train women in our graduate programs because it's a waste of state resources: women are just going to get married and have children. I remember that he spoke slowly and carefully to make sure I followed, which I did, with a sinking stomach. But when he got to his last line about women quitting to have children, I suddenly felt I'd been handed my trump card: "But I already have my children!" To which he said, without missing a beat and in an unforgettably righteous tone, "Oh. Well, then you should be home taking care of them!"

Christina Maslach:

Oh, oops—rather then, okay, I've done it. Been there, done that.

Carol Clover:

Yeah, talk about lose-lose. (A common view of female students at that time was, I think, neatly expressed in a little sign outside my Physics 10 TA's office: "You can lead an undergraduate to knowledge, but you can't make her think." ...Yes, "her."). Anyway, so I'm one of these women in my age bracket who are in the humanities sort of by default because there was (less) discrimination there. But if it's a default, I'll take it. I'm actually glad things turned out as they did; I adore my field, and it's given me an intellectually fascinating and academically gratifying career. Anyway. I didn't have my dissertation done when I started getting job offers, but back in those days that didn't matter as much as it would later.

Christina Maslach:

So you were in what department?

Carol Clover:

I was a medievalist specializing in early Northern Europe—so in the Scandinavian

Department, joint with Comparative Literature. I got job offers from Harvard first, then University of Washington and University of Texas—and even a Berkeley counteroffer at the last minute. All three of those public-university offers were at higher salaries than the Harvard one. But such was the power of “the big H.” I said yes to Harvard and went there and that was my first job. Wow—talk about culture shock. Harvard was good to me, but I have to tell you, I wasn’t on the east coast for more than about 15 minutes before I started thinking “gotta get back to Berkeley, gotta get back to Berkeley.” Yeah—the 60s, which were so amazing in every respect in Berkeley, had barely touched Boston in 1971. It seemed like another country and another century. A morass of ethnicity and social class. This neighborhood, that neighborhood. The Irish this, the Italians that. And the racism—it was completely open. There was that woman in South Boston— You remember her name? The one who fought busing and desegregation?

Christina Maslach:

Yeah. Louise or something. No?

Carol Clover:

Yes!! Louise Day Hicks! I mean, that was Boston then. I remember when I got back to Berkeley in the late 70s, I had a Boston friend out to visit. When I was showing her around and we walked past some tennis courts, she stopped in her tracks because it was the first time she’d ever seen black people playing tennis! Welcome to California. Very far from perfect on that point, but a heck of a lot better than what I saw on the east coast.

Christina Maslach:

This is interesting because I grew up in Berkeley because my dad was here in engineering and then I went to Radcliffe College, which was the co-ed part of Harvard at that point. But not completely co-ed.

Carol Clover:

What year was that?

Christina Maslach:

1963 to 1967. And I remember the culture shock of getting to Boston, Cambridge, that whole area. And what you said just brought back all these memories. I mean all the talk about social class—either I’d been an idiot in my younger life or never noticed anything about that. But the racism, and the religious intolerance, was huge.

Carol Clover:

It was unbelievable.

Christina Maslach:

Some of the classmates that I had at Radcliffe, in my dorm, came from the west coast. And essentially, we realized if we came from west of the Mississippi, we were coming from another world, and we were all kind of saying...what???!!

Carol Clover:

And did the professors too give you trouble about being from California? I sometimes thought it was almost harder to be a Californian at Harvard than to be a woman, to be honest.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah.

Carol Clover:

California. You're from California, where's your surfboard? You're from California, can you think?

Christina Maslach:

Yeah, yeah, yeah—you brought it all up! There was a New Yorker cartoon or cover of a New Yorker's view of the United States (not much beyond New York itself) so I had the same kind of experience. And it was eye-opening to think that I don't really know a lot about the rest of the country, of which I am a part. So, it was good in some way to learn about it, but it was a rude awakening.

Carol Clover:

Yes, I remember that map. And rude awakening...no kidding. And for my kids! I was living out in Belmont. Harvard colleagues had found me an apartment there. And for the kids to get to school and back turned out to be hellish because they had to go through different ethnic neighborhoods. My kids are half Jewish, and it turns out that wasn't a good combo for you to walk through the Irish neighborhood—not that great in the Italian one, either. So, my wonderful Italian-American neighbor, with whom I became friends, offered to walk my kids with her kids to school in the morning. And then, depending on who was where at what time, she would also go and pick up a kid or two or three or four and walk them home together. Learning to navigate Harvard was hard enough without also having to navigate the ethnic map of the suburbs. Not to speak of—I don't know if you ever dealt with it—navigating the corruption, dishonesty. You had to pay people off for all kinds of small things. Boston culture, as I figured out the hard way.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah, I know what you're saying. Oh wow.

Carol Clover:

But one was younger then and had more energy. In retrospect it seems almost unimaginable. I'm a single mother, with two kids who are finding their way; and I have one year to get my dissertation done while teaching a full load of brand-new courses (one of them over a hundred students) at one of the top universities in the country. One day I was driving down the turnpike from Belmont to Cambridge to get to my big 10 a.m. class and I had a blowout. I pulled over to the side and thought for a moment; then got out, took my bag of books and papers, locked the car (leaving it in neutral so it could be towed), went over to the side of the road, and thumbed a ride up to the Cambridge exit. Got out, ran across the bridge onto the campus directly into my classroom and taught—and then, as soon as I was finished with my lecture, went out and dealt with the car issue (which took forever and involved a couple of payoffs). Then caught a bus back to Belmont and made dinner. And that was life then.

Christina Maslach:

Wow. Okay. You persisted big time.

Carol Clover:

I had no choice. It wasn't persistence. It was no choice.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah. If you're going to keep going.

Carol Clover:

But I made it. And I finished my dissertation on time. Actually, the Harvard department itself was good to me. Oh, but here's another thing. This was the era that teaching evaluations came into being. I remember my first set from the big class. There were a few Cliffies in that class, but mostly it was Harvard guys. I was sick when I read my evaluations. They said things like "tits B," "bad shoes," and so on and on. I was really upset, so I found out what office handled the evaluations and went there and talked to the woman in charge. She said that this had also happened to the other female faculty (what few there were). Harvard was aware of the problem and was going to try to do something about it next year—so I shouldn't worry about it. I was reassured on that score, but still, it was mortifying. And the idea that my looks were the only thing they were paying attention to—you know?

Christina Maslach:

Yeah.

Carol Clover:

Don't wear green, it's not your color. Ever thought about dying your hair? (It was very gray even then.) Really like your blue skirt. And so on.

Christina Maslach:

Oh God. Oh my. So how long were you there then?

Carol Clover:

I was there '71- '77. I was undergoing a pre-tenure review when the Berkeley job came up. I was out of there. The Berkeley job was not tenured, but I didn't care.

Christina Maslach:

Did they put you up for tenure fairly soon or...?

Carol Clover:

Yes, the following year.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah. So there was no drama around your tenure?

Carol Clover:

Not that I was aware.

Christina Maslach:

It just was pretty straightforward.

Carol Clover:

It seemed so. As for Harvard, I will say that the people in my department there were quite decent. I never got treated badly by them, and I don't have any bad stories.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah. So, what was the department exactly?

Carol Clover:

It was Germanic Languages & Literatures, with a joint appointment with Comparative Literature. And I should also mention that, shortly after I arrived, simply because I was a known film buff (it was the 70s, and lots of us were), I got asked by the Carpenter Center to teach a course in film! This is pretty much before film had become an academic

subject. Sure, I said. So almost from day one at Harvard I was also teaching film on the side. And I continued with that for the rest of my career. People always ask how I can manage such opposite fields, Middle Ages and cinema, and I always say that they're not really opposites, but the same thing, sort of... (And I've written on this, too.)

Christina Maslach:

You've already mentioned one of the issues you faced, being a female professor at Harvard (the course evaluations), but were there any others?

Carol Clover:

Yes, here's a neat little story from my Harvard years. In 1973, a friend from Texas came for a visit. I offered to take her to the Harvard Faculty Club for lunch. Historically, the main dining room of that club was a men-only venue, and women, I think mostly faculty wives and the handful of female faculty there were, sat at tables in the back hallway off the main dining room. It was a spacious hallway, and pleasant enough, and men were sometimes there too, if they were with women. But no women in the main dining room, which was for professors only—of which there were just a few female ones at that time. My friend Louisa and I entered the front door of the Club and went over to where the receptionist stood. She was a fixture in the Club in that era—a very small, middle-aged woman. She picked up two menus and greeted us; I introduced Louisa, and we turned to the dining room. On a whim, as we headed toward the hallway, I quietly asked the receptionist whether there was any chance we could have lunch in the main dining room. "Of course," she said, almost without missing a beat, as though this were a normal request—or maybe even one she'd been waiting for. I'll never forget her posture: she held the menus in front of her chest, drew herself up to her full height of about five feet in a way that made it clear that she knew this was a special moment, and almost marched across the room right over to the table by the beautiful bay window—the best place in the room, which happened to be vacant. As usual, a number of the male professors in the room were sitting and talking at that nearby long table that seated at least a dozen—an old Harvard tradition. They turned and looked at us when we came in, some even craning to see the sight. We took our seats, the waiter came, we ordered (not horsemeat!), we ate, we had our coffee, and we left. We were aware of being observed, but no one objected or behaved badly. It was basically a non-event. But I'm pretty sure that, without forethought or fanfare, Louisa and I effectively integrated the Harvard Faculty Club dining room that day—thanks to the silently collusive receptionist, whose name I wish I remembered. Over the following months, women faculty started turning up in the main room, and before long it was ordinary.

Christina Maslach:

Wow, that is a fascinating story. Are there any other important things you want to share about your time at Harvard?

Carol Clover:

Actually, my most amazing experience in Boston happened in a prison—Walpole, a maximum-security prison some miles from Cambridge. A Harvard student of mine was doing volunteer work there, teaching an evening drama course once a week to interested inmates. The prison required a faculty advisor, so I agreed to do it. I'll never forget the first evening I went. It was clear that the prison personnel thought it was crazy for a woman do this, but I insisted. So, Artie (my student) and I went through the series of entry rooms/gates and came out into a real prison hallway—lots of inmates around to look us over. Then, as he and I and some guards started down the corridor, a smallish inmate came straight up to me and gently but creepily put his hands around my throat and said, "You know who I am?" The guards grabbed him and took him away. Turns out it was Albert DeSalvo — the Boston Strangler. Anyway, things calmed down after that, and I got involved in the drama project. Artie and I would go out there one evening a week to work on it. The prisoner-students were writing and performing their own play — a play about a prison in which the prisoners revolt and take over, so the guards become prisoners and the prisoners become guards. They even made a minor role for me: I played the wife of one of the prisoners (in real life an odd older man who was in for homicide: killing first his wife and then a cop). My wife-role had me coming to visit him in prison and our sort of embracing — seriously creepy, given the fate of his real wife. I should mention that all of this was happening in the prison auditorium, and that there were always guards looking on. Anyway, the play, once ready, was to be filmed and broadcast on the Boston television station WGBH. On dress-rehearsal night, the prison population was allowed in to watch — our first time with an audience, and it was a big one. It was clear from their reactions that they were really affected by the story. And when the scene came, in which the prisoners revolt, guess what: the auditorium full of inmates started jumping up and shouting — and the revolution began. Guards got us actors out in the nick of time, because within hours, Walpole went the way of Attica: the prisoners became guards and the guards, prisoners. It was seriously violent, and several were hurt. It made national news, and there are a couple of books about it. What seems to have been largely forgotten, though, is the trigger-role of our little play. Artie and I have long planned to write up the whole episode from our perspective (including mine as the only woman in a sea of male criminals, guards, and eventually police as well), but we haven't done it yet.

Christina Maslach:

Wow, what a story. But then you left Harvard to come to Berkeley, and you were in the Department of Scandinavian. So, I am wondering, how did your interest in Scandinavian come about?

Carol Clover:

As I said, back in the 60s, it was pretty clear that the humanities were my only choice. It was no tragedy. I'd loved the courses I had taken in early literature and more particularly western medieval epic. And I'd read Icelandic sagas and *really* loved those. So, I started pursuing that on my own, in the SF public library. Then I discovered that there was a Department of Scandinavian at Berkeley. This was in the early 60s. I went there to see if I could study Old Norse. (I also liked languages.) The professor said that course was for graduate students only, but if I'd take and do well in a modern language for a year, he'd waive the rule and let me into Old Norse. So that's what I did, starting with Swedish. When the Biology plan didn't work out, I put more of my energy into the language/literature/history line. And it paid my way. I got various scholarships. In graduate school, I qualified for National Defense Education Act (NDEA) grant to support the study of "strategic" languages (a Cold War idea). It was serious support—enough for the three of us to live on.

Christina Maslach:

Wow. I didn't know that.

Carol Clover:

In fact, I effectively took a pay cut when I took the Harvard job for \$8,500/year!

Christina Maslach:

Oh my God. Sounds like monopoly money is real. I hadn't realized that. Okay. So, then you're back in Berkeley. And you got tenure, and so then...

Carol Clover:

Well, the Scandinavian Department went into a troubled phase. One faculty member died; another got seriously ill; another grew increasingly difficult. It's one thing to have that in a large department—but not in one of the smallest departments on campus. We were not doing a great job at that point. And this at a moment when the campus was thinking of collapsing smaller departments, especially the language ones, into larger entities. To make a very long story short, after lots of time and energy spent fighting against that, we won! We got another two positions and we brought in great people and soon became one of the top Scandinavian programs in the world outside of Scandinavia. Our next campus review was also excellent. But for the period of two-

three years that we were on the chopping block, it was awful. And of course, being under threat didn't help our departmental spirit.

Christina Maslach:

The whole thing might blow up.

Carol Clover:

After it was over, a Dean who congratulated us on having survived said something like, "usually when we try to get rid of small departments, they bring in their alumni and their donors—but you guys, you brought in not only those, but kings and queens!"

Christina Maslach:

Oh my goodness. Yes. You'd have that royalty. In fact, princess Christina of Sweden, went to Radcliffe when I did and my family would tease me about Christina...

Carol Clover:

What year was that?

Christina Maslach:

I was there '63 to '67. So it would have been in that first year. Probably '63, '64 not for the whole time, I don't think. But there was sort of a special area where she got to live, and all that kind of thing. So our paths crossed occasionally.

Carol Clover:

Well, the present Crown Prince of Norway, Haakon, was a student here in Berkeley in the late 90s. While he was here, he took one of our courses on Ibsen! He and the professor, Mark Sandberg, got to know each other, and Mark has visited him at the Royal Palace in Norway (which he reports as quite a different dynamic from their Dwinelle Hall office hours!).

Christina Maslach:

Interesting. You had several departments though still, I'm just curious...

Carol Clover:

The main department for my medieval work was Scandinavian. The main department for film work was Comparative Literature because that's where Film Studies was at the time. Film then shifted to Rhetoric, and 50% of me with it. (It eventually became its own department, but that was later.)

At some point along the way I also got involved in the Academic Senate, serving on the Admissions Committee, DIVCO, Budget and Interdepartmental Relations (for four and a half years, one as chair), Committee on Committees, and Faculty Welfare.

Christina Maslach:

I remember that. I remember after Divisional Council was set up and you were on that as Budget Committee chair.

Carol Clover:

And then there was the Women's Studies stuff, which I got involved in much earlier, even as a graduate student—and then again when I got back to Berkeley from Harvard.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah, now that I think back on it, there were a number of us from different departments when it was all still an advisory kind of group.

Carol Clover:

People I particularly remember are Frances Ferguson, who remains a close friend, and Carolyn Porter, Geraldine Clifford, and June Jordan. I believe Carolyn was the one who convened our group. We met once a week at 8 a.m. for many months. Our initial concern was that the Women's Center, which had been established some years earlier, was in danger of being closed. And we used the threat against it as an opening to push for expanded resources. Rod Park, the Vice Chancellor, had been doing a budgetary review of units of all kinds, and publicly floated the idea of eliminating the Women's Center, saying that it didn't seem to have a clear mission or an obvious constituency. We began our campaign in a meeting with him, arguing that the problem with the Women's Center was not that it was failing but that the administration imagined that it ought to be filling more different missions than any other unit on campus. We needed the Women's Center for a variety of things (including self-defense classes taught by a fantastic woman named Lois, I think, who stressed a "strong but proportional" response to danger). But the Women's Center couldn't be expected to do academic research, and there needed to be an academic program rather than a series of one-off courses.

So, Park called the meeting to inform of us of the intended closure of the Women's Center. But we had our plan, and we swooped in with our account of the necessity of having three units—the Women's Center, a research center, and a free-standing program in Women's Studies that would be authorized to hire a full professor as director.

Park didn't have the authority to grant us the academic program or the hire. But he made it clear that he didn't oppose any of what we put forward. So we turned to Leonard Kuhi, then Provost of Letters and Sciences. He was very receptive to our plan and authorized the search for a director immediately. He also authorized a search in Women's Studies that involved five different departments, all of which were working to identify candidates to whom they would offer joint appointments. I can't recall exactly which departments were involved, but I think they were Sociology, History, Economics, Political Science, and English. More than 600 people applied for the position and coordinating the perspectives of the various departmental representatives on the committee made the search more than usually complex. The scale of the effort quickly became an advantage, however, because we identified a number of strong candidates who had significant support in the departments in which they would have their tenure lines. Mary Ryan of History was appointed as the first director, and Provost Kuhi quickly agreed to make two additional appointments out of that search: Kristin Luker and Nancy Chodorow, both in Sociology.

So, it was a three-pronged action. In addition to a properly supported Women's Center, an outreach operation, we asked for an academic program, Women's Studies, and a research group. And we got all three. I was appointed director of the third group, which we named the Beatrice Bain Research Group. I organized it, got the space and some financing, and launched it—brought the first scholars here, and so forth. It was really exhausting—but also gratifying.

Christina Maslach:

I developed a course, psychology of women. Later it was really a gender course, because it was not just women it was men and women. I think I taught some seminars, but then I had a course, and I would co-teach with Women's Studies and they would send over at least one GSI. And I loved teaching that course. I must say. That was really interesting because it spanned all of psychology but looking at all of these gender issues as we went through. And Carol Christ was part of that, Nancy Chodorow was there. We would have a retreat and we'd meet at somebody's house sometimes.

Carol Clover:

Yes, I knew about your courses. Did that take a lot of our lives, or what?! I mean, it was so exhausting. Arlie Hochschild, Susanna Barrows. Mike Rogin was involved, if you remember him from Political Science. There was a five-department search committee for the first Women's Studies hires, and he was on that committee. Frances Ferguson was the chair. Mike was on it, as were Arlie, Susanna, and a couple of others.

Christina Maslach:

It was in that order. Yeah, yeah. Oh my gosh. And first we had a designated emphasis before there was really a department.

Carol Clover:

But it very quickly turned into Gender Studies. And that's what happened to the Bain Research Group, too. It was conceived as being about women, but we'd barely got an institutional toehold when the pressure moved to gender. I was sympathetic – but I was also tired. And so, at that point, I sort of lost my strength.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah. Well, you'd contributed a lot at that point. I mean, you need to have a feeling there's other people coming behind you.

Carol Clover:

The problem was that as long as it was just women, there was a single aim; but as soon as it was women and gender, they were almost at war with each other, as you may remember. Or at least the woman-activists were taken to be the enemy of the gender-activists.

Christina Maslach:

Wow. I didn't remember as much of that.

Carol Clover:

It was playing out big-time in the Rhetoric Department, and I found it quite painful.

Christina Maslach:

Wow. Okay. Had Sue Ervin-Tripp left Rhetoric by the time you got there and come over to Psychology?

Carol Clover:

I think she may still have been on the faculty list, but she was long retired and no longer active in the department and hadn't been so for some time. But I met Sue much earlier—in the mid-sixties. She and my husband knew each other from the East coast.

Christina Maslach:

Oh really? Okay. So, you already had a connection?

Carol Clover:

When she came to Berkeley, we invited her to our house for dinner –1964 or thereabouts. She was really nice, and it was great for me, a graduate student, to meet not only a successful female professor, but one who was so nice and so interesting and so good looking!

Christina Maslach: Yeah, she and Dan Slobin always had this interesting joint story to tell about academic hires back in their day when they were up and coming, new PhDs, and basically, it was that the chair would pick up the phone and say, “so Harvard, who have you got?” So, it was interesting because they were saying, “Oh well, I’ve got someone named Dan Slobin,” but Berkeley already had Sue here on the campus. But her name never came up.

Carol Clover:

Yes, I remember the telephone hires! That’s how I got vetted and hired by Harvard—all by phone. I was interviewed by three men in the department. Some years later, one of them told me that after they’d offered me the job, and I’d accepted, they hung up and one of them said to the other two: “Well, now we’ll all be in clover!” But what happened with Sue?

Christina Maslach:

Years later, Sue eventually got her position transferred to Psychology, and she and I co-taught classes on the psychology of women. Sadly, she had been scheduled for an interview with me, and then she just died really suddenly. I would never have guessed when I got the news.

Carol Clover:

Oh, no—so you didn’t get an interview! I think I had seen her about two weeks earlier at a concert. She was absolutely amazing.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah. So anyway, we’ve got a lot of her documents, which I’ve transferred over to Cathy Gallagher and the *150 years of Women Project*. The archive, legacy, and so forth.

Carol Clover:

Good. I’ll be really interested to learn more about her history, making it, as she did, in a world in which women were so few and so far between—in a way almost before we had even achieved the status of a “minority”! ...That brings to mind a Harvard moment when I had a taste of that. It was at a big dinner even the president hosted at his mansion for

newly hired faculty (plus spouses) together with some older distinguished Harvard faculty (plus spouses). It was pleasant enough. And then, after dinner, it was announced that we were to separate into two groups: the faculty (all men but me), who were to gather in an adjacent room, a huge indoor porch, and have brandy and smoke cigars if they wanted; and the spouses (all women), who were to go into the living room. I went into a kind of panic: who was I? a faculty member, or a woman? I'll bet Sue had moments like that.

Christina Maslach:

So, what did you do?

Carol Clover:

I went with the wives. Seemed politically safer. Besides, I don't smoke cigars.

Christina Maslach:

Sounds like some *Upstairs, Downstairs* scene, or *Downton Abbey*, in England where the men and women separate after dinner. But getting back to Berkeley, what was your early experience as a faculty member – how did your workload compare with your male colleagues, and so forth?

Carol Clover:

Everything was fine and equal on that point for me, not a problem. No issues.

Christina Maslach:

That's good to know. What about in terms of graduate students?

Carol Clover:

Because my appointment was split between departments, I always had enough graduate students (it sometimes felt like more than enough!).

Christina Maslach:

So, were you able to just sort of pick and choose, whether different departments, as to how many or who you were taking on at any one time?

Carol Clover:

That never became an issue for me.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah. Because sometimes I have heard that when people have split appointments or half-time appointments or something like that, that it's never really half, or it's not really equally split.

Carol Clover:

For me the problem with a split appointment was the double service involved: twice as much graduate/undergraduate advising, twice as much departmental committee work, twice as many departmental meetings, etc. There are certain colleagues with split appointments who solve the double-service problem by establishing themselves as useless in both, but I didn't take that road.

Carol Clover:

Let me mention one last thing about the Budget Committee. The only time I felt that I was getting the woman treatment in some way was while I was chairing the Budget Committee. Things were fine on the BC itself, and in that office. But as Chair, I had to go to administrative meetings with the Chancellor, vice-chancellors, provosts, and the like—held in that big room attached to the Chancellor's office in California Hall, the one with the big table that people sit around. At that time, I was either the only woman in the room or maybe one of two. I was also often the only faculty member in the room; the others were mostly administrators and seemed to know each other pretty well. The discussions could be quite robust, with people usually sort of interrupting their way in. I wasn't very good at that, but when I succeeded, the room would go silent—like, uh oh, the woman is going to talk, what's the woman going to say. Talk about a situation designed to make you nervous. I really disliked those meetings for that reason. But otherwise, I had no complaints about the way I was treated, either by the administrators or by the Budget Committee itself.

I have some info on the history of women on the Budget Committee that you might be interested in. I asked Cam Rutter (who was the staffer in charge of the BIR) for the info, and she found it. (I tried to find her online the other day. There's not a trace of anyone named Cam Rutter... She was one of the sweetest, greatest people—a genius at running that office.) Anyway, she gave me this information: I was the sixth woman to serve on the Budget Committee and the fourth one to chair it. The previous female chairs were Elizabeth Colson, Louise Clubb, and Herma Hill Kay.

Christina Maslach:

And then you. Wow.

Carol Clover:

And then the doors started opening.

Christina Maslach:

There were a lot more. I know Meg Conkey said she chaired it, and I forget who else, but, yeah, that was interesting. At one point, I did a project with Sally Fairfax (when she was the Faculty Assistant on the Status of Women, and I was chairing SWEM), and we analyzed the data on which faculty were chosen to serve on the Budget Committee, over several decades. Overall, there were not many faculty who were women or ethnic minorities. But the big thing we found was the way certain departments always served and always had a seat on committees. This was going on sort of behind the scenes, not officially.

Carol Clover:

Yeah. One of the things that I have been disturbed by for decades is the fact that Academic Senate committees in general are way overpopulated by people from the professional schools and colleges, and way underpopulated by members of the College of Letters & Science. L&S is much larger — and where far and away most of the students are. So Academic Senate decisions about the campus are too often made by PS&C people who often really don't know what L&S is about. Of course, it's also the case that L&S people tend to demur when they're asked to serve on Senate committee because they're so damn busy with their teaching loads.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah. We could not get people from certain departments on committees. And I remember discovering that some very capable faculty would not be considered to be Chair of the Senate because they weren't a full professor because they hadn't written their second book. It was a book issue. I don't know if it's written in the rules, or it's just assumed that you have to be a full professor before you can chair the Senate and speak for or to all the faculty. And there were people who were forever associate professors, and it was in a lot of the humanities departments, certainly.

Carol Clover:

Yes, that's exactly right.

Christina Maslach:

By the way, apropos your point about PS&C, my father was an engineering professor on campus, and eventually he became the Dean of Engineering. At that time, it turned out engineering was pretty much off by itself and did its own thing and really didn't mix

with academics because they had the mining shaft there, they were doing other work. So, one of the things that my father put into place was the insistence that engineering faculty had to start serving on committees for the campus. Before that, they really weren't active in the Academic Senate and then they became more so. But I remember he said he took some grief for it, and always had to be saying, "come on, guys."

Carol Clover:

Well, I remember being told by a faculty member from the Business School that Haas encouraged their people to serve on Academic Senate committees. And during that era, it was hard to find an Academic Senate committee that didn't have a someone from Haas on it.

Carol Clover:

Actually, there's another story I want to tell, and I want it to be on the record somewhere.

Christina Maslach:

Okay.

Carol Clover:

This is in 1996. We're looking for a new chancellor, and I get put on the search committee, together with a friend of mine, Bill Oldham – I don't know if you knew him, in Electrical Engineering? Anyway, we had served on the Budget Committee together and we were both put on the Chancellor Search Committee. In those days, the faculty members of a search committee were expected to identify candidates. And so Bill and I were on this. And it was part of our job, as the two faculty members, to come up with names, and to present them to the systemwide committee, which included Regents. (I don't think it's done this way anymore; now the system is to hire headhunters to come up with candidates.)

So, the question back then was how you could get your preferred candidate in. One day Bill and I had been down at our long systemwide meeting, the first one, in which all the members had gathered, and the rules were set out, etc. etc. We were exhausted. We drove back to campus and Bill said, let's go have a drink in the Faculty Club and think about this. So, we went into the Faculty Club bar, which was totally empty except for one old guy sitting alone at a dimly lit small table up near the counter. We ordered our glasses of wine and sat down at a table over by the back windows and started talking. Bill was facing the bar, and at some point, he stopped talking and started staring at the old guy over at the other table. And then he said, almost whispering, "Isn't that Clark

Kerr?" I looked and agreed that it was. And Bill said, "Let's go over there and talk to him and tell him what we're doing and ask his advice!" He gets up, and I follow him over to the little table, where Bill introduced us and told him we were on the Chancellor's Search Committee and would like to talk to him. Kerr brightened up and invited us to sit. So, we did, and told him where the search stood so far, and asked whether he had any wisdom to share. Kerr said he could tell us what they used to do in the old days — "but that was then; you couldn't get away with it anymore." "No, tell us, tell us!" we said. "Well," Kerr said again, "you couldn't do this nowadays, but maybe it will give you an idea of how to think about it... You have to present the Regents with four candidates, right?" [Pause.] "So, the first name you give is that of the person you really want." [Pause.] "Second, you give the name of a woman." [Pause. Bill and I stiffen a little.] Third, a black. [Long pause.] Fourth, [really long pause] a sociologist." We exploded with laughter. So: the guy you really want, a woman, a black, and a sociologist. We took that to be an expression of Kerr's, and the Regents', annoyance at the sociology lefties during the radical sixties. It's a great joke. And it presumes that the guy you really want is of course a white male!

And sure enough, Bob Berdahl is the guy who got hired out of that search. We thought he was good and that he was doing a good job of running the campus. But unfortunate circumstances in his family life led him to resign in 2004 and move to Minneapolis.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah. I knew his daughter, Jennifer, for a while, who worked in the Business School. And we did some psychology research kind of thing together. And then there was Birgeneau, and then Dirks — and then, of course, Carol Christ, who came back from Smith in 2015 to settle in Berkeley as a retired person, only to be drafted back into administrative work here. And now as Chancellor starting in 2017.

Carol Clover:

I've known Carol since the mid-60s because we were in music groups together. Mainly a small singing group. So, we knew each other fairly well then. And I lived in her Spruce Street apartment in the summer of 1971, while she was back east, and I was gearing up to leave for Harvard.

Christina Maslach:

Oh, so you've got lots of ties way back?

Carol Clover:

Way back. But we also had a tense relationship in the late 80s, when she was Dean of

Humanities and got interested in the idea of folding together some of the smaller language departments. At which point she decided to chair the Scandinavian Department. The point of that seemed clear, both to us and to all the language departments. And sure enough, in time it was proposed that the department should cease to be an independent entity.

Christina Maslach:
Oh God.

Carol Clover:
It was a painful time for all of us. Needless to say, Carol and I fell out. But when it was all over and she came back to Berkeley, we became friends again. Until COVID came along, we were going to the theater pretty regularly together.

Christina Maslach:
Yes, you had mentioned one play...

Carol Clover:
Gatz. Which refers to F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, which the group of actors read aloud, word for word (including racist ones!) from beginning to end, acting it out as they read. It ran 6 hours, plus two intermissions and a 2-hour dinner break.

Christina Maslach:
Yeah, was it good?

Carol Clover:
Oh! It was just great!

Christina Maslach:
Do you still do music? And doesn't Carol play viola, or something like that?

Carol Clover:
She does. And piano. I also play piano. But we haven't played together since we both got back to Berkeley. I play mostly just by ear now, blues and old time, with another set of friends, including Carla Hesse.

Christina Maslach:
Oh, that's very cool. Have there been other colleagues who are also just good friends?

Carol Clover:
Oh yeah. A number.

Christina Maslach:
But outside your department, it sounds like...because you're talking about a number of people who aren't in Scandinavian.

Carol Clover:
Actually, I think people in small departments tend to have more extra-departmental friends on campus than do people in huge departments like History and English. And on the Budget Committee, I made longtime friends — like Steve Glickman. Also, very early on, because of a project I was working on, I met Tom Laqueur in History, and through him and David Hollinger (whom I'd met way back in the 60s), I got to know other people in that department. Also just being a medievalist puts you in touch with the medievalists in other departments—History and English, of course, but also all the other language departments, as well as Comparative Literature and Linguistics. And I was on the editorial board of *Representations* for some years, and that was a very interdepartmental undertaking, on which I also made longtime friends. And all those Academic Senate committees—they were windows on the whole campus.

Christina Maslach:
Yeah. There's something about being able to get beyond departmental boundaries that I think I have found there's many ways of doing it. You know, the Senate is one obviously, and other kinds of groups and committees or whatever, but it really enriches your life in so many ways that you're not really thinking about, but they do.

Carol Clover:
You know, by the way, that this is also the centenary of the Academic Senate and shared governance?!

Christina Maslach:
Yeah. That's interesting because we're celebrating here at the Women's Faculty Club, a hundred years of the women creating their own club because they were not allowed to join the men in the other faculty club. And how did they manage to go to the Regents and say to them, give us a plot of ground?

Carol Clover:
I know — good question.

Christina Maslach:

And then hang in and not take the first offer, which was way off in the boonies, and finally getting it and then building the Women's Faculty Club.

Carol Clover:

Yeah.

Christina Maslach:

But I didn't know about the Senate. Oh my gosh. Just think about what was happening, literally a hundred years ago.

Carol Clover:

Amazing.

Christina Maslach:

An interesting thing that I'm hearing in a number of the interviews, in various ways, is quite a few of the people have essentially talked about how they feel that Berkeley allowed them to be creative. To be deviant, going in a path that, had they been at a prior place or whatever, it would have been too much. "No, no, no. You've got to toe the line"—whatever it happened to be. There is this theme that, whatever other challenges or options, they can point to things that they did, or opportunities or encouragement to go and pursue something.

Carol Clover:

I agree 100% with that understanding. Berkeley's size alone has been an advantage not just for women, but for just about everyone. The Berkeley faculty is considerably larger than, for example, the Stanford faculty, meaning that in most fields and departments, Berkeley has more people than Stanford does. That also means we have more fields and, within those fields, more subfields—more intellectual range. Which reminds me... For many years, I held the Distinguished Chair of the Class of 1936. Members of that class would meet in Berkeley once a year (in connection with the Big Game with Stanford), and once I was appointed to their Chair, I was invited to go to their annual meeting and give a 10–15-minute talk. They were an impressive group--of a generation that had studied Latin or Greek, some of whom had fought in WWII. Each year I tried to give a talk that they'd like, and each year I felt I'd somehow missed the mark. One year I was so rushed that week that I didn't have time to prepare anything. So, what I did was, just a couple of hours before I was supposed to meet with them, run up and down the halls of Dwinelle Hall, going into the offices of everybody I saw to find out how to say (and pronounce) "Go Bears" in various languages (both dead and alive). I got it in

Arabic, Greek, Japanese, Old Norse, German, Latin, Old Irish, French, Hindi, Mandarin, and so on and on—I think I had 32 languages. I took my notes and sped down to the hotel where the Class had gathered, went into the room and up to the microphone, and said: “My talk today consists of just two words” and then proceeded to go through my list, pronouncing the words and then saying what the language was. (Some of them knew some of the languages—Japanese, Latin, Greek, Italian, German, etc.) By the time I got to twenty or so, they were laughing and clapping at each one. I ended by saying that UC Berkeley taught more languages than any other university in the world (which was true at that time) and got a standing ovation. They loved that idea. One lesson for me was that it’s not only prestigious awards in the sciences that can please our alumni and donors.

Christina Maslach:

It really does. I think it’s, I’m not sure of the right words here, but it’s kind of like the notion of a thousand flowers blooming, as opposed to, we need to have these kinds of garden beds or something like that. More entrepreneurial, though I’m not sure I like that word, but...

Carol Clover:

Yes, the thousand-flowers metaphor is a good one.

Christina Maslach:

Rhona Weinstein has written about that. She did a book, where she was basically comparing the kind of structure here at Berkeley in the public university versus the kind of Ivy league, private institution that is more known for a kind of grind them up, throw them out, and then you go and you pick the stars. As opposed to, if you come in as an assistant professor, this is your position and you can stay here as long as you want, as long as you do something. So, when you come up for tenure, you’re not going to be kicked out—there is a sense that you have the chance here to grow and do exciting stuff and we’ll keep you. And that is a whole different philosophy.

Carol Clover:

Yes, that’s exactly right. There’s something about the place that allows for continued creativity in relation to your teaching and research. You can keep adjusting your standard courses and inventing new ones. And that’s regarded as a plus. You might even be rewarded for it in your next review.

Christina Maslach:

The last question which I want to ask you now—is there anything else you wanted to mention or talk about that we haven't covered?

Carol Clover:

I'll just say I love this place. Love it! I feel like the luckiest woman. I cannot believe my luck. You know, one of the worst things that would have happened to me in my life is that I would have been tenured at Harvard and stayed there. I left before that was on the table. Thank God that didn't happen, because I'm pretty sure that if I'd become tenured there, I'd never have gotten the job here, and I'd have been stuck there, and in Boston, for the rest of my days.

But here's another Harvard moment that I won't forget anytime soon. The first faculty meeting that I went to, in an elegant auditorium in one of those stately buildings. And one of the issues to be discussed, junior faculty salaries, because they were so much lower than elsewhere in the country. They were ridiculously low.

Christina Maslach:

Wow. You were doing it for glory.

Carol Clover:

The Dean of the school said we don't need to raise salaries. But the faculty were saying, but we're not getting the best people any more at these salaries. And the Dean said, well, if they come here, people out there will *think* they're the best. That's all we need. That was my first faculty meeting—on a salary of \$8,500 with two kids.

Christina Maslach:

What? What was that phrase that somebody coined years ago? Psychic income. Is that what we're talking about?

Carol Clover:

Yes, psychic income. From the Harvard point of view, sheer exploitation—which is what the Dean's cynical remark admitted. But yes, I think psychic income was a part of it for me. In truth, that's why I chose Harvard—for exactly all the bad reasons. It was my own fault. But I'm not sad I did. Because I learned about a whole side of life I wouldn't otherwise have known about. And I met some wonderful friends there and in Boston more generally. I do music on the side, and I had the greatest people to play with in Boston.

Carol Clover:

Here's another thing. I was teaching one of those great big classes—it was like the fourth lecture of my life—and I finished early. There were like 10 minutes to go and I'm standing up there and feeling panicky. So, I said something like "That's what I have to say for today. So, this is your chance to ask a question that's been on your mind." Silence. Then a guy's hand goes up in the back of the auditorium. "Here's a question I've been wondering about ever since this class started. When the hair on your head turns gray, what happens to the hair on the rest of your body?" (My hair was very gray even then.) Could I make that up? And I couldn't even register that he'd actually said that. I knew it was an outrage, but I'm brand new, in front of this huge class, at a complete loss. The room fell completely silent. But a riposte popped into my head, and I said it: "That's for you to find out"—by which I meant he'd find out when he got gray hair. But then I realized that reply could have another meaning—and I was so mortified I swear I almost fainted.

In that same class—not that day, but after the first lecture—some students rushed up to the podium to ask me various questions about, you know, should they take it or whatever. One was a girl, obviously nervous, who said that she was a freshman and her advisor told her to ask me whether this class would be too hard for her. I asked her why it would be too hard, and she said, "well, I'm from California. My advisor said that if I was from California, I'd better choose easy classes. Is this easy enough for me?" And I said, "Well, I'm from California too. Come to my office hour and let's talk."

Christina Maslach:

I see what you mean. California was almost more of an issue.

Carol Clover:

She ended up with a Yale Ph.D and is a professor at the University of Wisconsin.

Christina Maslach:

She did? "Oh, you go, girl!"

Carol Clover:

She did. It was kind of a great moment.

Christina Maslach:

That's fabulous. Oh, I like ending on that note even better.

END.

