

CHRISTINA MASLACH

Paula Fass:

Christina Maslach, what a pleasure to have you here. I'd like you to start by telling us just the basic facts. Name. Birthday. Place.

Christina Maslach:

Right. Okay. My name is Christina Maslach, and I was born January 21st, 1946 -- the beginning of the baby boomers. Born in San Francisco. But then my parents went to New York where my father had taken a job after the war, and we were there for a few years and then they moved back to California to San Francisco, and my dad took a job here at UC Berkeley in engineering. I'm the oldest child and I have two younger brothers, and we grew up pretty much in Berkeley, so I'm a local and went all the way through Berkeley High School. But when it came to college, a lot of my classmates were saying, "Oh, well, we can just go across the street from Berkeley High to UC Berkeley."

But somehow that just didn't seem right, that sounded like my backyard, and I wanted to go somewhere else. I ended up applying to a bunch of colleges and I was on the wait list at Radcliffe College, got admitted to Smith, and I was thinking, okay, I'll go to Smith, which is a woman's college. So was Radcliffe, but it was at Harvard. It was interesting because my parents had two different reactions. My mother was really trying to make sure I felt good about what I was going to do, and how wonderful Smith was going to be, and all that kind of thing. And my dad kept saying, no, wait, don't do it because they're going to call you. It turned out he was right. They did call me and say, you're off the waiting list. You have a place at Radcliffe.

So, for the next four years, I went back East. Radcliffe was the female version of a Harvard education and had started with Harvard professors, literally going across the street to educate women. When I went there, which was from '63 to '67, it was almost completely co-ed, not quite as it is now, because the housing was separate, and the admissions were separate. For most everything else, it was like a co-ed college and we were "Cliffies." Cliffies had a real reputation of being feisty women, good looking and smart, that kind of thing. The ratio at that time was roughly one woman to three men. It wasn't the 50-50 that it is now. It was, I have to say, a really transformative experience, not just because of going away from home, starting college and so forth, but it was another part of the country that was so different from California at the time that it was like, wow, I don't understand all of this. I learned about social class, I learned about racism, I learned about all kinds of things that somehow, growing up in this bubble here, I guess I wasn't so exposed to.

Paula Fass:

Can I ask you something about that. So you didn't think there was any racism in Berkeley or San Francisco?

Christina Maslach:

Oh no, there was, but my experience in schools was very different. In terms of that, it was more

integrated, although also some segregation at the same time. You didn't really kind of pick that up in the same way. You didn't put people down for it. Also, with religion -- I mean there were a lot of things that I'd never known about that either. It was like coming from a place where the people I knew and grew up with, and the school experiences, were different from the East coast. It's one of the reasons I always say to people, it's good to try some other place and get away from home, because you never know how much you are sort of locked into that particular worldview or those kinds of experiences.

Most of the people at Harvard-Radcliffe came from the East coast and there were a few of us who were from the other side of the Mississippi, from the West. We knew we were few in number, you know, and came with a different perspective, more likely to have come from public schools than private. I'd never really known about private schools either. But it was a really, really amazing experience. John Kennedy was President, and he came from Harvard, and we actually saw him, he visited the campus once or twice, and things were happening. And then in November was the news of his assassination. Again, it's that light-bulb moment -- you remember where you were and what was happening. I couldn't believe it at first. So that was my freshman year. And, starting with, of course, being overwhelmed at first, not really sure if I could . . . everybody has that imposter syndrome -- really, they let me in? -- kind of thing. But I made some good friends that I still have to this day. It was a great, great experience.

Paula Fass:

College is a transformative experience.

Christina Maslach:

It really was in many ways. It was funny because I had gotten interested in high school in the social sciences. I had taken the first sociology course they were offering at Berkeley High. My mother was interested in psychology, and in clinical practice working with families and things like that. She didn't do it, but she was interested in it. And, there was also an interesting TV show, I'm trying to remember, I think it was called something like "The 50-Minute Hour." It was a weekly drama series that did psychology cases, people coming in to see a psychologist to get some treatment. And then there was a whole backstory that showed the family, or what was happening, and stuff like that. I don't know how long that show lasted, but it was fascinating. So, I thought, "Oh, well, maybe I'll major in psychology." But all my friends, particularly some who had gone from Berkeley High ahead of me, said, "No, no, no, you don't want to major in that." And I said, why not? They said, because at that time at Harvard-Radcliffe, psychology was split into two different departments, and one was Psychology and that was the rat runners. That was the experimental, the physiological and so forth. All of the more social science parts of it were in an interdisciplinary program called Social Relations.

Paula Fass:

Oh, yes, yes. That was a famous social program. Erik Erikson was in it, David Riesman...

Christina Maslach:

Yes. Roger Brown. I mean, there were just all kinds of great people. I discovered that Social Relations is what I want. And in fact, that's what I majored in. It was great for me because I got to study sociology, anthropology and psychology. One of the other transformative things that

happened was that I was working part-time, to earn some extra money, for one of the assistant professors in the Social Relations department. One day he said, "Wait, come over here and be a part of this group that's talking about research." I was saying "what?" -- and it turned out, it was Time magazine, or something like that, which was doing an article on "what is the state of the campus," at universities in America. The reporter happened to be there and wanted a photo-op of students sitting around doing educational things. My friend and classmate, Phoebe Ellsworth, and I were a part of this group, and Phoebe (who was ahead of me) was talking about a research study that she was doing with our mutual advisor. It was about how people respond to getting a gift, or a favor. They are in need, and somebody comes along and says, here, I'll help you out. It was a social psychology experiment, and Phoebe was talking about it. I'm sitting there and other people are speaking up, you were supposed to be chatting and saying something. I had been studying, sort of as a minor, art history, and I had been taking a course in Asian art. So, I finally spoke up and said, "Well actually...", because I had read Ruth Benedict and other things as part of that course. And I said, "You know, it would be different perhaps if you did this research in Japan. I don't think they would respond in the same way as you're talking about and hypothesizing for the people that you're studying here in the United States." Oh, interesting, interesting. And I thought, okay, I've done my thing. But then, literally, my advisor tapped me on the shoulder after the photo session was over (and the magazine never published any of those photos). But he said, would you like to go to Japan and do that research?

Paula Fass:
Wow.

Christina Maslach:
Now I had not even been trained yet how to do research. I had to learn how to do it. And I said, yeah, but I don't know Japanese, but he said, we'll get somebody, whatever. And before I knew it, I was off to Japan for the summer between my junior and senior year, and at first it was like a nightmare. I mean, because there I felt so foreign and not able to connect with the language...

Paula Fass:
This was the first time you'd ever gone to a foreign country?

Christina Maslach:
No, no, I'd been to other some other countries, but western countries in Europe. But this was so different, and I didn't know the language, and I couldn't read anything. There was very little available in English to help visitors like me. But they put me in touch with a Japanese professor, and he said he had a graduate student who would work with me, but he was leaving the next day for the summer. And he said, by the way, you do know that there is no summer session for Japanese students? And I'm thinking, but I just came here, and I'm supposed to be running research with college men because that was the study that had been done at Harvard. So, it wasn't a co-ed study, it was supposed to be Japanese college-age men.

Fortunately, the gods seemed to be smiling on me. It turned out that there was one university, Keio University, that had gone on strike, and it was an all-male university, and they were making up their classes for the month of July. So I had a couple of weeks to get the Keio men to come over to the other university where I was (at ICU) and participate in this study. The woman who

worked with me was bilingual, and she was the one who actually worked with the students and I was helping with set-up and gathering the data. Any rate, it was an unbelievable experience. The very first time I had done research and I came back, I had the data, I wrote it up as my honors thesis, and I was hooked. The idea that you could take an idea and transform it into a way of gathering evidence as to whether the idea, about how people function and how they think and everything, had any merit. And it turned out that my hypothesis that Japan would show a very different pattern than the United States samples was proven in a big way. The data were stunning, and it was like, wow.

Paula Fass:
That's incredible.

Christina Maslach:
I mention it because it was serendipitous, wasn't planned at all -- but it became my introduction to doing research, and I knew then that I wanted to go on and do more research. Oh, well maybe I should apply to graduate school. And I did, and I ended up getting into Stanford. But you know, again, I knew a lot about the social science part of psychology. I really hadn't gotten the other kind of training, so I had to make that up at first, so the first year was a tough one. But the other thing that happened then, in my second year of graduate school, was that I started being a teaching assistant and then I had to take my own section and teach a methodology class by myself, and without a lot of guidance. It was, again, a tough kind of thing, but I fell in love with teaching and at that point it became pretty clear I'm headed for academia. You know, "I'll go on teaching and doing research," which I did.

Paula Fass:
Did you have other women graduate students with you at Stanford?

Christina Maslach:
It turned out my friend Phoebe from Harvard was already there ahead of me, so the two of us, and she's gone on to have an astounding career. She's in Michigan and so we see each other occasionally. But Phoebe and I, I should just mention in a different way. At the time, the Psych department at Stanford was scattered between all these little different buildings, as opposed to being in one place. We thought it would be fun and it would be good for the department if we could have a way in which people got together and socialized. We both remembered our experience at Harvard-Radcliffe in William James Hall, where they would occasionally have sherry hours, and everybody would come in for the sherry hour. So we decided to have our own sherry hour.

Paula Fass:
With sherry?

Christina Maslach:
With sherry. And then later we would get wine or beer and other drinks, and we would bring hors d'oeuvres, and we would do it every other Friday. Phoebe and I started these sherry hours, and we would have them in the building where our social psychology program was. Phoebe is an amazing artist as well. She would make up an incredible design or a cartoon or whatever, or a

funny kind of witty, beautiful kind of thing that then we would copy and send out to everybody in the department, because those were the snail mail pre-internet days. Some people had collections of all of her invitations saying, “remember about the sherry hour, and come!” It was wonderful and it really turned out to be a great thing for the department to have that. I think it carried on for a while. I don't know if it still does, but at the time it was really, really kind of neat. Phoebe was kind of like an older role model and older mentor and more experienced in some ways because she'd been doing this earlier when we had had a class together at Harvard. Although I don't see her very often, I always think fondly of her and the kind of positive influence that she had in many ways on my life. So that was great.

Paula Fass:

Was the separation between experimental and social psychology as intense at Stanford as it had been at Harvard?

Christina Maslach:

It wasn't split into two different departments. No.

Paula Fass:

So you were able to bring those together around the sherry hour?

Christina Maslach:

Yeah. But the thing is, at the time, the different groups were very scattered. There were some people that I only got to know because they came over to our place. They'd be in another building on the other side of campus. Another graduate student was Elizabeth Loftus, and she again was a year or two ahead of me, and was in a totally different program, in a math program. Then she moved from mathematical to cognitive psychology. She's done a lot of work on how people remember things in ways that may not be true. She does eyewitness testimony kind of stuff. So, she was another female graduate student. But it was interesting, even at that time there weren't a lot of women. In fact, there were not many women on the faculty. A very famous one was Eleanor Maccoby, who did a lot of work on gender research, but she was not known for having women students at all. I never took a course from her, although I got to know her later.

It was also interesting because by the time we were ready to go out on the job market in those days, and this was 1970-71, there was no question that you would get a job, you just didn't know where. It wasn't like there were only a few jobs and many applicants. There were lots of jobs. And in fact, the department faculty would not recommend their students to compete against each other. In a more paternalistic way, they wanted to protect them, and they wanted to make sure that everybody would get a job -- you know, so-and-so would be good here, and so-and-so would be good there. They would make some decisions about where they would advise different people to go.

What happened at that time -- during my last year, when I'm doing my dissertation and I'm thinking about applying for jobs -- were newspaper articles that came out about the status of women on the Berkeley campus. That came out in 1970. I discovered later that it was the “blue book” in the Blue Book Report of the Academic Senate. But what came out in the newspaper was a story about the departments at Berkeley that had *never* hired women -- and then there were

other departments that *had* hired women. But when you looked at the departments that had hired women, there was a listing in order of how long it had been since the prior hire, and psychology was at the top of that bad list in the sense that they were the worst. They were almost 50 years, it was 47. I think the last tenure track hire had been in 1923. Then sociology was one year behind them, 46. And then it just kept going down to, you know, departments that had hired two years ago or something like that.

So that was a shock because, not that I had been thinking about Berkeley, but that I had grown up in Berkeley, I knew about Berkeley, I'd studied psychology, lots of women in the Berkeley campus were preeminent researchers. I knew their work. I had to study that, so what do you mean there's no women that were at Berkeley? I mean, come on. But a closer look showed that there were issues there. It turned out that all those women weren't faculty. They were something else. When I came here (I did apply, and I did get an interview), and when I came into Tolman Hall (which is now gone) -- it was through the entrance to the Institute of Human Development. There was a man who was the director, and then there was a list of all the women's names that I knew of. I was thinking, oh my gosh, there's Marjorie Honzik, and Dorothy Eichorn, and Jeanne Block, and . . . you know, on and on and on. They were not professors; they were all research associates at the Institute. They were not faculty. I remember thinking, "Oh, so *that's* what's happening here."

Now what was also interesting was why I did apply. First, I had thought I was going to go out and make my fame and fortune -- you know, I had left home, I had left Berkeley -- and why would I come back to get a job there? My dad is still working here, and my family's here, the backyard again. But one of the things that happened because of that newspaper article and the Blue Book Report was that when Berkeley advertised, they had a job in my specific field, in social psychology. At that point, this was before affirmative action and before any formal ways of doing this. It was just a letter from the chair to chairs of other departments saying, "Hey, we've got a position. You've got anybody?" And they would say, "Oh yeah, we have so and so," kind of thing. But this letter was a little different because clearly, they were recognizing the fact that they had been called on for not having women. So, it had some sort of awkward phrasing about "we are flexible with regard to sex," -- meaning, "we're open, we're not going to say it, but you know" -- so we took that as like, hmm, interesting. I checked with my advisors, my mentor Al Hastorf (whose daughter, Christine, is now on the Anthropology faculty here).

Paula Fass:
Oh, really?

Christina Maslach:

Yes. So we have that connection as well. But anyway, Al said, "Yes, you should apply." As it turned out, one of my letter writers later told me that he had written the letter in a way that was gender-neutral because my name, Christina, can be shortened to Chris. And in fact, in my earlier life, it would get shortened to Chris or to Tina or to Chrissy or to all kinds of nicknames. But he shortened it to Chris, and he wrote about how Chris was a really good prospect for this job, and Chris could do great research, and Chris also was a fine teacher. He really didn't use any pronouns, no he's or she's. Whenever I've told that story, my students always say, "And did it work?" And I say, "I have no idea." I'm not saying that it worked out. But the important thing is

that it says what our *mindset* was at that time – and that the fact that I was a woman had to be disguised in those initial letters of recommendation.

Paula Fass:

But then they saw you at your interview.

Christina Maslach:

Yes, of course. But we felt, in a sort of non-conscious way, without thinking through all the implications, that the letters had to hide the fact that I'm female. And if I could just get in the door, then they can decide that...

Paula Fass:

There you go.

Christina Maslach:

But, when you look back on it... Wow. Where were we thinking? I mean, these were still the days where, when I was at Radcliffe, we always had to wear skirts, and they would not allow women to wear pants unless it was a freezing storm, and it was two degrees, you know?

Paula Fass:

Even when I was in graduate school, we could not wear pants to Sunday dinner in the dorm.

Christina Maslach:

In the dorms. Yes. And we didn't really question or argue about or debate it. It just was, "it is what it is. Grass is green, sky is blue. Girls wear skirts. Boys wear pants." You know. So that's what my colleague, Sandra Bem, used to call a "nonconscious ideology" that you don't really think about in the same kind of way.

Paula Fass:

But you got the job.

Christina Maslach:

I got the job. Actually, it turned out they interviewed many people, and then hired not just one, but two women. It was me and my colleague, Eleanor Rosch (who was Eleanor Heider at that time, and I had met her before at Harvard). So, they hired two, which was really nice for us.

Christina Maslach:

And, what had happened – I had thought the job interview went well, and I was hoping it would lead to a job. I had met my to-be husband, Phil Zimbardo, who had joined the faculty at Stanford -- and now I'm going out on the job market! I had interviewed at Harvard, by the way, as the whole Social Relations department was falling apart, so that was a weird one. But the idea that Phil could stay at Stanford and I could get a job at Berkeley was a good thought. However, after I had interviewed at Berkeley, about a month later, there was an announcement that the State of California was doing a hiring freeze for all the UCs -- there's a budget thing, you know, so they're not going to hire.

And I thought, "Oh, that job is nonexistent now, so it's not even a question." I went off to do more job interviews, and that was when I went back east to Harvard. This was in January, same month as now. I interviewed there, I interviewed at Brooklyn College, I was going around, and then I came back. Phil met me at the airport, and he's asking me how it went and I'm telling him and he's talking, and then all of a sudden, it's midnight and it's my birthday. You know, the clock changed, and he pulls out birthday presents and cards and a little bottle of champagne so we can celebrate my birthday. I'm opening everything and talking about the job interviews. And the last thing he gives me, I open it up and it's the letter from Berkeley saying, you have the job.

Paula Fass:
Wonderful.

Christina Maslach:
So it was a great time. Obviously, he had been looking in my mailbox to see if anything had come in one way or the other. And he said he knew from the size, it was probably good news. Yes, so that's how I learned that I got the job. Apparently, the hiring freeze got called off, and the department went forward with the offer.

Paula Fass:
Had Phil come from another university before Stanford?

Christina Maslach:
Yes. He had been at New York University. And people thought he would never leave the East coast and would never leave New York. So his department chair was shocked when he took the job at Stanford. It was like, "What? No, you should've come to me. We could have worked out something for you." And he said, "Sorry, too late, I'm leaving."

Paula Fass:
So you changed coasts. I mean, you had been from California and gone to school in the East coast. And he was an East coast person, who came out to California...

Christina Maslach:
Yes, and eventually stayed and loved it. But he had gone to Yale as a graduate student. So in addition to our Cal-Stanford rivalry, a fun rivalry. . . We have the Harvard --Yale one as well.

Paula Fass:
Did he come with tenure to Stanford?

Christina Maslach:
Oh yes. In fact, Stanford made him a full professor.

Paula Fass:
No wonder he wanted you to get this job at Berkeley.

Christina Maslach:
Well, yes, but it was interesting. He made it very clear to me that he felt, at this point, that he was

more moveable, and that I should go and interview -- and then we'll just see what happens. We were getting serious in our relationship but didn't get married until a year after I had started. So we got married in '72, but I started here in '71.

Paula Fass:

How were you received when you arrived here in Berkeley, you and Eleanor. The first two women in 45, or 50 years. How were your colleagues?

Christina Maslach:

Most of the colleagues were pretty good, I think. I mean, there were a few who would sometimes make some stereotypical comments about "gossiping in the hall, instead of doing your work," or things like that, but mostly they were supportive. In fact, years later, I heard from some of them about what had happened at faculty meetings, after the report that the Psychology Department had not hired any women faculty for so many years. Many of the male faculty were shocked to realize that, and they pushed hard to change things by voting for new hires.

But the bigger reaction came from students. That first year, I can remember hearing whispering going on behind me -- "That's the woman!" "Really, where?" -- and the Daily Cal published an article about Eleanor and me and asked us about what it was like to be a woman. During office hours, some male students would stop by and, not seeing that the "professor" was in, would ask me to leave a note and tell him that the student had come to talk with him about getting into his class. And some female students would just pop in the door, shake my hand, and say "So glad you are here!"

Another thing happened. Here I am, a brand-new assistant professor, and I start getting calls from Nobel Prize winners here on the campus, asking me to be a part of their committee or some such thing. Wow! I would go to the meeting and then realize "I don't know what I'm doing here, and I didn't know enough about the topic." Here are all these people, and I would be the only woman there. I started getting more of this, so I went to my Chair to ask about it, and he said, "Wait a minute, you should not be doing this kind of committee work, until you get past tenure. Anytime from now on, when you get one of these calls, asking you to do this or do that, even though they are a famous professor, whatever, don't say anything. Say, 'I'll talk to my Chair,' and then I will talk to him about that." So, he started running interference for me. What I found out later was that the reason these men were calling me (and I had been thinking, well, I'm one of the few women now who's on campus, and they're all thinking they need a woman on their committee), it was because they were trying to get to my father! Because at that point, my dad -- who had gone up the ranks, had been the Dean of Engineering -- was now the Provost of the Professional Schools and Colleges. So, these professors were thinking, "Oh, it's his daughter, so maybe..."

Paula Fass:

Yes, I fully understand what's going on here.

Christina Maslach:

Yes. I didn't realize that at first, my dad didn't realize that at first. I remember later I talked to him about it and he became aware of that, if somebody would come to him and mention me in

some way. Fortunately, he was in the half of the campus that was Professional Schools and Colleges, and I was in Letters and Science, so it wasn't quite the same issue, but it was a kind of nepotism issue, in some way. Geoff Keppel was the Chair who recognized the problem and was really saying "Wait -- we have to change this." So rather than my having to figure out how to say to the person, "No, I don't want to do this," Geoff said, "I'll take care of it," so I really was very grateful for that.

Paula Fass:
Oh, I'm sure.

Christina Maslach:
The first Chair who hired me was Harrison Gough, and he later became an important mentor and taught me how to do test development, psychological assessment. My Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) was a result of his teaching me and guiding me as to what I had to do, because they never taught me that at Stanford.

Paula Fass:
I actually wanted to ask you what your initial research was about, and how that was framed and affected by your presence in Berkeley. And of course, this is research for which you are famous.

Christina Maslach:
Yeah. Well that didn't happen originally. When I arrived here, I was thinking I was going to be doing experimental research, as I had been trained as an experimental social psychologist. I had done experimental research, and I had done my dissertation on the process of individuation. There had been a lot of focus on people conforming, being persuaded by others, or trying to be like others. And I was saying, "yes, but there are times when people want to stand out and be different and be unique, and to individuate themselves rather than joining the crowd." There wasn't much work on that. It was actually the topic that I was interested in when I started graduate school, and I went to one of the professors and said, "I would like to do some work in this area." And he said, "No, sorry, I just wrote a book. It's all done. There's nothing left to look at."

Paula Fass:
Whoa.

Christina Maslach:
Yeah. but you know -- I won't get into that. But I did do it for my dissertation, so I was looking to do the next series of studies. "This is my work. I'm going to carry it on." First problem was the department did not have a lab for me. They said they would give me space soon, but it took almost until I was at the tenure point before I got lab space.

Paula Fass:
Were you unusual in that way, in not getting a lab?

Christina Maslach:
They had not had many people in my field, and the people they did have were not using labs.

And after a few years, the one other person in social psychology left, so for the rest of my assistant professorship, I was the only person in my field, in the whole department.

Paula Fass:

And they weren't accustomed to social psychologists needing a lab, so it wasn't a gender thing?

Christina Maslach:

Yeah. I don't think it was gender per se, but it was a kind of thing where they said they would provide one and yet it just . . . I realized later that I hadn't known how to negotiate for a lab, that I had just trusted that, if they said they would give me the lab space, it would happen.

Paula Fass:

Did you ever apply for grants to get a lab?

Christina Maslach:

I later applied, yes, for money and I did get money, and then I was able to get space that was being used for storage and stuff, and I actually built a wonderful lab. Then after I had gotten it done, the department said, "well, that should be shared with other people in social and personality, rather than being for you alone," which was odd, because everyone else had their own research space. But yes, eventually I got my lab.

But I didn't have it when I started as an assistant professor, so I would try to go back to Stanford to use the lab, or I was trying to use interview space in the Psychology Clinic. I was trying to find other ways to do some other lab work. And then I thought, "well, okay, they're still working on getting the lab, but what I will do is I will go out in the field, and I will interview people who are dealing with emotional issues of the type that I had been studying at Stanford."

I had done other research prior to my dissertation. There was a lot of interest in how people know what it is that they are experiencing and what they're feeling and how do we label the arousal that we might feel -- you know, if your heart is pounding and whatever, why is that? And there was a famous theory, but also infamous because some people didn't believe in it. I had done research which showed that the theory wasn't really right, and that there was a better way to understand emotions. So, I thought, well what I'll do is I'll go out and talk to people who in their everyday work life might face issues where they have to control the emotions they're feeling and not show that they're afraid or that they're angry. You have to be calm; you have to be nice. It actually had an interesting connection with what Arlie Hochschild was talking about with stewardesses on the airplanes, and how they managed the emotional interaction with customers.

I started interviewing people, because I didn't have a lab, but I started interviewing to try and get a better sense of their experience, and then figuring out how to develop hypotheses -- and then I'd have my lab and I'd do my experimental tests. That was how I found out about burnout. I stumbled on it totally by accident. In fact, there wasn't a name for it at first. I talked to people -- and I was picking people from occupations that I thought probably run into this. So people in health care, or people dealing with emergencies and crises, and you have to be calm and cool and direct traffic and retrieve parts of bodies or whatever it happens to be and not . . .

Paula Fass:
Show anything.

Christina Maslach:

Yes, and not get so upset that you couldn't function. So I talked to some prison guards because that had come up during Phil's prison study, the Stanford Prison Experiment [which turned out, later in my career, to be recognized as an important part of my academic reputation, because I had been the one who had convinced Phil to end the study after a week].

Then I thought of people in the ERs, I thought of people in police or rescue personnel, and as I started doing the interviews, people would then say, "Oh, you should talk to the psychiatric nurses [or to some other group], I know somebody over here." That kind of "snowball" thing. It was confidential, I would say I had questions to ask them, I was interested in emotions and how they're doing their job. What would happen is they would answer questions, and then often people would say, "It is confidential, right?" I said, "Yeah, absolutely." And then they'd say, "Can I tell you a little bit about some of the things in my work?" And it would be related, but a little different. I began to see that these people were all telling a similar story, whether it was the psychiatric nurse or it was the police officer or it was the ER physician. So I would ask them more about that. And I would say, "These kind of experiences -- do you ever talk about them to others?" "Oh no, it's unprofessional. I would never, never." I mean even their spouse or family. I was looking for concepts in the social science literature. There was a "dehumanization in self-defense" and I thought, Oh, okay because you're treating people like objects, as a way of protecting yourself from getting too emotionally involved with what's happening. It's the "infarction in room 502," rather than Mrs. Jones with a heart attack, or something like that, and her family and everything. So I'd mention that. Then medical sociology had a concept called "detached concern," which sounded a lot like what I was hearing, and initially I thought, "Oh, I bet you this is what it is." At the end of the interview I would say, "You know, there's a concept of 'dehumanization in self-defense'-- does that sound right?" Nah, no, not very, too much baggage with dehumanization. "Well, how about 'detached concern?' Oh, well, I don't know.

Then I had this, again, serendipitous experience when as a new assistant professor (this was my first year) I went to a dinner at the Chancellor's house for all the newbies on campus, and we were being welcomed to Berkeley. I was sitting next to a woman who was in charge of Admissions at the Law School, and she was new too. We were chatting, you know, "so who are you and what are you doing?" I mentioned that I was doing these interviews and here's something that's been coming up. And she said, "Oh my God, I don't know what they call it elsewhere, but in poverty law they call it burnout." I thought, what, burnout? She described it, and how she had left poverty law. She knew she had burned out. I interviewed her later on, after the dinner, and she had amazing stories to tell, which really captured what this was about. So then in my next interviews, I ended with "Are you experiencing dehumanization in self-defense, or detached concern – or how about *burnout*?" "That's it! That's it!" And people started saying, "Yeah, that's what it is, or I've heard it and yeah, we do mention that or something like that." That's how I came across the term, which was not invented by me or anybody else, but was part of... It had been, I think, it actually came out of engineering, quite honestly.

Paula Fass:

That you brought into circulation and stuff...

Christina Maslach:

Yes. There had been Graham Greene's novel, "*A Burnt-out Case*," back in the 1960s, and so it was using this term. I knew from my dad (an engineer who had worked for the NASA space program) that rocket boosters burn out, ball-bearings burn out . . . and Silicon Valley, when it started getting into its startup phase, talked about "burnout shops." So I think that is probably where that was coming from.

Paula Fass:

I want to probe this just a little bit....on people repressing their emotions in order to fulfill a professional role, to seem as if they're emotionless, that that was something that a woman would be more aware of? It may not be. I just think it's worth probing.

Christina Maslach:

It's an interesting question and I honestly can't say for sure, but there were other people at the time who were not women -- I mean, there was a guy in psychology, a psychotherapist who had experienced burnout himself. He had a clinic in New York City for drug abusers -- a therapeutic community I think is what he was calling it. That came from a different area. But again, Arlie was moving into that kind of issue earlier. Right. So it's hard to say. I mean, the therapist actually was one who, in a newspaper article, made a claim (or the journalist made a claim) that he had invented it. And I occasionally get kind of snarky letters from his children (he has passed away) saying, "Well, you didn't say that *he* invented the term." And I say, but it was around long before him, me, all of us -- we both used it, we both knew each other, we talked about and shared things. But no, it's not his invention.

Paula Fass:

And you've continued in this...

Christina Maslach:

Now the thing was, it was risky. I mean in the sense that it was not the typical basic research laboratory research that was the way you are supposed to do research. It was applied, which was kind of a "no, no." *We* do the basic research at a university like this, *others* figure out how to use and apply it, not *us*. But I was so taken with what I was discovering and tripping over, in these interviews. These were people, unlike college students in experiments, who were getting emotional during the interviews as they talked about some of this stuff. It was like something really important is going on here, but people aren't talking about it, so it was kind of a hidden problem. It was risky in that sense. But I was so taken with it, I didn't want to give it up.

However, what I had to do at the same time, since I didn't have the lab yet, I now still had to publish the research that I had done in the lab when I was a graduate student. One of those -- which turned out to be the most major piece of experimental research that I had done -- was really, really important to get published because that would be a critical part of my record. [I mentioned it briefly earlier in this interview, the lab study on how people understand what emotion they are experiencing.] It was research that the person who was the theorist -- who I was challenging in some way -- became the person who turned it down every time I submitted it

for publication. He was the reviewer that they would call on, and he would say no, and I could not get it done.

Paula Fass:
Incredible.

Christina Maslach:

And there's a story there as well that I need to tell. His name was Stanley Schachter, and he was back east at Columbia. He was not happy with the research, and it was both my study and then a companion study that my fellow graduate student had done that replicated his process but not his results, and then did a different process and came up with a better set of data. This all got inspired by a graduate student seminar where we had to critique a study and then design a better way to test it. And my fellow grad student and I actually carried out our proposed studies. But anyway, Schachter was always there saying, no, no, no, as a reviewer.

Paula Fass:

Could I ask you a question? In history, if I am asked to review a book or an article in one place, I will always, out of ethical standards, refuse to review it in another place for another publisher or another book review. Nobody would want it to dominate.

Christina Maslach:
Yeah.

Paula Fass:
That's not true in psychology?

Christina Maslach:

Well, I can't say for sure, but it was not true in this case. Finally, we had submitted both my piece and the companion piece by my colleague together to the top journal, thinking maybe if they see all of it -- both pieces together -- that will make a stronger case. And the editor was intrigued enough to say, wait a minute, let's see what can happen. It looked like it was being considered for a long time. Then he came up with the idea that Schachter can rebut and write a piece after our articles, and then we could write back in response, so he set up a different kind of format. But before that happened (or as it was on the way), it became known that Schachter was coming out to visit our department. Interesting -- he's coming to visit us because . . .? And he's going to give a talk or something like that. And I was told he wanted to meet me and talk with me about this. And this got known. Soon, all the other faculty were saying, "Oh my God, hey, I want to be in that room and hear that." It was almost like a "fight, fight!" kind of thing. And I was terrified and thinking, "Oh Lord, what am I going to do, this guy is going to come and we're going to talk, and my colleagues are all going to be in there in the room listening to us debate." So, I went and visited Al Hastorf at Stanford -- the guy who from the beginning was my mentor there at grad school. I talked to him and I said, "Al, what am I going to do?" He knew about my work, and Al was wonderful. I could always get good advice, wisdom, humor from him -- he just had a great way of framing things. So, he gave me advice as to how I might approach this and what should I be saying, and so forth. He said, most importantly, "You shouldn't be interpreting this as a threat, or anything like that. The fact that Schachter is coming out to talk to

you means you have something important to say.” And as he talked with me, all of a sudden it was like “Right, why would Schachter bother if I was just a little nothing who isn't going to make any difference? Maybe somehow he realized there was something important about what the data and the evidence were actually showing.” Al gave me the incredible insight and courage to just trust that I knew what I had done, and why it was important. When the big day came and went, I did okay. It was good enough that it helped, I think, to impress the other faculty when I came up for tenure.

Paula Fass:
That year?

Christina Maslach:
Shortly after that. By the time I came up for tenure, my article had been accepted for publication. It hadn't been published yet, but it was accepted for publication with the exchange being a part of that, under this editor. And that's how it finally got done.

Paula Fass:
Fascinating.

Christina Maslach:
That was what I think was critical at that time, getting my laboratory research published. It wasn't until later in my career, that the kind of reviews I would get from the Budget Committee, (e.g., for full professor) would say things like I was the pioneer who had opened up this new field of burnout. But back then, for my applied research on burnout, it had been more like “Who is she? What is she doing? We never heard of those journals. It's not laboratory, it's not basic. It's too applied.”

Paula Fass:
So, you shook things up?

Christina Maslach:
Yes. But it was tricky in terms of tenure, and in fact I was thinking that it might not be enough. Even though I had the other laboratory publications, it might not be enough with the new work I was doing, and I should start thinking about where I might look for another job. Phil and I talked about it, because we thought that we might have to rethink all of this.

Paula Fass:
Did you have children by that point?

Christina Maslach:
I had one pre-tenure, one post. Everyone said, Oh no, wait until you're past tenure before you have kids, but Phil and I were saying...

Paula Fass:
We don't want to wait that long...

Christina Maslach:

Yes, we don't want to wait that long, that's not a good thing. So, we didn't. But the one big surprise was that, when I had asked about maternity leave, I was told, "there isn't such a thing." What??? I had a partial sabbatical leave by that point, which I took, but then took an unpaid leave for the rest of the time – which meant that not only was I not getting any salary, but I was not getting any contributions to my health care (while I was having a baby!), so it turned out to be an unexpected financial hit for us.

But to get back to my tenure case, the other thing that happened was that I took a one quarter sabbatical after my tenure case was submitted, so that I was overseas when the word came in about the tenure decision.

Paula Fass:

So you don't know whether you got the full support of your department, or how that went, because you weren't around here?

Christina Maslach:

I was around at the time of the departmental meeting, but then we left for Europe. And I'm just not sure if anybody would have really said anything to me or would have told me because this is supposed to be confidential. However, another part of that story is that, by that time, there was another new person on the faculty who was a woman who came with tenure. She asked to talk to me about my research, before the faculty meeting on my tenure case. So, I did – and while we were talking, she started saying things that made my heart drop, like "Well, for those of us who give 100% to their career." I had had my first child already, and it was "opposed to those of you who are not 100%," and stuff like that. She started going off on this thing about commitment, and while not being blunt, she was saying that I was not committed enough to be worthy of tenure. The way she was talking, I knew I wasn't going to get her support. So, after I met with her, I made an appointment to see the Chair, and who was also a wonderful Chair, Steve Glickman.

Paula Fass:

That was the right move.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah. And I went in and I said, Steve, I just want to report this conversation I've had with this woman. So, this might come up as an issue at the faculty discussion about whether I am truly committed or dedicated to my job because I've had a child and I have a family as well. So he and I talked about it.

Paula Fass:

He was reassuring.

Christina Maslach:

He said, "I'll be clear, and I will make sure that that does not go..."

Paula Fass:

That it's not an issue.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah. I just felt a lot better, and it turned out that apparently it did not come up, or at least not overtly. At that point, Phil and I, and our daughter Zara, who was two years old, went off on a sabbatical to Europe with my mother. And then later my father came and my grandmother and, you know, we had a family reunion. We were doing a lot of travel, particularly in Italy. That was where I got the call from Steve Glickman. I remember the call came in and his secretary said, "Oh, hi, how are you?" And I'm chatting with her. "Oh yeah. What's going on in the department?" It didn't dawn on me she's calling to put on Steve to tell me about my tenure case. Then he gets on and I realize, "Oh, right." And that's when he told me that the case went through and I had gotten tenure.

Paula Fass:

So that story is interesting because it does remind us that women aren't always sisters. It's that they can be your worst critics because you don't do it exactly the way they do it. Or they're jealous because your life is more complete or complicated.

Christina Maslach:

Or we're not really sure.

Paula Fass:

Or whatever.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah. It's not entirely clear now. It turned out later that after tenure, I had my second child, Tanya. But later this woman then got married and had children.

Paula Fass:

Really?

Christina Maslach:

Yes. And later, periodically she would say we should get together...at some point, she was saying something about women -- and how we were all sticking together and helping each other out. And I said, do you remember that conversation we had before my tenure? And she swears up and down, she never ever said anything like that.

Paula Fass:

That you made it up in your mind.

Christina Maslach:

I wouldn't have done that. It was pretty clear what was being said.

Paula Fass:

That's fascinating.

Christina Maslach:

Not subtle at that time, but it was a very different kind of thing. The other problem that came up pre-tenure, which I should just mention, is the mid-career review.

Paula Fass:

Yeah.

Christina Maslach:

Which always is an ominous title. You're only there like two or three years and it's a *middle* career review. Things were pretty good in terms of my teaching, and in terms of the research and the publications that I was working on. The big problem, though, that was raised was about whether my work was actually Phil's work. Whether his ideas were being used by me, because we were then married by that point.

Paula Fass:

Right, I get it.

Christina Maslach:

And it was literally like "this was my dissertation, and this is what I am doing over here at Berkeley." Actually, Phil and I had talked about someday we would do some research together. This would be really cool. We ended up never doing it because there was always this thing about -- you know, his name would overshadow mine. They would assume that...

Paula Fass:

That it was really his idea.

Christina Maslach:

He gives me this idea, and then I go out and do all this thing.

Paula Fass:

That you're his research assistant.

Christina Maslach:

There you go. And so even though we had done a study and had collected data, we never published it.

Paula Fass:

That's very interesting.

Christina Maslach:

Just held it off, never did anything after that. Again, kept going sort of separate paths, separate ways. And, it was pretty clear. "It has to be clearly you." So in a way, the burnout work that I was starting was very clearly me, because it had started here and I was doing it, but it wasn't basic laboratory stuff.

Paula Fass:

This is a very interesting and important story.

Paula Fass:

I wanted to ask whether you had taken before or after your tenure, any leadership roles in your department who are on the campus?

Christina Maslach:

It's interesting. I had not, before tenure, and in fact once I started having children, when I would be asked periodically, "how about you be an Assistant Dean in the College of Letters and Science?" or whatever, I would just turn it down, because I realized what we had to do, Phil and I, for our family, when we have two careers. We're both commuting from San Francisco, he's going south, I'm going east, and our kids are in the City. We had to work out arrangements so that they were cared for if we were stuck in traffic or something else. It was too important not to have time with the family and do what we wanted to do, by taking on another job for me. So I kept trying to be nice and say "someday, but not now."

Paula Fass:

I had the same experience.

Christina Maslach:

"When my kids are older and grown, then we'll talk."

Paula Fass:

So you eventually did take on a leadership role on campus.

Christina Maslach:

I did eventually take on a few activities – and at first, it had to do with teaching, and the fact that there was an incredible growth of academic interest in issues of sex and gender in the 1970s. When Sue Ervin-Tripp moved to Psychology from Rhetoric, she and I were both really excited about developing a new course on the psychology of women, and so we co-taught a seminar on that topic for several years. And we got involved with other women faculty on campus, who were developing similar courses in their own departments, and eventually I became part of the women's group (led by Gloria Bowles) that developed the Women's Studies program. Because of student interest, I developed a lower-division lecture course, "Psychology of Gender," and taught that for many years (and it was co-listed in Women's Studies).

Then the Chancellor's office asked me to serve on a special campus committee, the Commission on Responses to a Changing Student Body. The chairman was a distinguished sociology professor, well-known for his work on issues of undergraduate education, but before the Commission really got underway, he voiced his opposition to a Senate proposal for an American Cultures course requirement for all undergraduates. Many of the Commission members (which included faculty, staff, and students) were extremely upset by this – and I am not certain just what took place after that, but this professor stepped down and left the Commission, and then I was asked to become the new chair. This was a huge surprise, but I decided to take on the job – and one of the first things I did was speak in favor of American Cultures at the Senate meeting that was considering this new academic requirement. I thought that the Senate had done a

brilliant job in developing American Cultures, so I was happy that the subsequent vote was in favor of it. However, one of the interesting things that was happening was that several women faculty were opposed to American Cultures, because it privileged ethnicity but not gender. They did not take a strong stance on this, but clearly some of them sat on their hands, rather than voting in favor of it.

After that, I chaired the Commission for three years, and we produced a report, “Promoting Student Success at Berkeley: Guidelines for the Future,” which made forty recommendations (most of which were subsequently implemented). That achievement, I think, was the real turning point for my subsequent leadership roles.

Christina Maslach:

In the Psychology department, I would work on some committees, usually on teaching kinds of things. After tenure, I was more open to some of this departmental service. Later on, I became Vice Chair, with Shelly Zedeck as Chair. And I learned a lot and worked a lot more on the teaching, departmental, other kinds of functions. Shelly did the tenure cases and the promotions, and all that kind of stuff. Everybody thought I would become Chair afterwards, but after five years or so (because he was a good chair) it was like, no, I really wasn't interested in doing more of this. This was, so I was being told, the way in which you then become maybe the Dean of the Social Sciences and then higher administration. I just realized that that work focusing primarily on personnel things, and then subsequently more on fundraising, was just not my cup of tea at all. And I didn't want to go down that route. But I was being asked to do various things.

Paula Fass:

I did the same. So you did eventually become head of the Senate?

Christina Maslach:

Yeah, I did, eventually. But early on, I used to attend Senate meetings because my father had told me it was important. In earlier decades, before my time, the entire faculty used to always get together. The campus would stop on Wednesday afternoons, and they would meet as a whole, so that had changed a lot. The Senate had become a representative assembly, and I first served as a representative of the Psychology Department. And then I served on Senate committees. I chaired committees. I did some, I think, really important work, particularly when I was head of SWEM (Status of Women and Ethnic Minorities).

Sally Fairfax was the Faculty Assistant on the Status of Women when I chaired SWEM. We got together and we actually collected data on the Budget Committee and who served on it, and how many women and how many minorities, etc., and patterns. What we uncovered was that there were certain departments that always had a member on the Budget Committee and other departments that never ever got represented. For example, there was a Law seat – always a faculty member from the Law School. We pulled together data on how many faculty were in different departments, and we then painted this whole picture, and the two of us, together, were doing this. And it changed the policy on how the Budget Committee operated and how it was selected (Provost Doris Calloway always had that report on her desk). The other thing was that they set up, they were kind of redesigning how the Senate worked, rather than that “full democracy, everybody just shows up” or a “representative democracy” kind of thing. We had to

have an executive structure that would handle business at various times. And so there was an executive committee, DIVCO, the Divisional Council.

Paula Fass:

I was on DIVCO several times. That was a John Heilbron invention, was it not?

Christina Maslach:

I'm not sure. It could be, but I think there were probably a couple of other people.

Paula Fass:

Yeah, there was a committee that was formed.

Christina Maslach:

That was something that was, yeah -- I think David Littlejohn was another member. I don't know about it, but there were people who had different positions on this. What I remember was that there were going to be hearings, deciding which Senate committees would be represented on DIVCO. Not all of them.

Paula Fass:

No, I know. And then there were some representatives who were elected.

Christina Maslach:

Right. There was a woman in the Chancellor's office in California Hall, Roslyn Elms, who advised Sally and me on this and said, you should go to the hearing, and you should make an argument that SWEM *should* be on. It was not originally on the list, you know, it was not one of the standard committees. So, in fact, we went to the hearing, and we called up all kinds of women and other people on campus and said, "Come to the meeting and be there." Because then they were taking votes, and we had the votes. There were other people who were saying, yeah, but this *other* committee should have gotten on DIVCO. But they didn't get out the votes or anything.

Paula Fass:

They didn't organize themselves.

Christina Maslach:

They didn't organize. And it was Roslyn who said, this is what you have to do, if you're going to make this happen. Roslyn was somebody who worked on the accreditation reports for UC-Berkeley every 10 years, and she was also crucial for the work of the Commission that I chaired. Our paths had crossed, and she knew about our work on the gender and ethnic patterns that were shown in the Budget Committee and other committees. That was an important thing. I think there was then more movement around looking at issues of gender discrimination and stuff like that.

Later on, I was asked to become what Sally had done and other people had done before me, which was to be the Faculty Assistant on the Status of Women. I did that for three years, I think, it was a half-time position. I reported to Carol Christ, who was the EVCP at that point. It was

amazing to work on these cases. I mean, any case involving a woman faculty member -- whether it was an advancement or promotion or whatever -- the staff person would come in and just have pulled all the files for me to read. So, I was able to read the confidential files and all the documents and then consider, is there anything going on that that should be flagged? Like who are they picking to be on the ad hoc committee? And after a while I could see there were some people who wrote very anti-women kinds of evaluations consistently, and they were always being picked to be on the ad hoc committees. So, then I'd have a little memo that would go into Carol saying, this person should not be there because there's this past history, and he's not in the person's field, or whatever.

Or there would be cases....I've never said anything because obviously all this was confidential, but this was someone who kept getting turned down for Step Six. What is going on here? -- because people were writing and saying, "I wrote several years ago about this, so why hasn't it already happened? etc." Then I had to make an argument -- was she being treated differently than other people? Other women, or other men? And could I make an argument that there was not a consistent process? In that particular case, there was a direct comparison. Usually that's not possible because there may be other women, but they were at a different level or in different fields. But here there was somebody in the same department, who was the same age, who was a man, who had a similar career trajectory. I mean, you could not have wished for the same two cases, one female, one male. It was very close. And I brought in other ones as well. I wrote up the case and it showed how in all these instances, the two people had the same record. They were great at teaching seminars, but their evaluations for the basic lower-division courses were not so good. In his case, they raved about what a marvelous teacher he was. "Of course, anybody will have problems with the lower division course. I mean, that's just part of it. But where he really shines is in this small seminar." In her case, "Although she is great in the small seminars, she is not so good in the lower division. But if you're really going to be a good teacher, you have to be able to teach those basic courses." You know what I'm saying? The spin on the same pattern.

Paula Fass:

I understand completely. Very important stuff.

Christina Maslach:

So I could just pull that up, put it in the memo, go talk to Carol and she would go down and talk to the Budget Committee. I never talked to the Budget Committee, but she would. And she would call them on this and say, "so explain to me, here's this thing, but here's that thing. He's getting Step Six, but she is not." Carol never lost one of those cases that came forward, where we challenged what was going on and how the women were being treated.

There was another one, which again, there are things that I wish I could publish and talk about publicly, because they were so amazing. But you had to be able to look at multiple different files, not just a single person all by themselves. And that's what the Budget Committee always does. They look at them individually. But there was another one where there was a controversy about a woman who was associate coming up for full. I looked at it and it was the most biased, horrendous, awful thing being done by the department and particularly by the Chair. So biased against her. And part of what I had to do was pull all the files of all the other men in the

department (because it was all men who had come up for promotion to full) and what their cases were like. And it was a sorry list of people. One of them was promoted posthumously. He'd never...

Paula Fass:
Goodness.

Christina Maslach:
...he had never done anything to justify promotion to full. But then when he died, they promoted him to full. And there were other people who had not never published...

Paula Fass:
How is that possible?

Christina Maslach:
You don't want to know. But it was so biased -- her record compared to all of these men and now I had a long history of them, including the Chair. I mean, he had promised he would write a book, but it had never appeared, for years. Finally, he said he had started a book. The Budget Committee finally said, "Oh, okay, promote the guy. He's writing a book." But then he never wrote it. I mean, it was just on and on. All different kinds of examples of a system that wasn't promoting people...

Paula Fass:
It wasn't self-aware of itself.

Christina Maslach:
And wasn't promoting according to their criteria -- or if you said that's the criterion for this particular field, they weren't applying it for her. So it was a job that I really thought, wow, there's a way in which we can handle this by actually doing the comparative analysis, and then you have data, and then you can look at it and say, okay, was it a fair process or not? And sometimes it was, and sometimes it wasn't.

Paula Fass:
You carried your professional understanding of that data into that.

Christina Maslach:
Yeah.

Paula Fass:
I'd like you to talk a little bit about teaching. Clearly when you did this very important work, that was halftime. Was that a preference? Did you prefer not teaching as much?

Christina Maslach:
No. I really loved teaching.

Paula Fass:

Talk a little bit about that.

Christina Maslach:

I go back to that first day that I had to run my own class as a graduate student in methodology, which is not exactly the most exciting topic to do. And I had this group of students and was talking about things, and it was a class that was a small lab class, but for a longer time period. So I had to fill up the time. And I came out of that first class, so excited because it had gone well, and I had two of them, back-to-back, an hour and a half each. And by the time I was done with that day, it was like working with the students, answering questions, laying out the projects and stuff like that. I was just beside myself thinking, I love this.

Paula Fass:

They're going to pay me for this?

Christina Maslach:

I know, I know. That's the great thing about it. If you can get a job where you love doing it and they pay you too, that's good. So then I was developing a good reputation as a graduate student, a teaching assistant, and later, you know, teaching my own seminar. When I came to Berkeley, it was of course, a big thing, and now I'm going to teach a 300-student lecture course, or something like that. That was a little scary at first. But my first year as an assistant professor, in the fall I was able to do some guest lectures and that kind of helped a little bit. But I remember the first day of the big class when it came -- I was sweating bullets.

Paula Fass:

So you get into the large lecture?

Christina Maslach:

The large lecture. In those days we had to use computer punch cards, which we had to pass out so that they could then register in the class. So, the first day was not really much of anything except doing this. But again, it was like, oh my God, I was sort of terrified. But at any rate, I got going and eventually it seemed to be moving better. But a couple of things happened that posed some interesting challenges. One, I had three teaching assistants, and I had never had a teaching assistant before.

Paula Fass:

They were older than you?

Christina Maslach:

They were older than me.

Paula Fass:

I had seven.

Christina Maslach:

Oh, okay. And they were all male, and they were older than me, and it was clear at some point that "who is this young thing who's coming in, she doesn't know anything about teaching at a

university,” that kind of stuff. Trying to work with them and design sections and do exams and stuff was challenging. I remember at one point they were saying, we don't think it's going very well, actually. People are having a hard time, not understanding your lectures and you're not clear, you know? I was just, oh my God, what am I going to do? I remember talking to Phil about it, and he said, well, why don't you ask the students to do a midterm course evaluation?

Paula Fass:
Smart.

Christina Maslach:
Which at that time was not done at all, but he didn't say it that way. He said, okay, it's the TAs' opinion, but why don't you find out from the students? So, we had a midterm and then I came back and, I said, it's time for you to give me feedback on my first year, and I'd love to know how to improve -- just let me know. So they filled out all these questions.

Paula Fass:
They loved you.

Christina Maslach:
They actually were having a good time. But there were things about my handwriting on the board, that was not as good. So, from that I learned how to do overheads that were clear, and that kind of thing. And there were a number of other things, but it was nothing, nothing like what the TAs had said. And I talked with them about it and we actually worked things out through the year, so that by the end of the year, we all went out for dinner at a French restaurant in San Francisco, which one of them had picked. And it was...

Paula Fass:
Okay.

Christina Maslach:
... we're in good shape and we've all learned, and we're sort of moving forward. The other thing that happened though, in addition -- there were two things. There was protest about Vietnam and Cambodia, and so all of that was going on and disrupting and calling for people to not go to class, and all that kind of stuff. There was also a strike by one of the unions, the custodial unions, going on. What that meant was that I would come into the lecture hall and there would be no setup, no chalk, there was nothing available to start the class. The mics didn't work, or there was no microphone. There was all this kind of stuff, and there were days when I came in and I had the overhead transparencies, but no machine, so I couldn't do it. That was a little challenging -- how to ad-lib when things are not going your way, and you can't rely on some things. You're going to have to lecture a little differently and then do the class differently.

And then the other thing was there was a call for a campus-wide strike. A big thing was going to happen, and this was an afternoon class I had, and this was going to happen at noon, and they were calling for everybody to not go to class and whatever. And the Chancellor said, classes will be optional on Friday. Okay, all this stuff is going on, and it can be optional. So, I said to the class, it's optional. If you want to come, we won't do a regular class, we'll do some other kinds of

things, but if you want to come, I'll be there. Whatever, it's up to you. I went first to see the rally on Friday, to see what was going on. Music, no rally, no protest. Because by that time people realized you don't do anything that gets you arrested on a Friday, because then you're in Santa Rita jail for the weekend, and this is not a good thing to do. So, it was kind of like, where's all the stuff going on? I go into class and maybe about half the class showed up. I had been lecturing on attitude change and social influence – so I said, this is a great example. How do you influence people, if you have a different political view on this, and what are different things that we're learning? Let's take a real-life example of what's going on in your community, with your family, whatever your positions are. So, it was a much more interactive kind of thing. And then about partway through the class, in comes somebody from the back. And he starts yelling and screaming at me for daring to teach, when “you should not be teaching, you should be out in Sproul Plaza and protesting the war”. I've never been talked to in that way ever, by anybody. And here it was publicly, in front of a couple hundred students and it was like . . .

Paula Fass:
Intentional humiliation.

Christina Maslach:
Oh yeah. Everybody was listening to him, and then they turned back around to look at me, and I felt like that moment went on forever. Then I said, actually, I think what we are doing is as valuable as anything else. I've just been out there and you're doing music and stuff. We're talking about social change and influence, and if you want to persuade someone, what are things you need to think about to be influential. And I know this is optional, it's an extra thing, but I think this is probably as good, if not better, than what's going on out there. And this guy kind of stopped, and then all the students turned back around to him, and they started yelling back at him. It was that moment of -- okay, I've said that, now what is going to happen, he's going to yell at me again. But no, the students started saying, “we're here because we want to be, we're learning relevant things,” etc. And finally the guy disappeared and left.

Paula Fass:
So triumph.

Christina Maslach:
It was, but you know, that first big class was...

Paula Fass:
Hardest.

Christina Maslach:
With the ups and downs.

Paula Fass:
Did you have dogs? Because I had dogs.

Christina Maslach:
Oh sure. There were dogs. Yes.

Paula Fass:

So, but anyway, you loved teaching, so when did you start teaching graduate students? From the get-go?

Christina Maslach:

Oh, from the beginning. Yeah. The course load always, in my department was split pretty much for everybody, that you taught half undergraduate, half graduate.

Paula Fass:

That's a lot because in my program we did not have that.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah. But it was interesting because I think as I mentioned before, pretty soon I was the only person in Social Psychology. So when it came to the program, either of teaching undergraduates or of teaching graduate students, there was nobody else but me.

Paula Fass:

Could you have graduate students if you only had one person in that field?

Christina Maslach:

Well, you could, but the thing was, there were already people there, and they were taking several years to get through. So, I was having to find other people to teach some of the core courses to keep it going. That was an interesting challenge, but I got to meet some interesting people and some of them not only came to teach undergraduate courses as visitors, but we did research together. For example, Joy Stapp did several studies with me on individuation (my dissertation topic), which resulted in several top journal articles. And Ayala Pines became very interested in my work on burnout, so we did several field studies together. So that was another way of making that work.

For one of the graduate seminars to teach social psychology, I asked for extra money from the department, which they gave me to bring in the "who's who of social psychology" to visit at Berkeley. We had this visiting lecture series where each visitor would teach a class, give a seminar, we'd have a reception, you know, all that kind of stuff. But it was bringing the students face-to-face with the top names in the field. That would be a way to introduce the students, and they would have a chance for much longer conversations with these visitors to talk about research and stuff. So I tried cover it that way as well.

But we got to the point where the department used to have a bigger social psychology program, used to have a bigger industrial-organizational program, and they were down to one person in each, Shelly Zedeck in I-O, me in Social. The department was senior faculty, and we were both assistant professors, and they had pretty much decided at that point, we're not going to develop those programs again. We're not going to hire in those areas. So Shelly and I weren't sure if that meant that we would even get a fair shot at tenure because if they're not going to hire in our area, are they going to be fair and do it on our merits, rather than whether there's a program for us.

So that was part of my thinking, we may not be sticking around. But then what happened was the university did a review of the department. They brought in outside people as well. And these people pretty much made it clear that you must have social psychology. It was essential if you're going to have any reputation as a top psychology program, and so you'd have to build it. And the department did rebuild slowly in social. They decided not to rebuild in I-O but would treat Shelly fairly, which they did. But then he was without a program, he was like a one-person show, collaborating with Business, collaborating with social-personality psychology. So it all worked out, but then it became an ongoing search for several years for another social psychologist.

And again, I had to be on every search committee as an assistant professor with all the senior faculty. I had to identify for them who are the top people in social psychology, bring them out and then go through this thing of, "Oh, you know, why should we have that person?"

Paula Fass:

That must've been rough.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah. There was one faculty member in particular who was basically opposed to every single possible person that we could bring in.

Paula Fass:

Well, he didn't like social psychologists.

Christina Maslach:

Right. But it meant that I was in this interesting role of being on the search committee, and most of it was under Geoff Keppel as chair. What he set up was, we would bring these people out and do the talks and whatever, but we, the committee, would take turns hosting a dinner in our homes. So all the other senior people and me would be together in somebody's house. He and Sheila were incredible cooks, and Steve Glickman and Krista also, and Jeanne Block, so it was this amazing social arrangement, where I got to know the faculty, the senior faculty, better because we all had to be together over wine and food, as well as over file folders and stuff.

Paula Fass:

Do you think this also helped to create a sense of camaraderie in the department in general, having people in their homes?

Christina Maslach:

Yeah, I think so.

Paula Fass:

And a high sense of your own, of the importance of your area, instead of being constantly in competition.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah, kudos to Geoff for doing that. I mean, I always used to laugh whenever I went in to his office to see him about something, the first thing he would tell me is a new recipe he'd just

discovered that used lemon and chicken and garlic, and we would compare some notes and then we'd move on. He really set the tone there for that. And I think there was something about what happened in those meetings, over and above whatever guests or visitor we were hosting, that really made a difference -- it certainly made a difference for me because this was while I was an assistant professor.

Paula Fass:
Yeah, sure.

Christina Maslach:
Finally, the department decided to hire two people in social. One was a man; one was a woman. And, there was obviously stuff that went on that I was not privy to, about how this was being negotiated. But it came back that they would do the woman's case first. But then something happened that put the kibosh on the man's case, and he never came, even though he had been made the offer. Something happened at the last minute that didn't go through.

Paula Fass:
Are there any other things you wanted to bring up in this interview?

Christina Maslach:
I realize that I never finished describing my other leadership activities, so let me just say a few words about those. First was my role as Chair of the Academic Senate. I was the third woman to serve as Chair, and I was the first (and only) person to serve twice. When I was initially asked to serve as Vice-Chair, and then Chair, of the Senate, I had said no -- as I was still in the mode of turning down administrative jobs while my children were growing up. But one of my psychology colleagues, Arnie Leiman, who had served as Chair and was active in the Senate, took me out to lunch and told me why I should consider saying yes, the next time around. Later, I was asked again, and this time I did say yes -- first as Vice-Chair to Robert Spear's Chair, and then as Chair myself.

But I didn't serve a full year as Chair because I was then asked by the EVCP, Paul Gray, to become the Vice-Provost for Undergraduate Education and Instructional Technology -- a new position that he had created. This was an amazing opportunity for me, because it was not the standard kind of administrative job, but it focused on things I really loved, namely teaching and learning and undergraduate education at a public university. So, I stepped down as Chair of the Senate, and worked as the Vice-Provost for almost ten years. I had a great time doing that job (even though the promised support funding from UC never materialized) and learned a lot from Paul (and from his successor, George Breslauer). I worked with a lot of talented staff, and we were able to accomplish a lot of things -- particularly in educational technology, which was at a critical turning point. And I also worked with my counterparts at all the other UC campuses, many of them women, and I treasure that time together with them.

Finally, I was asked to serve as Chair of the Academic Senate for a second time. Again, at first, I said no -- but this time because I thought it was important for this position to rotate among all the faculty. But for various reasons, other potential candidates were not available at that time, so I agreed to do it again. After I had finished my term in 2013, I retired from the University. But I

have stayed active with the Women's Faculty Club (which just celebrated its centennial), and then you and I developed this Academic Pioneers oral history project, recording interviews with women who joined the Berkeley faculty in the 1970s and 1980s (including the two of us!).

END.