MARY ANN MASON

Christina Maslach:
First, we want to start with some basic demographic information -- name where you were born, where you went to school, college.

Mary Ann Mason:
Okay. Mary Ann Mason. I was born in Hibbing Minnesota. I'm a Minnesota girl, and I went to college after moving around the country because my father was an immigration officer. They transferred them a lot largely to keep them clean, I think in those days, so they went all over the country. And I went to four different high schools, then I went to college, first of all, at Rutgers, Douglass, and then Vassar for my last two years. And then after college, like all the young women my age, I got married immediately.

But I went on to graduate school with the encouragement of a professor I had at Vassar, Carl Degler, which has really made a big difference in my life. It's good to mention that because I think for women of my generation, it made all the difference to get that kind of encouragement from some professor, or someone senior who thought you had promise and gave you a little push. He kind of followed me around the campus when I was a senior and said, “Ms. Mason, have you applied for that fellowship?” And I said, but you know, I'm getting married. I can't do that. “No, you can take it anywhere you're going. And I hear you are going to the University of Rochester, which has a very good History Department.” And then every time I crossed the campus, it seemed, I'm sure, there he was. “Ms. Mason, have you applied for that fellowship?” And I did. And you know, I got it. And I went to graduate school -- I got married and went to graduate school. And many years later he came to my first book party, first book I ever wrote. And we became friends. Carl Degler turned out to be, I think maybe, one of the most distinguished American historians ever. He went to Stanford and when he was at Stanford, we became friendly, and it was wonderful. And how important it was for young women of my generation to get that kind of encouragement from a senior professor. And when that happened, it made all the difference to me. And I think it probably makes a difference to anybody who's had that kind of encouragement.

Christina Maslach:
So then after grad school?

Mary Ann Mason:
Then after grad school, I came to Berkeley in 1967, the summer of love, with my first husband who came as a postdoc to what was then called the Rad labs, now the Lawrence Berkeley labs, and I was finishing my dissertation in the Bancroft library. And the exciting part about the summer of love was that even though I was a very studious graduate student, at noon, there was that siren. It was a siren from all the police cars who were coming where the protesters were, and the Black Panthers were there, and the anti-war people were there. And then Mario Savio...there was this huge, huge number of protesters of various kinds. It was the most exciting place really possible. And you just couldn't resist. So even though I was not officially an activist, I went

down there pretty much every day to be part of the crowd and I got gassed a couple of times. You could not avoid that. It was very exciting.

And then ironically, because if you live long enough, everything becomes ironic about 30 years later, this was Sproul Hall, Sproul Plaza. And the students took over Sproul Hall, the activist students because it was in protest, I think they held it for a week or so, so this is the place where 30 years later, I was actually in charge of Sproul Hall because I was the Dean of the Graduate Division and the grad division occupied Sproul Hall. The chancellor at the time, Chancellor Robert Berdahl, came to me and said, Mary Ann, I know you can handle this, it'd be fun. Today there is a whole police station in the basement, and we'll assign you an officer and you'll get through this. This is right after 9/11. And the protesters had started up again. I mean, it's ironic, what comes around, goes around. There I was in charge of Sproul Hall where I was in charge of quite a large staff . In 2001, protesters kind of occupied most of the Sproul Hall, and I had a large confident Sergeant Lieutenant Lindsey who was looking after me and the staff and she'd come by every 45 minutes or so and say, Dean Mason, it's okay, everything's on time. They're moving along. They're lying down now, but they will be told to leave in, you know, an hour and a half or so. And by 1:45, I feel confident you will be able to leave here. So, I get these knocks on the door every 45 minutes because she said she'd give me a report of what was going on. And then she finally said, Dean Mason, I think things are going pretty well. So, in 15 minutes you can let your staff go, because they were all hanging around. We're all hanging out the windows. Then we all kind of walked out of Sproul Hall at 1:45 and [outside] there were two different lines, just the group who were wanting to get arrested and they have their arms up like this and please arrest me because they wanted to be. They wanted to go to Santa Rita, the local jail and be martyrs. And the other group just had picked up and left. So that was kind of anti-climactic, that's how it ended. No bloodshed, few people went to Santa Rita I think they maybe spent a few hours there I'm not sure what they did, but they could feel that they were warriors.

And then two days later we get a call from Manhattan --our daughter, Eve, who at that time was working for Conde Nast, *GQ Magazine* in Times Square-- called up and she was so angry and told us “I can't believe it. I was lying in, in Times Square in a protest and they never said I could leave. They just picked me up and arrested me and took me to jail.” So, she called in... they don't have the same attitude in New York that we have in Berkeley. Didn't give them a chance to disperse, but they did eventually let her go. And she was very angry and protested to the police department, and they sent a nice young aide around to explain to her and it all calmed down. But nonetheless, it’s the Berkeley culture that is very forgiving. It was a very exciting time to be there. The 1960s.

Paula Fass:
It was also on the Berkeley campus, as opposed to Times Square.

Mary Ann Mason:
Exactly. Two different places now, still two different worlds.

Christina Maslach:
So when did you finish your degrees?

Mary Ann Mason:
Good question. I finished my PhD, I think in 1972, but then I also went on to get a law degree or I was doing this simultaneously part of the time. Life wasn't always in clear checks for me. I was married then I had my first child in 1972, Tom, but I didn't start at Berkeley as a professor until 1989. By this time, I had practiced law, I had been teaching at St Mary's College teaching history, and for a while at Holy Names College. I had done kind of the typical work pattern that women like me did at that time. They had temporary jobs or they changed professions, but it was on the cusp of change --there still weren't too many people with regular faculty positions. In fact, when I first heard that my colleague now, Paula Fass, got a job teaching history at Berkeley, I was so envious. I think that was in 1974, right? The first woman to get a job there. And I mean that just didn't happen; it was so far out of the range. And then we had a group called West Coast Women's Historians. It was made up of all those people who taught in four- year colleges on the West coast. And there were seven of us because at that time I was teaching, I think, at St. Mary's College, and we were small, but powerful, a very talkative and energetic group. It was, I'm just trying to give you a sense of what it was like for this very tiny group of women who were trying to kind of break through the barriers. As I said, Paula Fass was kind of unique. I was envious from afar.

Christina Maslach:
How did it come about that you came to be hired at Berkeley? If you can tell me a little bit about how did you find out about the job?

Mary Ann Mason:
It's a good question. I think most things like this in life are kind of fortuitous. I wasn't scouring the ads or doing anything like that. I set up a paralegal program at St. Mary's College where I was teaching at the time, which was very successful. It was for reentry women because, at that time, I was following divorce law, or I was teaching it or practicing it. I can't even remember. But nonetheless, there were a lot of women who found themselves divorced in the 1970s. Everyone was getting divorced, and the law had changed so there was no alimony any longer. So, they really needed to find a stable way of sustaining themselves, and sometimes their families as well. So, the paralegal program which I set up was my program for educated college women who wanted to do something professional but needed to do it fast. And the American Bar Association picked up on the idea. So, I set up a program at St. Mary's College in Moraga. And then we did a branch in Oakland, because it was very successful, and the ABA accredited it. For many years it had a very good run but after I left, it kind of fell apart. That was not because of my leaving I don't think. I think the whole profession kind of fell apart for various reasons. Nonetheless, I felt good about what it achieved at the time because it was really offering people, largely women, a chance to do something that they felt was useful and help themselves professionally. And they could manage it, because they had not given up on doing the kind of graduate work or things that they might have done in a different era. At the time they were stuck in this time warp. It was a kind of transition, as all the women who you are interviewing know, between the stay-at-home moms and the women who wanted to have professions. And a lot of us got to get caught in this trap, in between.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah. So how did it happen that you were hired by the university in Social Welfare, right?

Mary Ann Mason:
How did I get a job? It was because of one of my students, one of the women who took a course from me. Barbara Gilbert, I think. She took a course from me and then she introduced me to her husband who was a professor, Neil Gilbert, so he could meet my husband. So, we got together socially, and we just had some nice time socially. I can't remember all the details of it, but he said, there's a job coming up [in his school] and you'd be perfect for this in the Graduate School of Social Welfare. I said, you know I'm not a social worker, but he replied that we had someone who's been teaching law, and he's leaving, and they really need someone to teach law. I said, children, law, all those kinds of matters-- they really did need to cover matters like health law, mental health law, family law. So, on his urging, I applied for the job and got the job as an assistant professor.

Christina Maslach:
Was there anything in particular about the process in terms of you coming for the interview, or giving a talk or negotiating it, that stands out at all? Or was it sort of straightforward?

Mary Ann Mason:
Well, I had a very good Dean at that time. Harry Specht. Yeah. The further away I get from this, and this was many, many years ago, I respect how he handled it and handled everything. And in fact, when I was going through the process, I do remember the process and I looked at it on paper. I'd already written two books and blah, blah, blah, and I had all these degrees. I had a JD and a PhD at this point, and he and the ad hoc committee were the one that was reviewing me. There was one man on it and I won't name names, he's long dead-- he actually was a friend of my husband-- who said she's a nice lady, but, you know, she's married, or something to that effect, you know. She's not really made for this kind of thing, it's going to be too hard for her or something like that, and Harry Specht argued with the person who was on the committee or wanted to argue with him, and he called the man's office and the assistant answered and he said to him, I would like to speak to Professor blah, blah. And she said, what is this in regard to? And he said, this is about Dr. Mason or something. [And she said] Oh, is that the woman who was too old?

Paula Fass:
Oh my goodness.

Mary Ann Mason:
And he said, ah, you will say that again, if asked, right? Well, I said it to you, I guess I have to. Well, I got the job.

Christina Maslach:
Well good for him though.

Paula Fass:
Can I ask something if you don't mind? The ageism question did not occur at the same time as discrimination against racial groups and women. It came a little bit later...

Mary Ann Mason:
Ageism was always there.

Paula Fass:
No, but, the legal question of whether you could discriminate against people on the basis of their age emerged later...

Mary Ann Mason:
The issue came later, but the actual practical issue was always there.

Paula Fass:
Oh, the practical issue yes, but was the concern about the matter being taken to court already there when you were being hired? In other words, by '89. That's what I'm asking. By '74, certainly you couldn't ask people about certain things. You couldn't discriminate on the basis of their gender or their race, but you could still discriminate on the basis of age, but by '89, it sounds like we may have moved by then to another boundary that couldn't be crossed.

Mary Ann Mason:
Yes. I don't know exactly when the law fixated on that, but it was clearly a no-no.

Paula Fass:
Okay. That's what I thought. Interesting. By '89 it was already a legal problem.

Christina Maslach:
In terms of your subsequent interactions with colleagues on campus, did you run into similar issues like this again? Or were there any other kinds of things that would come up, positively or negatively, in terms of what it was that you were bringing to the school?

Mary Ann Mason:
No, I have to say I was treated very well by my own department and the School of Social Welfare. There were several women faculty already.

Christina Maslach:
There were, yes.

Mary Ann Mason:
It was the kind of department that was been always very open to women. So, I didn't feel it in the department. And I was very active as soon as I could be with the Graduate Council and with the committees. And there, women were not well-represented, but they were represented.

Christina Maslach:
Okay. Some people talk about ways in which they were welcomed as finally having a different perspective or bringing something, but others, you know, were not welcomed. So, when you started developing your next line of academic work and research, what kind of issues did you focus on?

Mary Ann Mason:
Well, actually the job is what made me go in that direction. And then I'd been doing a lot of work on the most recent book I was working on when I came to Berkeley. It's a history of child custody in America, *From Father's Property to Children's Rights*, which was social history and very much of an effort that grew from what I knew how to do and had been doing a lot. When I was appointed the Graduate Dean, which was kind of out of the blue....

Christina Maslach:
What year was that? Do you remember?

Mary Ann Mason:
Yeah, it was in 2000. And I had been asked to stand in as an Associate Dean for the previous year. So, I had some sense of what's going on. And I got a call from Joe Duggan, who was Graduate Dean, because he was stepping down and I thought he was going to ask me to continue on as Associate Dean. I didn't really want to do that. And then he asked me if I wanted to be Dean, I said well, why not? And then I really got a big picture of the campus, and it was very eye-opening. For one thing, I was the first woman Graduate Dean up to that point, the only woman Dean on the campus too. And the first meeting, I was the only woman dean (not the first woman Dean and I wasn't the last), but at that particular moment, I was the only one, it was still very heavily male-dominated. As I said, I had not seen that bias so much in my own department, but I certainly saw that in higher administration. That made me very aware of it. And the next thing that made me more than aware of it is that when I introduced or met the incoming class of PhDs, 51% of them were women. But if you looked around, still a very tiny percentage were women on the faculty, a very tiny percentage -- more than 2%, but not much more. And that's why I started this long research project on what happened to women in the academic pipeline. Women who got PhDs particularly. And we got the grant from the Sloan foundation and later on from NSF and other people to really follow them in a systematic way. And what happened was pretty clear once women got pregnant (and it usually happened when they were graduate students). They knew they couldn't really manage it. So, they dropped out at some point. As a result, there's this huge loss of talent, or if they got a job, then at tenure, because we made no accommodation for them at that time. And they knew it. So, the huge drop between the number of people who got PhDs and those who actually got tenure was enormous. Staggering. So that was what I really focused on.

Paula Fass:
If I could just ask, there must also have been some attrition within the graduate program. In other words, 51% came in, but not the whole 51% got their PhDs. Correct? In other words, there are different plateaus of diminishing numbers. So, let's say a hundred women come in -- of those hundred, did 50%, get their PhD?

Mary Ann Mason:
Well, that's a good question. And I do have data on it, but the major event that changed things is when they had a child.

Paula Fass:

Right. But so many of them had those children during the time that they were getting their PhD, because of the age issue. Women, like men, get their PhDs in their late twenties, early thirties, which are the most important childbearing years. So did these women feel that conflict or problem or potential problem...

Mary Ann Mason:
As graduate students and even more so as young academics and postdocs.

Paula Fass:
And postdocs, correct. But I suspect some of them then dropped out even before they got the PhD. They looked around and they saw that there were very few women who were actually on the faculty.

Mary Ann Mason:
Well, you know, I did write a whole book on that.

Paula Fass:
It's one of the reasons I'm asking...

Mary Ann Mason:
And if anyone wants to and, I'm sorry, I didn't prep for this, but there's a whole book called *Do Babies Matter? Gender and Family In the Ivory Tower*. We did do extensive study of this using a lot of the NSF data because anyone who gets a PhD registers once, and then they're followed every 10 years for forever, until death or whatever. So, we have really good data on all of these, all these women and men as well. And then we also did our own surveys at the UC system.

Christina Maslach:
What was the response to the work that you were doing, to your research and also to your administrative work -- are there particular high points in all of that, that you want to share with us or challenging ones as well?

Mary Ann Mason:
Well, the highest point is...I got an email one day from a woman called Sarah.

Mary Ann Mason:
A woman named Sarah Brady and she said, hello, Dean Mason, my name is Sarah Brady, and I am the assistant to Susan Bonilla, who was a California State Assembly representative. She said, I want you to know that we really admire your work, and we really want to help graduate students who get pregnant. Can we help you write a bill? So yeah, in fact, I went with Sarah to Sacramento, and we got a sponsor and we wrote the bill and, and I testified before two different committees I think though I've forgotten the details of these two committees. And I didn't have any resistance to this. So, we passed a bill in California. I can give you a copy of that too. It basically gave all graduate students in California and all postdocs, basically gave everyone including spouses, including dads and fathers, a year of leave without the danger of being dropped from the program. There was a danger that you'd get taken out of the program,

particularly in science, because if you weren't there, you weren't producing. They don't want you anymore. And again, it became a kind of a ground- breaking thing. And then we did the same thing for faculty, and other states picked up the idea. So, it has had a very good effect.

Christina Maslach:
What an influence. When you think about that in terms of a legacy of all of that work.

Mary Ann Mason:
It was a great moment to have Sarah Brady call me.

Christina Maslach:
I hadn't realized there were those, both bills.

Mary Ann Mason:
Yes.

Christina Maslach:
That's really incredible. Wow.

Paula Fass:
If I may just say this...Mary Ann transformed the climate at the university for, for family life. Because, both maternity and paternity leave were recognized, one of my colleagues, Mark Brilliant, in the opening of his book thanks Mary Ann, saying that without her, he would not have been able to both be the father and the author of this book. And he said, Mary Ann Mason was the great innovator. We were the first, Berkeley was the first because of Mary Ann's work. So... If she won't say it, I'll say it.

Mary Ann Mason:
And I never met him before. I thought it was wonderful...

Christina Maslach:
Oh, that's great.
Okay. Now, did you come in with tenure or did you have to go...

Mary Ann Mason:
Nope, assistant professor.

Christina Maslach:
As assistant professor? Okay. So maybe we could then ask about that process as well. When did that happen? Was there anything, was it again, was it a straightforward process in terms of what happened in your department?

Mary Ann Mason:
Nothing difficult about it. You know, I had already written a couple of books. I wrote another book for tenure. So it was not that hard.

Christina Maslach:
So there wasn't any drama.

Mary Ann Mason:
No drama.

Paula Fass:
I mean, Mary Ann just throws off the fact that she wrote this other book. But the fact is, this book that she wrote, *From Father's Property to Children's Rights,* is a foundational book in the field and it's used everywhere. And in courses on children's history and courses on legal custody issues, it's a major book.

Christina Maslach:
Right. I also wanted to ask about the kind of teaching you did and what your experience was there.

Mary Ann Mason:
Well I taught law courses. And I did them in kind of the, well in a traditional Socratic way, and I've always liked teaching and it was very enjoyable and I give the students legal cases and then they'd have to explain them and they argued and you know it was fun.
But I'm not one of these people who thinks teaching is the be all and end all of things. I think writing is more interesting.

Christina Maslach:
Okay. But in terms of teaching and the evaluations and what you were doing, it was succeeding? Some people I've interviewed have talked about some of the different reactions that male and female students had, either as undergraduates, but also as graduate students working with them, in terms of either the particular topics or how it was that they felt more or less comfortable with them as their mentor. So were there any of these kinds of issues that ever came up for you?

Mary Ann Mason:
Not that I remember honestly, but social welfare is largely female-dominated, so I never had any trouble.

Christina Maslach:
Yeah.

Mary Ann Mason:
Maybe I just didn't remember, but I just chose not to remember.

Christina Maslach:
Okay. I realized we didn't get everything in terms of your more personal family life. I mean, we're sort of jumping around a bit in terms of that. So, from the sixties to the eighties just fill in some of the gaps there that we had in the interview. So that you were, you were married to your first husband, you were working during free speech and all of the protests and stuff in the sixties. Yes. And then, and you had one child?

Mary Ann Mason:
Yeah, it was my first husband. And then, I taught at two different universities. Well, Holy Names College in Oakland and St. Mary's College in Moraga. And I liked them both. And these are the kinds of places that would take women on the faculty. So, there were a number, not large number, but there were some women who were teaching there, and I set up the program for paralegal studies, as I mentioned at St. Mary's; it was a good time. And then I was also practicing law part of the time, yeah, it's all something of a blur because I was doing so many things.

Christina Maslach:
So many things. Multitasking, as we now say. Okay.

Mary Ann Mason:
And it's a long time ago. My second husband, who I married in 1980. No, actually '79. We've been married for 40 years and he's an academic as well. So, it worked out fine. Married 40 years now.

Christina Maslach:
And you had another child?

Mary Ann Mason:
Yes. Yes. Eve Ekman Who also knows where she gets Berkeleyism.

Christina Maslach:
Yeah. When, when was she born?

Mary Ann Mason:
1980. That I remember.

Christina Maslach:
Yeah. And I think that was when our paths crossed a couple years later at San Francisco Day School, and then NYU, where Eve and my youngest also went, and they were both there. Yeah. So we have some other family connections. Okay, but in terms of accommodating both family and professional life, I don't know if people talk about it as balance or they talk about it at all. I mean, were there particular challenges for you or, or solutions that really worked well that you experienced in all this?

Mary Ann Mason:
I do think this is somewhat idiosyncratic. I had two children and they were seven years apart, which I think makes a big difference when you don’t have them too close together. That is much harder in my observation. And I always had some form of help. I had some kind of daycare or something to rely on. So, and I had healthy children. That's a big difference because if you have children who are having some difficulties, you can't, it takes up all of your life. It's never easy to be a mother and trying to pursue a career. It's always difficult. I don't think my story is much different than any other. It's good in the sense that my children were not particularly sick. They were sometimes sick.

Christina Maslach:
Yeah. No, but I mean the sort of more normal range of things.

Paula Fass:
Was Paul helpful as a partner?

Mary Ann Mason:
Yes, yes. I'd say he was helpful. You know, I don't think he was a 50/50 person, but I'm not sure that any men are.

Christina Maslach:
Did you have commuting issues?

Mary Ann Mason:
Oh yes. Because he was always at UCSF in the city and medical school and I was always in the East Bay, even before Berkeley, the colleges I taught at were in the East Bay. So, we went back, we moved back and forth, I think three or four times. And one of us would always have to call it. There had to be some reason for doing it. I won't go into the reasons, but it was usually that one person couldn't handle the overwhelming commute they were doing because, as you know, commuting across the Bay Bridge is challenging.

Christina Maslach:
Many years. Yes, absolutely. Absolutely. How did you and Paul meet, by the way?

Mary Ann Mason:
The old-fashioned way before the internet. Mutual friends.

Christina Maslach:
A mutual friend introduced you or something like that.

Mary Ann Mason:
Yeah. Did you know George Oster at all? Probably didn't, he was a professor at Berkeley.

Christina Maslach:
No. Did any kind of personal family, or any other kinds of issues ever, pose any problems for you at work? So, I mean, it's one thing to say, how does the work influence or have an impact on your whole life and commuting and all that, but did it ever come up in other ways, in terms of your academic life?

Mary Ann Mason:
You mean family issues? Well, maybe the commuting more than anything else, I mean that was..

Christina Maslach:
I guess the most important thing at this point is, are there any other things that you think were

important in terms of your coming into this career at Berkeley that we haven't asked about and that you think would be important to share with us?

Mary Ann Mason:
The major thing that was my experience of being Graduate Dean and just seeing the whole bigger picture of what was happening in academia and how they were coming in, but they weren't seeing it. And that really struck me very hard when I saw it first- hand. That wasn't so obvious in Social Welfare because there were lots of women in the field. But it certainly was very obvious for you. So, the whole bigger picture. And that included looking at the law school and then it was over at the business school, all the professional schools as well.

Paula Fass:
Can I ask a question? What Mary Ann hasn't said, that I know, is that in her role as Graduate Dean, she also had a national presence, and that there was this council of graduate deans that met regularly. So, you were exposed not just to the situation at Berkeley. But you saw the situation at the Ivies, right? Wasn't it 11 schools that there was this major consortium of -- do you want to talk a little bit about that at all?

Mary Ann Mason:
Well, my own research really was not so much just concentrated on that. But I did get a look of the whole, the whole spectrum. And I don't know that it was that much different in any of these schools, but you got to be a graduate student at a major university. We're talking about major name places that have PhDs who go on to get faculty positions. I don't know that it made that much of a difference. The same issue of childbirth and family were just as strong at Stanford as they were at Berkeley or UCLA.

Paula Fass:
But, that's an important point. Because not everybody saw things in this nationwide way that you did. So, the fact that they were the same, doesn't make it less important to them.

Mary Ann Mason:
And the only thing that is different in some ways was Title IX (the California laws which we passed ultimately were based on Title IX, which is the federal law), which was ultimately very important, since it covered all of education. And we used that as the basis for our new laws that we were going to push through. Not all states have used it though. The problem is it hasn't been really a national question, some states have picked up the California model, but it has not caught on everywhere. It's like, were you asking me, or someone was asking me, about the new federal law that if it passes before...

Paula Fass:
Which affects federal workers...

Mary Ann Mason:
So a lot of these issues should be totally widespread. It should be federally enforced. But you know, I sometimes feel guilty. I kind of left that behind and moved on to other things, including

retirement. But you know, I've written a couple books since then. I just didn't invent other things. Because there's a lot of work to be done there yet. I don't know about the two of you, but when you've left an intensive area of research, it's hard to keep up with it. You just systematically don't, because it just tears you apart to not be there at the center of it. And I just don't travel anymore. It's harder to be around the world and figuring out what they're all doing. You probably feel the same way, both of you.

Christina Maslach:
Yeah, but the other thing is I just find at some point it's like, "I've made a contribution, I've done certain things, and I'm not going to be reading every article that's out there." You know what I'm saying? I'm moving on to another thing that I'm going to do now.

Mary Ann Mason:
My last book was *Babies of Technology*. And now we're doing a book about who takes care of mom. If we're going to make any progress on it, but we're, you know, just picking up new things.

Paula Fass:
You might want to talk about the fact that unlike anybody else, I know, you have written books with your children. I mean, that's an unusual experience. Do you want to say something about that?

Mary Ann Mason:
We believe in child labor.

Paula Fass:
Well what was it like? I mean, it's a very unusual experience.

Mary Ann Mason:
Well, we did different things. With Eve, it was more, she gathered a lot of stories together that was mothers on the fast track. She did that. And I think I gave her a task, which I think she enjoyed and got a lot out of it, which was interviewing women in different professions, outstanding doctors, outstanding, whatever from different professions. And that was very useful. And she's a writer; both of my kids are. And my son is really quite a good writer and editor. So, this last book, on babies and technology, he really did, I think, the most serious part of the writing, although I probably did some of the necessary part of the thinking. And now we're moving on to, who's taking care of mom. I'm trying to shovel it all towards him because he has strength to do it, but it's good for them to have the experience. But he did this last one on babies and technology and the one that we're currently talking about. Giving it to him as a project. I'm not doing it because it's just, it's fun to do together. And I have to say it's an enjoyable experience for all of us. We didn't do all four to be together. We couldn't handle that one.

Christina Maslach:
Yeah, that might be too much collaboration.

Mary Ann Mason:

But both of them are good writers and they enjoy doing it.

Christina Maslach:
Good. Are there any other colleagues of any kind that you would want to mention as being important for whatever reason? You talked about Carl, who was that mentor, but, anyone else along the way who you think, how great that I was able to spend some time with him or her before I went into administration, or as I was working on x or y?

Mary Ann Mason:
I would have to say the woman next to me [Paula Fass], we've had a good, productive time together. We've written things together and it's been a very, very productive relationship, both as friendship, but also just the things we've written together.

Paula Fass:
We've traveled together. We've done projects together of various sorts, and Mary Ann was extraordinarily important to me. And we have this, this larger group too, which might be worth mentioning.

Mary Ann Mason:
Our book club.

Paula Fass:
Well, now it's become a book club, but it was the Berkeley Family Forum, which produced three books together too. So, there was this interdisciplinary group that Mary Ann helped to create. I came in on it, but you and Steve Sugarman were the creators. Just to kind of remind Mary Ann, she's done so many things. She doesn't necessarily remember them all. But that was something that was very important as part of the campus community.

Mary Ann Mason:
And I think that was like 25 years ago?

Paula Fass:
Yes. It was about 25 years ago.

Mary Ann Mason:
And they're all Berkeley faculty, you know, almost all of them. I'm sure.

Christina Maslach:
Okay. Is there anything else that you wanted to say, or something we haven't asked about that you think we should have?

Mary Ann Mason:
I've had a great ride.
And I'm really happy that you guys are doing this. This is really a good project.

Christina Maslach:

It's a great project, I think. I mean, I've just learned so much from hearing these different stories and sometimes, I've heard parts of them, or our paths crossed at a point where, you know, we might've shared something or whatever, but then there's just other things. It was like, wow, I never knew.... So, it's been eye-opening. It'd be nice to think about how best to share some of this.

Paula Fass:
Can I add one more little thing, because I have known Mary Ann very well. Maybe because of her experience, not being funneled automatically into one discipline, which tends to happen to people who get their PhDs and then go on into teaching. Mary Ann has had a much more global perspective on things than most people that I know. She sees things in large ways because she looks at it as a problem, as an issue. Not just as a reflection of a disciplinary perspective. And I think that's an enormously useful and helpful thing that a lot of women actually have brought to bear because they've had these varied perspectives. And I think Mary Ann's a really good representative of that. So, somebody's got to say it if she doesn't say that.

Christina Maslach:
That's a good point. I mean, it does resonate with several of the other women who've been interviewed who actually followed multiple paths eventually. You know what I'm saying? It's not, it's not the funneling...

Paula Fass:
That's part of the era too.

Christina Maslach:
And that's what we're hoping, I think -- to capture that. I think that it really required some other kinds of work and experience.

Mary Ann Mason:
Thank you! Thank you for doing this. This is amazing. I admire you guys for taking this on.

Paula Fass:
I think it's an important thing.

Mary Ann Mason:
Yeah, I do too.

Paula Fass:
Part of the history of the transformation of the university, which, I think, people don't even see because they have not looked.

Mary Ann Mason:
And again, because I had these two little colleges that I started at. We were slow to transform...

Paula Fass:
Certainly because we were Berkeley--a major research institution, and it was assumed that

women may teach but don't do research very well, it took longer.

Mary Ann Mason:
Remember that first day with Western women's or whatever it was called. There was...there was somebody from Stanford, and a couple people from Davis and couple from Sacramento, but it was just, you know, these little scatterings.

Paula Fass:
Even at Barnard, when I was there in the sixties, we benefited from having the wives of Columbia professors with their own doctoral degrees teach us, but they weren't in the professorial ranks. They were lecturers or instructors. And we, we actually did know the difference, but they were there, and they were women and that influenced lots of us. That was the time that the big change in attitudes took place.

Christina Maslach:
Yeah. Capturing that is great.

END.