

A TEI Project

Interview of Helen (LENA) Astin

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1. Transcript

1.1. Session 1 (February 14, 2012)

Lena Astin

: Kimberlee, after you gave me the assignment, I started to reflect back over the early years of my life. I also would like to contextualize what it was about during my early experiences that made me the kind of person I am. So I'll give you the story but I'll also do a little bit of interpretation.

Kimberlee Grandholm

: That sounds perfect. Okay.

LA

: To begin with, I was born, in 1932, in a small place that is called Serres. Very small. Delightful place. My father had a very high position there as a civil engineer. So we had resources. We had a beautiful house that he designed. The house, had a lot of gardens around it. So to this day, I remember the smell of Greek jasmine. And as it happened I have a friend who brought me some Greek jasmine that I planted, and now I have a huge tree in my backyard.

KG

: That's awesome.

LA

: So I get the same smells here in Los Angeles, which is so wonderful. I sort of like going back and forth, reminiscing about my childhood but also enjoying my jasmine tree here,

and I treat it with a loving care. So anyhow, it was a beautiful house, and that started me sort of loving beauty in my life, I think, very early on. Flowers, beautiful gardens, beautiful houses. My granddaughters tease me about it, and they love it, too, because they enjoy when they see how I fix the house and how I arrange flowers, and so that's a part of me, to a great extent. I had a very wonderful childhood until the war broke out. I have a brother, who is three and a half years older, and we were very close growing up. We shared a room, and the idea was that before – again, before the war – that in a couple of years my father was going to give me his study, and that was going to be my space, a room of my own. But that dream did not materialize when the war broke out. So even at that age (I was eight years old then), I used to fantasize about how I was going to fix the space and make it my own. Some other recollections I have of those days are that I was the only girl in the neighborhood. I grew up with a lot of boys, and I used to play all the games outdoors. So of course, I participated in that, but I must tell you that I not enjoy sports, but "I was a good sport." I used to crave to play dolls and dollhouse. So a boy who lived next door loved to do that with me. Every so often, I would say, "Laki, let's go upstairs and play dolls, and we'll fix a little house and so forth." I have wondered what has become of him. What happened, during those early year that was a significant thing for me, was that all the kids started school before I did. And all of a sudden, the neighborhood emptied, and I was left behind. So I used to walk to the school and sit for a while outside waiting for them to come out. So what my father did – he said, "Okay. She's ready to be in school. We need to get her in school." So he actually changed my birth certificate so I can start school earlier. He had that kind of power and connections to do that.

KG

: Oh my goodness.

LA

: So he made me a year older so I could start school, and I started school a year younger than most of the kids. My recollections of school are that I always loved school, from

the beginning, and I was always an excellent student. It was my desire to succeed in school and in academics, and even though, at home, I was not an easy child, I was the perfect child at school. I remember my mother, when she came to visit me in this country, looked at me, and said, "My God. I never thought you would turn out so good. You're a sweet kid now." I said, "Well, you change, you know, over time."

KG

: What year were you born?

LA

: 1932.

LA

: In 1939, when I was seven, there were all the rumors around that we were gonna have a war. So my grandfather thought that it'd be a good idea for all of the women and children in the family to go to a village in middle Greece, as a protection. And we went, actually, where he was born and raised. We spent there less than a year, maybe three or four months when we decided that nothing was happening so we came back. So that was the first inkling that something was going to happen, something was cooking. But I was very young, and I didn't realize, really, the significance of the move and what it meant, what a war means. A year later in 1940, Greece declared that, "no, we're not going to succumb, that we're gonna fight with the Allies." I remember it was a day in October, and it's a very big day in Greece. They call it the Oxi Day, which means, "No," we're not going to surrender, we're going to fight as much as we can, as well as we can, even if we are a little country. So in October, when the war was declared, the Second World War, my father, who really understood the German mentality because he was fluent in German, decided that the women and children – because all the men were recruited for the army – the women and children should go to Athens because the Germans, out of respect for the Acropolis and what Athens stood for, they were not going to bombard Athens. And that turned out to be true. They never did actually bombard Athens. So all of us, right away, went to Athens. I remember that day very well because my mother came to me and to

my brothers saying, "Okay, guys. Here's two suitcases. Pack whatever you can, and we're leaving tomorrow." And I remember saying, "How can I – what can I put in this suitcase? I can't even put my doll in this suitcase," and then I said, "and then I have a piano lesson." I just had started piano. So my mother said, "Nothing doing. That's what you have to do. Pack whatever you want." So we left everything behind, and we moved to Athens. We spent in Athens about a year and a half. It was a very significant year for all of us. First of all, because immediately you felt – the war, you felt it immediately. Greece was occupied very soon after the war begun. The Germans and the Italians occupied Greece for a couple of years. While in Athens we lived in one room, my brother, my mother, and I, a room we rented from the family that lived there. My aunt and my cousin were renting a room there as well. So immediately what happened was that the space was reduced to practically nothing. The other thing that happened during the occupation was the enormous famine that the Greeks experienced. I remember, even as a young child I had to stand in lines for maybe one tomato, a potato, or a can of soup. So I experienced the war, in terms of limited space and food. We also had a lot of sirens and air raids – we will be walking to school and the sirens will start. But we were never got bombed while living in Athens. The only experience and memories as a result were going to the shelters, not having enough food, and not having enough space. Another experience I remember very vividly was our trip by train to Salonika, returning not to my original hometown – Serres, but to a much bigger city – Salonika, which is about 40 miles probably from Serres. A beautiful city and the biggest city after Athens, situated right by the water. So we were on the train going from Athens to Salonika, and we stopped. At the stop were Italian and German soldiers, eating lunch. I remember it vividly. I went close to one of the soldiers looking at his food and craving it. It was an Italian soldier. He looked at me, and he gave me his whole dish of food.

KG

: What was the dish?

LA

: Pasta and he was so reprimanded by a German soldier that he had to take it back. "How could he give his food to the enemy?" That was the German mentality. The difference between the Italians and the Germans was like night and day. We never feared the Italians. But the Germans, you heard their boots behind you and you were petrified because the Germans – which was terrible really – that if one German was killed, they will kill ten Greeks in retaliation. So you never knew really, what was next. Your life was always in jeopardy with the Germans, but as I said, the Italians were different – and it's interesting to see some movies that were made during the war. The Italians will sing and enjoy themselves, and the Germans were hardcore. In Athens, actually, the best part – because I have to think about the good parts as well as the sad parts. The best part was the school I went to. The Berzan School created and operated by a Frenchman, Mr. Berzan.

KG

: So, how old were you at this point?

LA

: I was eight when we left Serres for Athens.

KG

: Talk a little bit about before the occupation? Can you tell me a little bit where you lived before that?

LA

: Yeah, I lived in Serres, as I said, in a beautiful home that my father had designed and supervised its construction. The house was in two floors. The first floor was rented, and we lived on the second floor. The house was surrounded by these beautiful gardens. Schooling was wonderful. I had started piano lessons. It was an idyllic life, as far as I was concerned, beautiful home, beautiful neighborhood, wonderful experiences at school. It was like anything a child can ask for, to feel very safe and loved. I always felt that kind of safety around my family which I'll come back to it because I feel a lot of my strength has come from that sense of security early on. Even during the war, I felt very safe.

KG

: So that was an extremely sharp contrast from what you were experiencing during the occupation.

LA

: Right. From this – as I said, an idyllic life to living under the German occupation I think that was so important to have your first eight years of life where you really feel very comfortable in a very loving family, very secure. My grandparents lived not far from us. Every Sunday after church, we'll go and visit my grandparents, and my grandmother will have the wonderful food spread out, and as I said, in retrospect, I saw it as an idyllic life, really, as a child. There was no concern, no pressures, wonderful grandparents, very loving parents. As I look back, I feel that I was very fortunate and very lucky to experience this first eight years in that way, because, from 1939 until I came to this country, life – which I'll speak about it – life was not an easy one at all. But what happened in those early years, I think they have been critical in making me the kind of person I am, feeling very secure and feeling loved, life was very good. I remember early vacations going to an island every summer. My mother – my father would stay behind, so my mother, the children and our nanny will go to a lovely island in the north. I remember being like around three or four years old on a small boat and seeing the moon and looking at the beauty all around me. What I remember, in those years, is a lot of beauty and a lot of comfort. Also, I remember, though, being a kind of a brave child, really, like walking – young and walking behind and following the older kids to school and waiting there for them to come back. Another memory I have of those early years is that we lived next to a clinic, and the doctor – a handsome older man with his goatee and wired rimmed glasses. He used to make visits on his horse. One day I said, "I want to come and see what you do," and he said – at that time – I was probably seven years old. He said, "Well, I do surgeries. You want to watch one?" I said, "Why not?" and I remember I went and watched a surgery, an appendectomy, and I'm sitting there watching it, and I remember it like now the intestines coming out, I never got afraid or anything. My brother who became

a doctor, apocrypha has it that he almost fainted when he watched a similar surgery. Looking back, I remember the great room in the house, sitting there, playing. One memory that I want to mention has to do with my relationship with my brother. I always felt that he was the favorite one because he was "the good boy." He never acted out. He was very obedient. Sometimes firstborns are like that, and my mother would say, "Look at your brother, how good he's – never says no." I have to say, I was not an easy child. If my mother said anything, before even she finished her sentence I would say no. So I was kind of a stubborn and – I was very sweet, in my own way, but not really that sweet with my parents. As I said earlier, those first eight years, minus a few months when we were taken away to that village in 1939, were very good years. I started – I wanted to play piano. I started piano lessons. I had only maybe a couple piano lessons, and then the war broke out.

KG

: Did music have an effect on you that early an age?

LA

: Oh, all my life because – I'll come back to it because during the war when we went back to Salonika, I kept insisting that I wanted to start piano again, and my parents said, "We cannot do it. We cannot afford it. We don't have a piano in the house. We cannot do it," and I have to tell you, I was again that kind of a child that I said, "Okay, I'll stop eating then. Either I start piano or I stop eating." I'm having my own little revolution here, and finally, they succumbed to it, and I started, and the only thing I could do is go to a neighbor's home when we rented time from somebody else's piano for me to practice because we couldn't afford to get a piano. I started these lessons when I was 11 or 12, and I studied until I left Greece. I attended the Greek Conservatory of music. I was quite advanced before I stopped when I moved to this country. I had three more years to get my certificate in piano, which also involved harmony and history of music. It was a total immersion into music, and when I came here as poor as I was, I continued to study piano. I had a wonderful teacher during my

undergraduate studies and as a graduate student back at Ohio. I had a teacher who never charged me a penny for the lessons.

KG

: Oh, wow.

LA

: Because he thought I was so serious about music, and it was such a pleasure for him because I was doing it out of love for it and not because I had to do it. So he says, "No, no. You don't have to pay me. Just it is a pleasure." But I knew it was never going to be my life's work. It was going to be a side of what else I was doing. I was serious about it but not to want to become a concert pianist. I remember when I was at Ohio, we had – the director of the San Francisco Symphony come to give a master class, and I participated in it, and he said to me, "You know, you'll never be a concert pianist." I said, "I know it, but it doesn't bother me." I said, "That's not my aspiration." But music has always been very significant in my life and actually my husband and I met through music, which is another story, too, because he's also a pianist, and he was a music major. So music has been a centerpiece in my life and in our lives as a family. Both of my sons wanted to make their livelihood as musicians. So we'll talk about that later. So anyhow –

KG

: Could you talk a little bit about – you – so you've talked about the first eight years, and you've slightly touched on moving to Athens during the Germans occupation. Can you tell me a little bit about what those transitional months were like?

LA

: Well, when we left for Athens – again, being eight years old, you don't have that much of a conception of the significance – what a war is. I didn't know what to expect. If you think of your life, there's television; there are movies. I grew up without any of these – we had a radio, and that's it. We didn't have a telephone those years. The way I grew up in Greece, it was very similar to the generation of my husband's mother in this country, in terms of the

experiences: no telephone, no car. A radio, yes. We listened to a lot of music. So I never went to the movies. There was not an experience of mine growing up in Greece. As a young person you went to school, you played in the neighborhood. So those were the two main activities, and you socialized with your parents. On Sunday we'll go to my grandmother's, or we'll go to a beautiful place to have lunch and listen to music there, too, a sort of a symphonic quartet or something like that. It was really, in many ways, a very protected life. So the transition then was like all of a sudden, from a life that is so easy and so beautiful and so wonderful – all of a sudden you don't have space, you don't have food. You live with fears because everybody's very anxious and afraid. You hear the sirens, people running to the shelters. So from being so free to all of a sudden feel that – but again, I'm trying to think, was I afraid really, and I would say not that much, and that's – I think is because of my mother. She was a very stoic kind of a person. While in Salonica we decided to stop going to the shelter. We said what's the point, you know. The Germans were still there. So the British will come to bombard the German camps trying to avoid, of course, hitting the houses. I remember seeing the bombs exploding and sort of having a little bit of fear because I was behind a chair, but at the same time I was watching them thinking that they we're like fireworks. It was sort of this juxtaposition of a child having some fascination, a little bit of fear because you get it – it comes through you in some ways. So I didn't have much fear. I think my memories of the war were much more in terms of the limited space and the limited food and the fear of the Germans, tremendous fear of them, but not sort of thinking that much of death or – it's hard to describe it, and as I said when I reflect back, it has to do with my mother, who was so protective and so loving and so stoic that she didn't show her fears, so it never got transmitted to us as children.

KG

: Could you talk a little bit about your mother? What did your mother do? What was she like?

LA

: She never went to college. She went to an academy for girls. She got some kind of certificate or something. She was sort of like – she grew up, again, in a well-to-do family. So she played the violin, and she spoke French, and she was elegant, and she loved, also, beauty. She loved beauty, and I think, in part, watching her, that was transmitted to me because even with nothing she would manage to have the home looking beautiful, and if she could get flowers, she would get flowers, even during the war. She was a very wise, very wise woman, very strong woman and – the way she dealt with me when I told her I was – I met this guy, and I'm going to marry this guy, and I thought they would disown me because they didn't even have time to process it, and here I was marrying somebody who they never met, that didn't know anything about him, and it also meant I was going stay in this country, and she wrote me the most beautiful letter of how wonderful it is to have now another son, and I can't wait to meet him and welcome him, and I was shocked, which I told her later, I said, "I'm amazed about that letter you wrote to me." She said, "There was nothing I could do, other than love you and not create any rift between you and us or with your new husband." They did not come to my wedding because they couldn't afford to come. But the way she dealt with that and the endorsement she gave me, and the support she gave me long distance was unbelievable. That's the kind of a person she was. Unfortunately, she died when she was 58. I left for this country when I was 19, and she died in 1965. So I was 33. When I came to this country Greece would not allow anybody to send money overseas because it was right after the war. So I left in 1951, and I didn't see them until 1955, after I was able to save some money for the trip.

KG

: Oh my gosh.

LA

: And there were no telephones, so I couldn't call them. There was no e-mail or anything like that. There were only letters. So – and when you think about it – so I saw her in '55, and then when I got married, two years later, we went –

my husband, Sandy, and I went back in '58, and then my father passed in '61. He was 65, and then my mother came every year to visit us, and then she died three years later. So in a sense, I didn't have a mother, really, after age 19.

KG

: That must have been hard.

LA

: Very hard. And also the fact that there were not the means of communication like we have them now, where you can get on Skype and talk and you pick up the phone anytime. So it was very hard, which we'll talk about that because it's an interesting story. I left Greece without speaking a word of English to come to this country, which was a little crazy, but – back to the years in Greece. So I moved to Salonika in 1942.

KG

: Well, before we go to that, talking about your mother, I'm now interested in your father. What was your father like, and how did he react to the war?

LA

: My father was one of the most loving, generous, very quiet man, exactly opposite of my mother. My mother was very social. She used to hold a salon for her girlfriends on Thursdays. She would fix the house and will have tea and all that. My father would be happy to sit and read and listen to music. He was asocial. He had one or two friends, maybe one, but he was shy. I'm glad you asked because he had an unqualifying regard for me. I could do no wrong. I would sit and practice the scales, and he would say, "Oh, they sound so wonderful, Lena." Anything I would do, it was perfect. That gives you a lot of strength. When I look back, it's very interesting because the other thing – like I remember another episode with my father. I would come back from school, and I did – it was in math – and I did a problem, and I used a different approach to solve it, and I got the right answer as well, but my teacher wasn't sure about it because I didn't follow his approach. My father, who's very good in math because he was a civil engineer, he looked at my solution and he said, "Lena, yours is much more elegant." I

tell you I could do no wrong with my father. I'm embarrassed when I talk about it because he will come in the morning to wake me up for school when we lived in Serres and in Salonika later, and he would sing to me to wake me up. We didn't have alarms, right? He never lifted a finger on me. I don't remember being punished by him. My mother tried to set the limits and the boundaries, but my father was always, had – as I said this, unqualifying, positive regard. Bless him.

KG

: Did he have – I'm sorry. Did he have the same regard for your brother?

LA

: He seemed to favor me much more. Again, when they say – you read about it, the sort of cross identification, and my mother was much more positive for my brother, much more accepting of him, much more supportive of him. We had many more fights, I would say, but mother-daughter kind of fights because I have also wonderful memories of her waiting for me to come from school, and I would remember I would sit and tell her everything that happened that day, and she would listen and wanted to listen and to be there in my life. But my father it was sort of like – which made it difficult for my brother, I think, first of all because my father was such a quiet man, really, in many ways. So for a boy, I think it was much more difficult, but for me, I couldn't have asked for a better father, really.

KG

: Did that affect your relationship with your brother at all?

LA

: You know what is interesting, when I was growing up, I had enormous admiration for my brother. He was like my hero because he was very smart and very good in school, and I remember saying that to him – you're my hero – and as we got older, he says to me, "You remember you used to say I was you're hero, but you have become my hero," which was wonderful, and we're very close, and the thing that I love about him. He lives in Pittsburgh, he never has been competitive with me and vice versa. We always have had

respect and admiration for each other. But he used to tease me a lot, older/younger sibling stuff, and I used to aggress, which I'm embarrassed to say. If I got upset with him or angry with him, I would throw things at him. He never lifted a finger, but he had a way of getting to me, teasing me, and of course, I was exactly – whenever he had to study, I would go and start practicing the piano, so any way to annoy him, but again, it was that kind of sibling rivalry.

KG

: Of course.

LA

: You know what was interesting, I told my mother once – actually later when I was here and I was married with kids and she was here visiting me – I said, "I always felt that you didn't give me enough support, and you supported my brother Alex much more," and she said – again how parents make choices which can affect children – because I always wondered why doesn't she endorse me more because academically I was a star student so actually I did better than my brother did, and she would never say, "Oh, isn't that wonderful, Lena." She would always support him, and she said, "Because he put much more effort than you did, and I felt he needed more of a reinforcement, more support." So she thought she was doing the right thing because things came very easy to me and not as easy to him, so she had to give him much more support, but it had its effects on me.

KG

: I'd like to go back. So after having talked about your family a little bit and having a better picture of what they were like and how they might have supported you during this occupation, I guess we can return to that and you can –

LA

: Yeah, I want to tell you about my life in Salonika. We lived with my grandparents, and an uncle and his child. We all lived in one small apartment. So I grew up with an extended family. I was very close to my grandmother. I was the girl in the family – I had a cousin, male cousin, and my brother. I was favored by her, by my grandmother and my grandfather. They both died right in the house where we

lived together. So I witnessed that as a child, too. But I don't remember being upset about it. Either I'm repressing it, or it was sort of like this is life. You grow older and then you go. My grandfather was sick for a while, but again it was – I think all of these experiences that have made me very strong and, in many ways, very brave as a person, really. The support and love and then the fact that you have these experiences early on and you survived, so you have a different outlook on life.

KG

: If we could talk a little bit about school. So you started school when you were in Serres, but then you had to continue –

LA

: Then we went to Athens. So I was there for a year and a half in this wonderful private school. The director was a Frenchman, and I have no idea why I ended up there because I went always to public schools. So unless it was the only school that was near us and could accept me in a transition time. I had no idea what the dynamics were, why I ended up there, but it was a very good experience for me, the school. Short, a year and a half, but very good school. I remember Mr. Berzan, the director was wonderful. Young girls I met my age, were my very good friends. So that – the schooling experience was very positive, the same thing like in Serres. When school became crazy for me was in Salonika during the war and the occupation, because we hardly had any school. Most of the time, the schools would be closed, or we'll go for couple of hours during the day or maybe at night because the Germans also took the school buildings. I got to Salonika around 1942 and I was there until 1951 – of course, things got a little better, but still Greece was – and I don't know if you know that after the war we had a civil war in Greece. So when I left in '51, Greece was still in a mess. We were still recovering from both, World War II and the civil war. So I would say from age eight until 19, that period of my life, I lived it with a lot of constraints.

KG

: How did that affect you as a student?

LA

: Well, that's the interesting thing. You know that – first of all, toward the end – we had regular classes after the Germans left, but during the time the Germans were there, as I said, we had very little school. So – which is amazing to me that with so little schooling – that's why I say why people here get so anxious about their children's schooling because if you look at it, schools were – for six years, the school was miserable. I hardly probably learned anything, but it never affected me in terms of making the transition here, and I'm sidetracking now. I came as a junior in college, and I'll explain why because I had two years beyond high school in Greece, and so I came without knowing the language. I couldn't even say hello, practically, and two years later I graduated with honors. I graduated cum laude.

KG

: Is it all right if I – I'm sorry. I might come here.

LA

: Is it too loud?

KG

: All right. I'm sorry about that. So go ahead. You talked about graduating with honors.

LA

: Oh, yeah. What I was saying – even though – what I'm thinking back, even though we lost a lot of time during the occupation, in terms of having the kind of schooling that is essential and necessary, when I came here, I did very well in school. The transition was easy for me. So whatever I did in the years after the occupation, I was very well trained, and I was very well disciplined, too, as a student. I was a very good student. So it was not difficult at all without even speaking English.

KG

: Could you tell me a little bit about the ways that your parents approached your education, especially during that time?

LA

: Other than, as I said, my father being very supportive of me and endorsing whatever I did – my mother was less

involved in my schooling than my father was. Not in terms of helping with homework, but I would share more with my father, and again, I think, because my mother was not college educated so she was much more – I learned from her the social graces, and from my father, I learned much more. He was very well educated, very disciplined, well read. So it was interesting to have both of these backgrounds. I always said when I look at my mother's family and my father's family, how – from the two sides, what I got from my mother's family, was that the great-great-grandparents were very famous fighters during the Turkish war. As a matter of fact, there are 75 folksongs written about one of my great-great-grandfathers, and there's a street named after him in Athens. So they were the fighters, and from my father's side, they were the intellectuals. It's very interesting, I had – so I – my genes, come from both sides, really.

KG

: How did your parents meet?

LA

: Those days were arranged marriages. My uncles – her brothers met my father, and they arranged for the two of them to meet, and they liked each other. They were 13 years apart in age. It was an arranged marriage, like all of my aunts. It was the same thing. There were three sisters and three brothers in my mother's family. In my father's family there were two brothers and one sister. I was not as close to my father's family. My father grew up in Asia Minor, and they had to leave because of the Turkish conflict. So my father was the first one to leave Asia Minor and come to Athens, and it's interesting because when he came to Athens to study, he was not fluent in Greek, either. His first language was Turkish. So he went through the same struggles as I did. He was not as adept in Greek, like I was not adept in English.

KG

: That's interesting.

KG

: So as parents, what were their parenting styles with you and your brother?

LA

: Again, what I was going to say is that my father was the person who supported me intellectually and academically, and my mother was the one that wanted to see me learn all the social graces and be elegant – but also, she was very supportive about my intellectual achievements. That's another – it's a very interesting story that they both let me leave at age 19. I never had left home, and they actually – they let me come here because they said, "We value achievement so much." When you think about it, growing up in Greece, and for them to be so supportive of my leaving Greece and coming to another country and so far away, it's unheard of. When I think back – that's why I'm very grateful to them that they were able to do that and trust me enough to do that, and I'll tell you exactly what my parents said and continued to say when I was in this country because they had said that I could do that. I could leave when I finished the Teacher's College. It was only two years after the gymnasium, and I got a certificate to teach in any grade. My parents had said, "If you do that, then you can go for a year overseas," and they meant either Switzerland or France, and I remember saying, "Well, I want to go to the United States," we'll talk about that later because it's another very important phase in my life. So I was never really disciplined, disciplined in the sense of being punished. Yes, there were boundaries from my mother, much more. She got involved much more in the childrearing than my father, but my father was, as I said, had this unqualifying, positive regard, which is so essential in a child's life. So –

KG

: How did their relationship affect your concepts of relationships at that early of an age?

LA

: Actually, I have to say that they respected each other – it's like the old-fashion marriage, – they took their responsibilities seriously but there was very little interaction between the two of them, very little play between the two of them. I never saw them going on vacations, but again, it's the war years. So there was no way of going on vacations –

but I think, personality-wise, too, my father would not have enjoyed it. He would rather stay home and read and listen to his classical music.

KG

: So going to – we've gone through age eight. We've gone through part of your experience with German soldiers and some – yes.

LA

: Oh, let me tell you some other things about my years in Athens which stand out for me. When the Germans were coming to take over Athens and they came actually, we had the Greek flag up in the Acropolis, and of course, the Germans were going to put the German flag up there because they occupied us. So one of the Greeks rolled himself in the Greek flag and committed suicide from the Acropolis. So he wouldn't let the Germans take the Greek flag down. Those kind of experiences as a child, they shake you up, but also, it's kind of the honor – you fight for what you believe. I get emotional thinking about it, and I remember, it had such an effect on me to hear about it. I didn't witness it personally, but everybody talked about it. So there were things like that during the war, the bravery of the Greeks and the way they handle the occupation and the community we had with each other and the sharing, in terms of the little food we had. When we were in Salonika, I witnessed the taking of the Greek Jews by the Germans, and that was another very significant experience for me as a child. To wake up one day and see lines of Jews with a star on their arm and little bags that they were allowed to carry, and I asked what's happening and then I learned that they were being taken away in concentration camps, and they – even in those days, the folklore was that they would burn them. I can't forget it. And they would make soap and lampshades. So to hear that as a child, that there is this kind of – we didn't call it discrimination, but whatever it was, to witness the Germans – they would be this way with another group of people. I had a classmate who was Jewish, and one of my mother's friend was Jewish, and my aunt managed to hide her, and she survived. So that was another very

significant experience for me as a child. So there were these bits of experiences that I feel have made such an impact on me. Another experience I had is – I told you earlier that the Germans would retaliate. So one night, in the middle of the night, the Germans came, and they took my father and my brother to jail, and I remember my mother and I walking behind them in our nightgowns and not knowing whether they were going to come back the next day. So – but fortunately, they did. But we didn't know why they were being jailed, other than another way of – another act of the Germans against the Greeks and those being occupied. I want to tell you the difference for me as a child, watching the Italians versus the Germans, is like night and day, the kind of fear I had about the Germans. I remember if I heard them, as I said, behind me, I would cringe. I would be so scared of them. So – but I think if you take those experiences in the context of a family who was very protective and very loving and very strong, it makes such a difference that I felt safe within the family, in spite of what was happening out there, and I think that's very significant, for me, the way I've developed as a person, really. So did I answer your question?

KG

: No. Yeah. No, you're doing great. I'm curious to know about your idea of religion. How was that developed, especially seeing such separation of Jews that early?

LA

: Well, actually – religion has played a very significant role for me. It was first my brother who decided to explore religion in more depth. My parents were not very religious. The Greeks are – they're religious in a very – like the Italians are about Catholicism. You go to church on big holidays, but it's not something you practice. There was a group that developed during those years to sort of go back and truly look at the Bible. It was almost like – I hate to say that like born-again Christians, but it was not a fanatic group. It was much more how can we live what Christ said in a true way, how to be loving, how to be caring. So my brother joined that group, and of course, I used to imitate him, and I told

you he was my hero. So I said, I'll join, too. It had nothing to do with my parents because my parents were never members of this new way of looking at the Greek faith. So I became a member at age 12, and I continued to be involved with this group until I left to come to this country. Let me tell you a little bit about that group because it has had an enormous impact on my life. First of all, we read the New Testament. I don't know anything about the Old Testament. It was much more about loving thy neighbor and being good to thy neighbor, and caring about our neighbor, rather than feeling that you are a sinner or you need to find a way to redeem yourself. There was no guilt associated at all. It's a very – when I think about it because I went to a Episcopalian church here, searching for some church, and I was amazed how much of it was around we're sinners and we need to be saved. None of this was at all in this group. It was much more what can you do to love the other, and I remember the first thing I did was to memorize the epistle by Paul about love. It was my favorite piece in the New Testament. Also, another aspect of this group was to do a lot of service work. So when we'd get – we used to get products from the US and take them to the villages and distribute them and sing to them as part of this group and interact with them, and this is the first time I also learned about what it means to serve the other and to learn from the other, which we say that's what service should be. I remember going to a village. Their homes were completely destroyed because during the civil war the villages were hit much more than the big cities, I remember visiting the people, who lived in a stable because they had lost their house, and the first thing they said was, "What can we give you? How can we treat you?" They were the ones that were suffering, but they wanted to reciprocate, and it was a wonderful experience. So that was a very powerful experience for me from age 12 until 19. Although there were many things that I was fighting, there were some aspects of this group that I was not agreeing to, and it was primarily, which is very interesting – it had to do with – how we dress. We should not pay attention to the way we look. There was this – especially women should not care about it. I

remember I used to feel a lot of conflict about it because I wanted to look pretty, and I wanted to dress up – and I remember I was told off a couple of times by the superiors. I was again acting out a little bit, I was not compliant enough with the group. But in terms of what it did for me, it was very powerful experience, and in many ways I have said really, the war experiences and my experiences in this group and getting to understand my faith during those years have made me very much the kind of person I am. Very powerful experiences, really, for me about serving the other, about loving thy neighbor, and trying to constantly improve the kind of person you are. I think that was a very powerful messages for me, and I'm very grateful that I had that experience. So in spite all the pain of the war, it's how to take the positive things from the experiences, really.

KG

: Definitely, yeah.

LA

: And how they stay with you the rest of your life.

KG

: I wonder if you could talk about friendships that you might have had during that time and how you met those individuals.

LA

: First of all, in Athens, I remember I was close to two other girls, and the experiences I remember is around food issues because we had so little. I remember we went to one of my friend's house, and we had a little cheese, and we cut in three pieces. Little piece like that and we were weighing them to make sure we all had an equal amount. I'm telling you, you can't even believe what starvation it was like. I remember having – the food was so bad that I used to throw it in my lap because I couldn't eat it. Anyhow, and my mother would say, "I'm so glad you're not growing fast enough, so you don't need much food." Which was true, it took me a while to grow in size. I was like a little girl for a long time, but it didn't hurt me. I grew up later. I also had cousins who lived in Athens, three girls, and I became very close to them. They're like my sisters. To this day, I call

them every other week and we talk, and I vacation with them. They are like my sisters. In Salonika, as I was growing up, I had friends through the religious group, but my closest friend was a woman from the conservatory because music was so much part of me. I was there practically every day. It was like being in high school, like you go every day. You also have lessons galore. In Greece, which is interesting. The public schools are single sex. The private schools are the ones that are co-educational. In the public schools, you wear a uniform. That's not the case with private schools. It's exactly the opposite. So I went to an all-girls high school. Those days, high school was eight years. So I had four years in elementary and eight years in high school. It was called the gymnasium. They changed it now; it's six and six. We wore black uniforms with white collars. I should show you some pictures from those years, and because of the war, we didn't have money for the uniforms. So my mother took the lining out of one of her coats. It was a black lining and made me a uniform, and later on – I don't know how she got hold of some new material and made me this gorgeous black uniform. It was silk, too. I don't know. I think it was post-occupation. We used to get a lot of stuff from here, from the United States. I remember the first coat I had was made with materials that we got from here. The first real shoes I got were from here, the white oxford shoes. The first time I tasted peanut butter was from this country. So it's interesting, maybe that was my connection with the United States. Not, really. When I think – I never thought of that, why I had this desire to come to the States because I wasn't watching movies. I didn't know much about the States, but it was probably what attracted me is that, at a very young age, I was getting something that I desired from this country, that kind of – I don't know. I just – as I said, I didn't think of this before.

KG

: What – how was America perceived, either to you as a child or –

LA

: At that time?

KG

: Yeah. In Greek society.

LA

: As a very new, exciting country with a lot of money and wealth, but also as a caring country because, as I said, it was the Truman Doctrine enacted to help countries that were occupied, the Allies. So it was a very positive feeling. So when I was planning to come here, I had this great enthusiasm about being in America. It was a very positive feeling then. Not anymore. The Greeks have a lot of problems with America right now, with the US.

KG

: I wonder if we could switch tracks a little bit and talk about what was expected of you as a child, like for chores, for your responsibilities and how those might have changed throughout the years in your childhood.

LA

: This idea of chores is not a concept we had really. When I was young, we had a nanny. So I grew up with somebody who was helpful, before the war. So I don't remember like this is what you have to do, or doing dishes. I don't remember any of that, to be honest. Sort of – I would say, if anything, the expectations were much more about being a good student and doing your homework and achieving and being caring about your grandparents, visits with them, caring about them. Well, also living with all these people in a small space, it's not an issue of having to do much, really. I'll tell you – something else about the war. First of all, we didn't have water every day. So you couldn't bathe. You couldn't even wash dishes. So each one of us had our own dish, those days without water, and we will wipe it and save it. After you ate your lunch you will wipe your dish and you would put it back for dinner. So there wasn't that much that you could do really, clean the house or do dishes. The space was so limited that I slept with my mother on the dining room table. So when you think about it, we didn't have lights, so most of the time I did my homework with a kerosene lamp. I don't think my kids can imagine how it's possible to live like that, without food, without water, one toilet for all these people –

like one, two, three, four, five adults and three children. It's sort of like – so the idea of chores and – that was not an issue, in terms of what was expected. The chores would be go and get some food – stay in line and bring back some soup or maybe a tomato and a potato. That was the amount of chores I had, really. I don't remember anything else.

KG

: Despite all these hardships, it sounds like you were still a really happy kid, right?

LA

: Yeah, – yes, you're right on that. I don't remember suffering, really. I suffered, but it's not something that stands out, and I would say, again, I attribute that to my parents, more specifically to my mother and my grandmother, my grandmother who was like a very famous Greek politician – very smart. We had labeled her after him because she was a very strong woman, very little, but very strong, just a wonderful woman. I have very, very fond memories – I was named after her too, and I was a very favorite of hers. So I think of the goodness of our parents and grandparents and the way they supported us and protected us, I think it made such a difference. So in spite of all the war stuff, it really – I feel like I'm a very resilient person and maybe having those experiences and being able to survive them made me who I am. I remember telling my husband, if he worried about the house or losing anything, things is a fire or earthquake, I would say, "You know, we lost everything and rebuilt everything." I would say, "Those are material things," and that's how I felt about the fires here, when we had the fires in Los Angeles. As a matter of fact, one of the reporters from the

LA

Times wanted to know – she interviewed me – how did it feel when we had to leave our house because of the fires, and I said, "To tell you the truth, it didn't make any difference to me. So we would lose things. So we'll start from scratch." And I think it's because we lost everything during the war. That house we had in Serres, it was taken actually by the Bulgarians who had joined the Germans, so they made it a

place for the soldiers to stay. So we never saw anything again. Everything we had in that house disappeared, and the only photographs we have now are photographs that some of the relatives in Athens had. So we lost everything, and it didn't make any difference. When I left Greece, my parents and my brother still lived in the same small apartment building and only later they were able to buy a small apartment of their own, when I was in this country and which I saw when I went back to visit them in 1955.

KG

: So moving on a little bit with your education or before you decided to go to America.

LA

: I was – as I said, I was an outstanding student, so I was a teacher's pet. They – all of my teachers loved me. I mean teachers in high school, and I remember admiring a lot of them. There was a teacher of writing and literature and it's like I see her now. She was super and I loved her and she loved me. I graduated from high school with a grade of 20, which is like a straight 100. In every course I had 100.

KG

: Oh my gosh.

LA

: I still have my high school diploma. So you couldn't do any better than that, and if you were a good student, the honor you got those days was that you were a flag carrier. So whenever there were parades, I carried the Greek flag. So that plays a role around my Greek patriotism. I'm very patriotic, and my husband says the Greeks can be ethnocentric without insulting other people, which is true. He pointed out that the Greeks can talk about how wonderful Greece is without making comparisons that we're better than X. It's just "we're good." I'm very proud of my heritage.

LA

: So my high school years, once things settled down after the Germans left, were very positive, and also I had a wonderful – those years a wonderful education, I remember them as being very significant because they start you reading the ancient Greeks. You read about Plato and Socrates when

you're very young, and even though you might not understand it, it has such an impact on you. You know the saying by Socrates – which is translated in this country very differently than it's in Greek, "The unexamined life is not worth living."

LA

: But the way we say it in Greece, the actual Greek translation would be "it's not just to live, but to live meaningfully."

KG

: That's different.

LA

: It's very different.

KG

: Yes.

LA

: And that has had such an impact on me. That and my religious experiences – those things – reading about those philosophers, even though you're too young, and we read it in ancient Greek – I had to learn ancient Greek in high school – it has such an impact on you, as the kind of person you evolve to and become. So I would say the few years in sort of let's say – the Germans left in 1945, 1946, and I came here in 1951. Those years – of course, two years were in a post high school. They were critical years, educationally, for me, and not only that I achieved very highly, but also that I learned a great deal. And again, I learned in a very selective way. I remember the things that were very meaningful to me, and I was so supported and so reinforced by my teachers.

KG

: Were you teachers, if I could ask, were they male or female?

LA

: Both male and female.

KG

: They were both and they were both very supportive. What were your favorite subjects or least favorite subjects?

LA

: I was very strong in math and science, very strong. My writing always was very clear but very short, very precise, which explains how I became a researcher. I was not that much into literature at all. I was very much into science and math, and very early on, I wanted to become an architect, and then later on, before I went to the Teacher's College, I was studying to enter the University. I wanted to go and study physics. That was my favorite subject. So I was very science-oriented but very much discouraged because they (my parents) felt that was not appropriate or recommended for women – you'll see some of the interview I gave for a book. I was discouraged primarily by my father, who said, Lena, you're not going to have an easy time in those occupations. They're male occupations, and I don't think it's gonna work for you. Being a civil engineer – he said as an architect you'll be the only woman.

KG

: So was he warning – what was his warning to?

LA

: It was a warning that it was not going to be an easy occupation for you to be in – so it's interesting. I was very disappointed that I was not able to pursue something that I felt passionately about because, to tell you the truth, I didn't like the Teacher's College. The only thing that I enjoyed in the Teacher's College was psychology. When I was in high school, about 14 or so, I found the Stanford-Binet test translated in Greek, the intelligence test, and I went around the neighborhood asking all the kids the test questions. I was a psychologist in the making without knowing it, and another thing, when I was in high school, I became very much interesting in career development, how people choose their life's work. Where did that come from? I have no idea. Like it was in my genes, and I remember reading books while I was in high school about that. I was fascinated, and I think it had something to do because of my own explorations and having the discussions about who goes to what occupation and why. I was in a – almost in a subliminal way, I was aware of the discrimination then, that those occupations are for women and those are for me, without being said in such a way but

processing it in that way that stayed with me. So I was very tuned into this area of work very early on. And here in this country was when I started doing research why women are discriminated against making certain choices. I might have told you that my honor's thesis in college was about how women choose their lives' work, their majors. I was fascinated by it and what role the family and the parents play in that because I was so – it was so fresh in my head in terms of what happened to me.

KG

: Could you talk a little bit about that, about your perceptions that you had of Greek culture at that time, in regards to – maybe not necessarily career development but about gender roles?

LA

: Oh, very much so. I saw it in my own family. My mother took care – the home responsibilities – it was so gender related what you did, what my mother did, what my father did, how they related to each other, even though – I didn't see the macho thing because my father was not a macho person at all. He was a very soft man, but I saw it with my uncle, who lived with us, who managed to spank me, which I couldn't believe it, that my father never did – as I said – but my uncle hit me, and the reason he hit me is because my cousin – my male cousin – and I decided to stay late at night –during a religious celebration in Greece, on Good Friday. In Greece you sort of do Good Friday like a funeral, and all the churches go around in the neighborhood with pretending that they carry Christ's body. And I remember my cousin and I decided to visit every possible church. We wanted to see how each church does it and we didn't get home until 1:00 in the morning. Of course, I was with my cousin, not alone. There were no telephones, so we couldn't call and say what we were doing, but my uncle got so furious at me. He didn't hit his son. He hit me because it was inappropriate for a girl to be out at 1:00 in the morning, even though I was with my cousin. So talking of what is right and what's wrong for men and women, there was no way – I was getting those messages early on, and I was storing them somewhere. So

there's no questions that there were very clear cut gender differences. None of the women, except my mother's older sister had gone to college – she became a school teacher, but none of the other two women in her family had a college education. All her brothers were highly educated but not the girls. Same thing with my father's family. My grandmother, who was not educated at all, but her brothers, all became highly educated and very successful. My great uncles – which they played a role in my being in this country, too. One of my great uncles, was a professor of economics – this is my grandmother's brother on my father's side – professor of economics at Columbia, wrote the best economics book. His other brother, who died young, was a very well-known mathematician. The third brother was an inventor, and the fourth brother was an ambassador to England during the war years, very famous diplomat, who became a secretary of the UN here. So it was like night and day. Again, the brothers all very highly educated but my grandmother, not even high school, I think, not even close to high school. So I watched that. I observed it. Now, my cousins, my female cousins in Greece, my age, they all became educated. They stayed in Greece, the youngest of the three went and did post-graduate work in England. She was in education and became a dean of a school, two year college. Her two sisters became pharmacists. So the women in my generation even though they stayed in Greece, they all became highly educated. A lot of my generation women that came to this country like I did, through a scholarship, they all are very successful, very highly educated, high achievers, and very successful. So it's interesting that Greek women of my generation were very supported educationally. To give you a little anecdote, when I started having the kids, I stopped working for a while after my second pregnancy because we moved, and I said it's crazy to get another job because I'm going to have another baby. My mother was writing me from Greece saying, "Why did you get all these degrees for? To change diapers?" And my mother-in-law here was very ambivalent about my working when I had the little kids. So in many ways I was getting double messages. My mother, as protective as she

was of me, she would not stop me from becoming highly educated. For a Greek mother to say “you didn’t get the degrees to change diapers. Get somebody else to help you.” Isn’t that liberating, when you think about it?

KG

: Yeah, definitely. That’s awesome. Were the expectations the same with lots of other families, like with your friends?

LA

: Yeah, I would say so – when I look at my cousins, my three cousins, they were all professional. I haven’t kept in touch with a lot of my high school classmates to know what has become of their lives. My closest friend, finished the conservatory and became a teacher of music, teaching piano students. Yeah, it would be interesting. As I said, I haven’t kept in touch with my women classmate from Greece, but I would say that a lot of the women who came here, at the same time I did for education, they’re all very high achievers and very successful professionally.

KG

: But even so, with the focus that your generation could place on education, there were still those gender roles. You couldn’t be an architect. You couldn’t go –

LA

: Right. Exactly.

KG

: So could you talk a little –?

LA

: What is an appropriate occupation for a woman? Like the reason my two cousins became pharmacists – it’s an interesting story, too – is that their father was a pharmacist, and in Greece you sort of pass on – it’s a business that you pass on to your children, and they had only one son, and he chose to become a theologian. So for the family, it was very important that the pharmacy is passed onto the family members. So that’s how the two women were encouraged to become pharmacist, so they wouldn’t lose the business, actually.

KG

: Was this the same with your family? What did your brother end up excelling in?

LA

: He became a doctor, pathologist, but what is interesting is that he wanted to become a chemist, and he was very much interested in research, but my parents said you cannot do this – how parents shape kids' occupations – that you'll do much better as a doctor professionally, in terms of jobs, than becoming a researcher. So he was geared toward that – and the reason he became a pathologist is because he didn't like the clinical work. He would rather explore and find out, become a diagnostician, rather than a clinical doctor.

KG

: I think we're good for today. You feel good about that? Okay.

LA

: It's a lot.

KG

: Yeah. All right. Well, thank you. Just to recap, this is February 14th, 2012. This is Kimberlee Grandholm, and I'm with Dr. Helen Astin. So thank you for doing this with me and –

LA

: Of course.

KG

: Listening to me talking all this time.

LA

: This was great. Thank you.

1.2. Session 2 (February 23, 2012)

KG

: Okay. We're back for Session 2 on February 23. This is Kimberlee Grandholm, and I'm with Lena Astin. Thank you for coming again.

LA

: My pleasure.

KG

: Great.

LA

: I enjoy it.

KG

: So for Session 2, we're going to start where we left off from Session 1, at about age 17 or 18. We recapped some of your education, but left off before discussing the social aspects of your teenage years.

LA

: Well, first of all, dating didn't really exist when I was growing up. If love stories existed between boys and girls, it was done very privately. It was never out in the open. I did have a girlfriend who had a boyfriend, though, and my mother was very accepting of it. Her own mother didn't know anything, but they would come and visit us together. But generally, it wasn't done. I think it had to do with the sort of single sex institutions; there were no real opportunities for boys and girls to find each other and interact with each other. It's not that there was no interest. There was a lot of interest. My personal interactions with boys and young men came when I was at the conservatory, because that was co-educational. And I did fantasize about love, but I didn't date. It was just one of those things where you sort of look, and you fantasize, and you think about it. And you hope that somehow there will be an opportunity, but it just doesn't happen. It's a very different world from what we see here. If you are going to date, your parents know about it. The only time you go out, you go with your parents. And if there is an opportunity for social interaction with younger people, you always have your brother along, so you're very protected. It's a very different world really. As a teenager, my sexuality was kind of suppressed. We did not watch movies, so it really was a very different way of growing up. Times were quite different in the '40s, especially in Greece. As a country, it was not as advanced in terms of what we have here. The culture and the movies, even, were very different. My life as a teenager revolved around my music, my school, and my religion. Weekends were spent with my parents, going out for lunch or dinner, or going to a café and listening to music. The social life was very limited. I was much more advanced in terms of intellectual development than social

development. As a matter of fact, when I came to this country at 19-years-old, my uncle told me that I behaved more like a 14-year-old by American standards. But once I arrived here it didn't take long to catch up. We'll talk about that later.

KG

: Could you possibly speak to some of the differences that you noticed between interactions at the conservatory versus the all girls' school that you went to?

LA

: The all girls' school there was really like any other-- you made some good friends . If there was any flirtation, believe it or not, it was with the younger male teachers. And it went both ways-- the teachers would get crushes on the girls, too. That happened to me with one teacher. I think he taught mathematics; I don't really remember. But he thought I was the greatest, and you could tell that he had this very warm feeling toward me. But there wasn't any kind of sexual harassment or anything. There were always limits. At the conservatory, there was much more interaction because all the classes were mixed. If you were a music student, there were classes like harmony and theory. Your private lesson was one on one, but those classes were with all the other students . That was my first real experience interacting with boys and young men. The girlfriend I was telling you about who had a boyfriend, she was a student in the conservatory, but her boyfriend was not from the conservatory. I don't even remember how they met. So still, you see, there was not much of a social interaction between boys and girls. We would basically just talk to each other and spend time with each other, but things remained innocent. There was still no real dating, like going out to the movies. Again, overall, I would say it might have had something to do with the fact that Greece was still overcoming the civil war and the revolution, so everybody was focused on their studies and the work at hand.

KG

: Were there any expectations that your parents might have had for dating? I mean, I know that you have said that –

LA

: Actually, it would not have been okay with them.

KG

: It was not acceptable?

LA

: It was not okay until they decided it was, and in that case it was always supervised. The parents would talk with other parents about their kids getting together one day and becoming a couple. So you still didn't have a real choice in terms of getting to know your partner. And remember the story I told you about the doctor who lived next door to us? Well, they had a son, and his mother and my mother always talked about the possibility of the two of us becoming a couple. So the guy would come and visit, but only like a neighbor—nothing more. And because I got the inkling that our mothers were up to something, I would always find a reason to leave the room, like doing my homework. So it was not talked about openly; something like sex education did not even exist. The parents didn't tell their girls anything about sexuality. It was kind of taboo. So of course, the schools did not have it-- God forbid. So as you got older, you found out on your own. But the parents were not involved in teaching anything like that. On the other hand, there was the expectation that yes, definitely, you would eventually meet somebody and get married. There was a lot of preparation involved, and they had to think about the dowry. Yes, there was such a thing as a dowry, and the parents would prepare material goods to go into a trunk that would become the dowry. I'll tell you, my mother had already a trunk ready for me when I got engaged, which she mailed all the way from Greece to the United States.

KG

: That must have been expensive.

LA

: It was just so very different, really-- experiencing things there, and then coming to this country where I did date a lot.

KG

: What were your thoughts in those years then to the idea of arranged dating?

LA

: In general, it was accepted because it was just part of the culture. But I always knew I wasn't going to settle for it. I was not going to have somebody else arrange who was going to be my partner in life. I felt very strongly about that. But though my parents were very protective, they were a contradiction because they let me leave the country to come all the way here. So they were unusual parents in many ways. And they took it very well when I announced that I was getting married to someone from this country. They were very accepting, both my mother and my father. Of course they wanted me to find somebody from a good family, well educated, and with all the criteria, but I don't think they would have insisted that he had to be somebody they chose.

KG

: If I can ask, what were the expectations for these arrangements within the context of social class? How were the arrangements decided? Was it simply that one family knew another one?

LA

: It was always within the same social circle because of the relationships that the parents had with other parents. And Greece is a very homogeneous in terms of race and religion. So of course, there are class differences. The educated and the less educated, the laborers and the professionals. We didn't have diversity in terms of race and ethnicity or religious diversity. It was really the class of the other family in considering someone a potential husband or wife for their children.

KG

: What was your awareness of political issues that were happening at the time?

LA

: Actually, it is interesting that you're asking this question, there was not the kind of... let me think about how to explain it. At one point, my kids here became aware of the political scene. But in general, I don't think Greek teenagers were much involved in the political scene. So my memories of

what was happening politically and who my parents voted for are nonexistent. I don't have any recollection whatsoever, which is very interesting. I don't even remember what party was in power at that time. I have very little memory of that, so I cannot even address it.

KG

: That's okay. If not politics, what were the adult issues that were discussed, and were you included in these discussions--at dinner table or wherever else your parents were discussing?

LA

: It is interesting because my father was not the interactive type. And then, of course, there were my grandparents. It's a very mixed kind of a family situation. I don't even remember sitting around the table and discussing issues. I only remember the expectation that we had to be high achieving. I remember that was held as a very high value. We had to contribute to what needed to be done around the home. My parents did not spoil us. We had to take care of business, all of us. I remember cleaning the house with my grandmother. No particular issues of discussion come to mind, really. I think it was so much more about living every day for what the day presented us with. Survival. Most of my memories are about the poverty, the anxiety, the survival. Those were the primary things that were surfacing and probably those things made up the conversations, too. How do we make it to the next day? How do we make it really? How do we survive this war?

KG

: So during this time, how did your relationship change with your parents?

LA

: Well, the only conflict I had with my parents was over my religious practices. My mother thought it was excessive. She was worried that it was a little bit cultish. So she would confront me about this from time to time. And she would say "what are your plans? Are you going to become a nun or something?" I mean, she really was worried about that. And so if we had any confrontation, it was about that. There were

no other confrontations because, as I said, I was a good student. I was not an issue for them. I was a good girl. I didn't date, I didn't sneak out, so none of that was an issue. So it was primarily my religious involvement that worried her. And in some ways, she was right because I think I mentioned earlier that the group was very intense in terms of adherence. I was told that I needed to dress in a very conservative way. As a matter of fact, some of the older girls and women would always wear long sleeves, never exposing their arms. That was considered bad manner. It was sort of like the idea that you don't provoke.

KG

: To clarify this, was it a particular religious movement?

LA

: It was a movement within the church. And the whole idea was that really, the Greeks took religion for granted. They would only go to church on Christmas and Easter; they would not participate in the way you are expected to here. The movement I was a part of looked much more closely to the New Testament and to practicing the teachings of Christ, going to church faithfully and going to confession. And practicing it in a serious way, not just because it was done. Now, why did this happen during those times? It's an interesting question. I just reflected on it. I have no idea what brought it about. What was the relationship between the war and the movement coming about? Maybe there were some leaders within the movement that felt this was a time for people to become much more serious about these issues because people were much more ready, vulnerable you might say, because of what was happening. And it's interesting, the leadership really. A couple of times, I wanted to leave and they would not let me. That's why it had some cultish elements to it. They would do anything they could to keep me. And part of their reasoning was because I was such a good student, I was so popular, so I was sort of like a poster child. How could I reject the movement and leave? What would be the implications of it? So sometimes, they would bend over backwards despite my acting out to keep me as part of the movement.

KG

: How could you –

LA

: And it still exists, actually, to some extent in Greece.

KG

: Could you define what acting out might have been? How would you act out?

LA

: Like dress a little more colorfully and a little more flamboyant. I didn't wear makeup. Even if you were not part of the movement that was not something that was done. So I didn't wear make up until I came to this country. And I remember I loved it. It was like oh, something new. I started smoking and putting make up on. And then when I went back home in '55, I went and visited, as a matter of fact, one of the leaders of the movement. He was a man of the cloth. And he was very – he was a wonderful person. I mean, I really admired him. And almost challenging in a way, I went with my lipstick and my earrings, and he never said anything. I was testing it, but he was much more concerned about my life and what was happening, which was very good actually. He was very accepting. And then when I came to this country, I sort of wanted to have some affiliation with the church. I found that the differences were so dramatic between a Greek church here and a church in Greece because the churches in Greece are a part of the state. Money never surfaces in the discussion. I remember the first time I went to church in this country, there was a whole thing about how to raise money. And I said, what is this? I came here to be uplifted, not to keep talking about money. So I found it very different and I stopped going to church. That was the end of my church attendance. I tried a couple of times when I was in school to go -- primarily searching to find somebody, a leader of the church, a priest or a minister that seemed to make sense to me; that I was inspired and uplifted by. I ended up finding an Episcopalian minister when I was in Ohio that I loved, and I would go to that church just to hear him. So I was always tuned in. In retrospect, if you think about it, I was always searching, always needing to

have that part of my life be central to me. But I never really found it. And so I found it much more recently by doing the study on spirituality. That reconnected me again with the search that I had for a spiritual life.

KG

: Could you talk a little bit about the decision to attend teachers' college and how you reached that?

LA

: Well, actually, it was not my choice by any means. I wanted to go to the university as I mentioned earlier. I had high aspirations for the university, but what I was interested in pursuing I was talked out of on two occasions because they were considered fields that were too challenging and not appropriate for women. Even as I was studying for the university exams my father, who primarily took the leadership role, said "Lena that's not for you." And then both of my parents made the decision that I should go to the teachers' college. It's so much like here, too. Go get your degree first then get married, and have your degree in case you need a career to fall back on. Teaching is a stereotypical occupation for a woman. So I did go, even though I wasn't particularly interested at that point. I spent two years, and the only thing that I enjoyed was psychology. I found the other subjects to be unchallenging, I have to say. They assumed you'd already done a lot of the intellectual work in the gymnasium in high school, so most of the work covered how to teach kids how to do art, to learn about dancing, and the culture. It was also very agricultural, learning how to plant flowers and vegetables. I remember it was like and I hate to say it, but they were like two years wasted. But still, I did it. My parents said that if I did it, I could leave the country and get further education, and that was always in the back of my mind. So I said okay, I'll do it, get it over with, and then leave and go somewhere else. So I did very well again. But it was not as meaningful I would say. It didn't do anything for me.

KG

: What were your peers like in the teachers' college?

LA

: Overall it was mixed; both boys and girls, mostly middle class or lower class really. But again, this is often the case with the university because it doesn't cost any money to go to the university in Greece. So the smarter kids from the villages were able to come and study at the university. So there was less of a class system within the university, which is a good thing. It was the same way at the teachers' college. It was very mixed in terms of social class. So that was in some ways a good part of it. You're exposed to new people. But again, all of my friends were women friends, and I had very little interaction with the boys, except for a boy who used to write me love letters. You know, something very interesting in retrospect is that I shared all of that with my parents, and they were very comfortable with it. They were never criticized me. I was very open with them while I was going there about this sort of fantasy And this continued in this country, too, and my parents were very accepting of it. My father, I could say anything to him, and I felt very comfortable, which now in retrospect, I shouldn't have taken it for granted. It was a gift really in many ways to have that relationship and acceptance. It's interesting. Basically, I think my high school years stand out much more in my mind than my two years in the teachers' college. I remember teachers from my high school years very vividly. Teachers I admired. But with the teachers' college, I don't even remember the teachers. It was sort of like two years that went by, they came and went with very little impact on my life.

KG

: During this time, what were your developing goals for your career, for your future?

LA

: Other than being very interested in psychology and knowing that I wanted to continue work to further my education, I didn't have any specific career goals. And it was not talked about either. It was more about becoming well educated than how education might translate into the workplace. I was very interested in that question, but not with any specific goal. I was very interested in how people

choose their life's work. That fascinated me. Even when I was just 16, when I would get a book about that, I would read it. So it was almost as if my work and my research and my interests later in life were already in the making. So early on, I have no idea where it came from. It might have to extend to my parents discouragement of my pursuing what I wanted. I'm sure that played a role. But this – I mean, I was truly very interested in human behavior. So I was really a psychology student in the making from early age and very passionate about it and continued with it. All of my degrees are in psychology. BA, Masters, PhD, and I always loved it. But I didn't have any specific goal other than I would be educated and then I would enter the labor force. I only really knew about a couple of professional women. My older cousin who was a pharmacist, and the sister of my best friend who was a chemist. So you might say there were some role models of women in other professions. None of my aunts or the wives of my uncles, none of them, that generation-- nobody was a professional woman. So it was only in my generation when the women began to enter the workforce. And actually, I have to say that in my age group in Greece, the women had been very much engaged in their professions, even more so than here. And you also see a difference in cultural issues. In Greece, there is much more of an acceptance of what goes on in the workplace, which , again, it's interesting to me. Here, we've actually been much more behind in many ways.

KG

: Could you talk about what sparked your interest to apply for school in America?

LA

: Well, as I mentioned, my parents made me a promise, and from the beginning we knew that the place I would go would be America. I had met a gentleman who was a friend of my aunt's. He was 16 years older than I was and was already living in this country. He was a dentist, and he came to America to become an orthodontist. So I corresponded with him and he became very fond of me, like one would of a child. But he also seemed to have some romantic interest in

me. He was very interested in doing everything he could to bring me to this country. He was the one who discovered the Anglo American Hellenic Bureau of Education, which was established by some professors at Columbia. The bureau was made up of professors of philosophy and history, the humanities. They had the notion that if they were to bring young students to this country, educate them, and send them back, they would help to rejuvenate the golden age of Pericles. So they established a scholarship program for Greek students, which was by application. So my aunt's friend, whose name was Dino, discovered that this bureau existed. He sent me all the papers I would need to see if I could get a scholarship to come to this country. I was very much encouraged by the group. There was a director of the bureau, Mr. Lucas, who said that in terms of my academic credentials, there would be no problem for me to get accepted. What I needed to do is figure out everything else I would need to do to be able to migrate to this country. First of all, I had to be able to speak English and pass a test. The other thing was that I had to have somebody in this country who would put some \$1000 in the bank in my name as a type of insurance, and that was a lot of money in 1951. Both of those were major obstacles if you think about it. I didn't speak English. I never had learned the language. And I said what the heck – who is going to give me \$1,000? But I made it happen. I got \$1,000. There were three brothers of my grandmother's, all of them living in this country and all highly educated and accomplished. I had never met them and they didn't know anything about me. Of course they knew about my father, but I had had no direct contact with them. I took it upon myself to write a letter to tell them that I had been accepted by this bureau to come to America as an exchange student. I described myself and how badly I hoped to be able to do this, but that I needed to have \$1,000 in the bank. My mother said to me: yeah, good luck. Somebody who doesn't know you is going to just give you that much money. Well, believe it or not, two of them went to Mr. Lucas to offer the money, and the third uncle said that he couldn't afford it. I remember like it was yesterday. The letter came.

I ran downstairs, got the letter, and ran back upstairs out of breath. And I read it to my mother, and she started to cry. She said she never believed it would happen, which was why she had agreed to allow me to apply in the first place. It totally shook her up. She never thought it would happen. And actually, I was not that sure it was going to happen either, but I figured I had nothing to lose. Sure, it was a bold statement on my part, writing to people I never met to ask for money. But it worked. So the next obstacle was the English. What would I do now? I decided to find an English teacher and ended up with a wonderful woman who became my friend. I only had one month before I had to be tested and leave because school was going to start in September. She said it was time to go get tested, and even though I didn't feel ready, I said okay. She took me to this American college in Salonika called Anatolia College, near where I grew up. The president of the college was an American. Greek students would study there, and they would become fluent in English. It was a college, but more like an extended high school really. So we went and, of course, I still didn't know any English. And the guy, bless his heart, said what are you going to do? You're supposed to be fluent in English before I can certify that you can do this. My teacher jumped in and said don't worry, she's very smart. She will learn very fast. He said okay, another fluke-- I'll certify that you know English. And he just let it be. Another obstacle overcome, just like that. It felt like it was meant to be. So here I am, not speaking English, with a certificate saying that I had passed the test. After that, I needed to get my passport, visas, tickets, and the other logistical stuff. And my parents said they weren't going to lift a finger. They said I had to take care of it all on my own, because doing that would assure them that I could survive on my own in another country. I mean, what a wise statement if you think about it. They needed to feel comfortable that I was going to make it, but it was also important for me as somebody who was so over protected. I never had left home, not even to go to a summer camp, so to organize all of this was an enormous amount of work because the Greek bureaucracy is beyond

description. To get anything done takes forever. You have to visit like 10 offices. But I was so determined, and I think that's my survival mode. That's one of my strengths really, that I am tenacious. Nothing stops me. I also think it had to do with the fact that I was self-assured, having grown up with very loving parents. I had high self-esteem and not much phased me. My parents were so supportive because they believed so much in education and felt that it was a good reason for me to leave the country. My brother was the most hesitant one in the family. He thought I should wait to learn English before leaving the country. Because he already spoke English, he realized that it was not going to be easy to go to a new country and start college without speaking the language. But all the papers were done, the ticket was purchased, and everything was arranged. The day came that I had to leave home, and my parents were so wonderful. My mother made sure I had clothes and a coat-- very few items because we were still very poor. But I had a heavy coat for the United States, and I had a couple of nice dresses. To back track for a moment, I should mention that my mother had exquisite taste in clothes, and I had taken some of that from her. I always pay attention to how I dress and like what I have on. That is a very important part of me. She also believed that you don't have to have a lot of clothes. You have one very good dress for the winter, one for the summer, and that's it really. But they would be exquisite. They would be made from beautiful materials and were beautifully designed. So I came with practically nothing, but the few things I had were quite elegant. I came by boat, and that was an experience because there were a lot of Greek people migrating as well-- some from the same program. And it was the first time that I was free to flirt with boys left and right. I enjoyed it very much and I didn't even think of what I was doing really. It was such an experience to be on a ship crossing the Atlantic. Of course we stayed in very poor cabins, but the young people managed to find a way to go to first class. I don't know how we did it. We would meet there and dance and have a ball. All of a sudden I felt so grown-up-- the newness, the excitement.

KG

: If I can ask, I'm sorry, what was it like to have to say goodbye to your family?

LA

: You know, I remember we all went to where the ship was docked. I remember very vividly my mother crying and myself crying. But again, I was so excited for this adventure in a kind of naïve way, not fully realizing what it would mean and the hardships I would face. I didn't have the slightest idea; I just looked at it like I was in a fantasy world. I was going to leave, and then I would be able to do all these things. And eventually I did, but I suffered a lot when I first came here. I treated it like I was going to Athens or another city in Greece. I didn't have a conception of what a step I was making. I do say it was the naiveté on my part that got me through, because any person with a little more logic in their head would not have done it. They would have waited to learn English. It was crazy that I didn't know the language. That's why in retrospect, it's beyond me that my parents were brave enough to let me do it and that they trusted me so much. I can't believe it myself.

KG

: What was it that drove you to do that? Was it the thought of education or just adventure?

LA

: Adventure. It was more the adventure. But of course it was also the education because I definitely wanted more. I was not satisfied with what was happening in Greece. I definitely wanted more education. There was no question. And that was part of why my parents were encouraging. They would have done anything for me to get more education and achieve more. But the adventure played an enormous role. Me, on my own, trying to make it so far away in such a new country. I had my own fantasies of this country from what I read. As I said, I wasn't seeing many movies. So that was not what influenced me. It was more what I read and what I heard. The adventure was important, but it felt safe because I came with the bureau. I knew what school I was going to. There were other Greek students doing the same voyage

with me. There I was, with this friend of my aunt's who adored me. I had these uncles that I had never met, but they were going to be there in New York, all three of them. But when I got to New York, it was a lousy day. It was very rainy and sad. I remember we docked and I saw the Statue of Liberty, and I started to cry. I thought, what the hell am I doing? All of a sudden all the fears popped up. I was scared about the decision, the reality that I was here. That was tough. But we were met by a group of Greek students who were a part of this organization. They greeted us at the docks, and there was a woman that became my closest friend, and she's a close friend to this day. The first thing they did, the crazy Greeks who were already in this country, was to say "oh you have to see New York Times Square! Oh, we have to go to Music Hall " So anyhow, they wanted us to see New York right away, the day we arrived. So they took us to Times Square. I was overwhelmed by the lights and the craziness. I felt lost. But I was not alone. I had the group. And then we went to a movie, which I didn't understand a word of. We went to a Greek restaurant for dinner. I stayed with my new Greek friend, and that was wonderful. She was a student at Barnard College and had rented an apartment for the summer, so she had space. I stayed with her until my school started. It was very important to have this kind of security in the form of other students, other people my age, and to be able to speak Greek, and not to have to face the reality of the real world in the states. Then I made a date to meet this uncle-- the uncle who gave me the money. I was very excited, and he was very excited to meet me. This is a story in itself because he was so eager, filled with anticipation over meeting his 19-year-old niece from Greece. He had a fantasy of this very young, glamorous woman, and instead, there I was. I was very chubby. Here comes this chubby kid who didn't look much older than 14. He was standing outside his apartment waiting for me, and when he looked at me, his face dropped. He said "before we go into my apartment, let's go to the drug store. I want to weigh you. You're very heavy." What a greeting.

: Oh my gosh.

LA

: Some way to meet your uncle. So I go there, and he weighed me, and he thought I was overweight. He has been the biggest puzzle in my life. He's passed away. He was so hard on me and yet so approving-- I mean, it was crazy. He would never endorse me face-to-face, but he would tell all his friends about this wonderful niece, this high achiever who is doing all these wonderful things. But he never said it to my face. As soon as he got to know me, he called his girlfriend and he said "take Lena, and take her shopping for anything she needs. Just do whatever she wants." So this wonderful woman took me to some big stores in New York City, and I got my clothes for college-- my skirts, and my sweaters— everything the girls used to wear in the early '50s. You've seen pictures. I took all the right clothes for college. So that was a very sweet thing of him to do after he insulted me, right? Then I have another episode with him. I used to come down, and he would take me out to dinner, and he would always say would you like a little money for the subway? And he would give me like \$50.00 just something to have a little extra money. He was very generous this way. One time he called me and said "I have a friend of mine visiting me here from Belgium, and I would love for you to join us." So I said I would love to, because for a starving college kid, to be in a nice restaurant was like a gift. Then he asked if I spoke French, and I said I was learning. And he answered wait until you learn and he disinvited me.

KG

: Oh my goodness.

LA

: That's the kind of a guy he was. But you know, at the same time, as I said, he was a fascinating guy. He was an inventor with a brilliant mind. He lived a very elegant life. I don't know if you've heard of the Pierre in New York. He had an apartment in the Pierre. He had an apartment in Paris. He went to Switzerland for skiing in the winter. I mean, he was very cosmopolitan and spoke many languages. Very elegant- - I think he wanted his niece to be different than she

happened to be. She was intellectual and an achiever, but she was not glamorous. But he was very loving. Whenever we went to visit him in Paris, he went out of his way to do everything he could to show Sandy and me the best of times. When I got married, I asked him to give me away, and he was so honored. He could not believe it. He said yes. He said he would get me whatever I needed, and asked "do you need some money for your wedding gown?" I said it would be welcomed. He said to me-- now, remember, this is '56-- "would \$200.00 do?" I said of course it would do. So I bought a dress for \$45.00, and it's a beautiful dress. That's how much things cost those days. And we had enough money leftover to buy our first piano.

KG

: That's awesome.

LA

: And then he says to me, "what would you like as a wedding gift?" Again, totally naïve, not knowing anything, I said "we need glasses. I need some glasses, regular glasses." So he went to the most exquisite place in New York, and these boxes arrived of German crystal, 12 of each. I still have some of them. They were so thin that most of them broke. I mean, the most exquisite gift you can imagine. So he had his way of loving me and also being very critical. He wanted me to be different in terms of my looks and my sophistication. But his love was always there. And as a matter of fact, when he passed away, he left everything in both of his places, all of his belongings, to us-- including a Mercedes sports car that he had had made especially for him, which my husband brought all the way here to

LA

, and then sold because it was so special that if anything went wrong with it, they would have to get the parts from Germany. So Sandy said "I'm not keeping this car." Then he sold his two apartments and created a scholarship program for the same college, Anatolia College in Salonika, because he went to that college when it was in Istanbul -- I have to back track. My father came from Asia Minor. That's another story in itself. There were a lot of Greeks there. I think I told

you my father spoke very little English. His uncles also came from Asia Minor, and they were all educated at this very famous college in Istanbul, then Constantinople. Then they all left. They went all over Europe and they became highly educated, all of the brothers. So anyhow, he left that to Anatolia college, which was a wonderful thing. Now, as an educator, I see what a wonderful thing it was for him to do.

KG

: If I can ask, how did this affect you? Seeing this difference, and I don't want to say it was like a parenting technique, but it is sort of similar to that. If he gave you away at your wedding, he must have---

LA

: He was – yeah. My substitute father.

KG

: What kind of affect did this have on you coming from such a supportive family and then being confronted with –

LA

: With him?

KG

: Yeah.

LA

: First of all, I have to say that I respected some aspects of him. I admired his brilliance because he invented the aerosol that goes on the faucet to make the water bubbly. He made a lot of money as a result of that. He had this kind of inquisitive mind and I admired that. I liked his lifestyle. I loved the fact that he knew the best restaurants, that he dressed exquisitely, and that he traveled a lot. I loved that part of his life. But he did not have good relationships with women. He married only once. And he married while I was here in this country, and it was when he was in his late 50's– he married somebody who was 28. I remember he called me up and said "Lena, I want you to come and meet me because I have to introduce you to somebody. So I took the train from college, and I met them. And she was exquisite. She was a graduate student actually at Columbia University, very tall, with flame red hair and high heels. It was like I was this kid, totally naïve-looking and still not sophisticated enough,

and here is this woman. She even smoked with a cigarette holder. And he made sure to tell me that if she asked me anything, that he was only 42. So then we decided to go to dinner, and she says to me wherever Lena wants to go-- , as if I knew New York. But that was his style. They went on their honeymoon, and she left him on their honeymoon. So only God knows why.

KG

: Oh, my gosh.

LA

: So I get a letter from her because I sent them a set of records as a gift. And she wrote to me: Lena, I'm sure this would be a great addition to Eli's collection, not to our collection. So I said, that doesn't sound good. But then I called him, and he told me. He made up a story that she didn't want children, and he wanted children, or something like that. But I think he had a very hard time with women. And there were certain affectations about him I didn't like. He was very different from my father. I also had another uncle who was a cousin of this uncle, and they were really surrogate parents for me. They lived very near my college. On Sundays, they would come and pick me up, and I would have dinner with them. They really took care of me in a loving, parental way.

KG

: If we could talk about – yeah, move towards that a little bit more. Your experiences, so starting college, and maybe you could go into how they affected your life as well.

LA

: Well, as I said, I stayed in New York until college started. And that was an easy transition because of all the Greek students. The only thing I remember is that they took us to Columbia for dinner to welcome the new arrivals, and there were all these professors at Columbia with their Phi Beta Kappa keys. They were all in their late 50's and 60's, and they took us into this faculty club at Columbia. And I remember thinking to myself, I can't speak any English. How am I going to converse with them? It was very disconcerting. The first thing they gave us was half of a melon at the

beginning of the meal. Talk about a culture shock. I thought, what am I doing with a melon? That's a fruit you eat after you eat dinner. So I sat there, and then they gave me a spoon to eat it with. In Greece, we ate melons with a knife and fork. So it was interesting. The first week in this country, all of a sudden trying to ease into a new culture and new customs and new ways of doing, was a little traumatic. That dinner was actually more than a little traumatic, especially since I did not speak English. It was hard. Finally I picked up my stuff because college was going to start, and I went to Adelphi University in Long Island, which was not too far from New York. I took the train. Beautiful place. And what amazed me, again, was all the green, because Greece has very little green. All you see in Greece is beautiful blue sky, blue waters, white houses, and beige because there's no grass, there's no trees; very few trees. Here, you go to Long Island, it's green. I wrote to my parents: "I'm in a sea of green." That's the sea of the United States. Not blue, it's green. Anyhow, I got to college and I had a roommate, another new experience. The girls were actually very nice. They all came to meet me and talk to me, but I couldn't talk. One of them asked me who my roommate was, and I didn't understand. She told me hers was—whatever her name was-- Rose something. I heard Rose, and I said, rose is a flower. So mine is Carnation. I was so completely out of it. The other thing that fascinated me about the other girls was the clothes they were bringing. I remember my roommate kept bringing more and more skirts and blouses and sweaters. She had a huge closet full of clothes. I looked at mine, not much. She was from Brooklyn, a Jewish girl, also a freshman. So all of a sudden, again, I'm finding myself not really belonging. But there was a group of Greek students on the campus, so immediately, I found my Greek group. That felt so good. They were supposed to help me when I had to register because I didn't know what to do, so they were going to meet me at registration and walk me through it. So I'm waiting and waiting, and nobody showed up. And I stumble through-- I don't even know how I managed to register. Then I asked them what happened. They said they

thought they should throw me right in and let me survive it as a test. I said thank you. So anyhow, we started school in September and until December, it was hell for me. I will never forget it. I was totally miserable. I got migraine headaches, which I never had in my life. One day, I went to get out of bed, and I got this excruciating headache. I couldn't even walk to the bathroom, and tears streamed down my face. I couldn't go to class. Then I used to get sties all over my eyes, boils all over my face. I was a mess. All of my anxiety and discomfort was causing my body to be destroyed. It was very tough. So was going to class and not understanding a word. I would just sit there, and then I would come out with a headache, a regular headache, because I didn't understand a thing. I didn't know how to cope really, so I would take every textbook that had the same subject matter and read the same issue in three or four different textbooks. I started using my little dictionary, which I'm going to bring in and show you so you can see that I had to look up, every word. I told myself I couldn't do it. So that's when I started just reading the same passage over and over again, so to speak. And I would take in whatever I could absorb, which is an interesting way of learning a language-- almost by feeling. I do that with French now when I go to France. I just pick up a few words, and I try to get meaning out of the context. I figure out what is being talked about and recognize a few words. And that's how I learned English. Sort of more like learning the context. So the first semester was from hell. From hell. I will never forget it. I never felt good and I didn't understand anything in class. I didn't understand any of the rules and regulations either. And in those days, you were grounded if you came late to the dormitory. We had house mothers. And I would go to visit my uncle, and I would not keep track of time. I would come back late and the doors would be locked. And the house mother would ground me. "Next weekend, you cannot go anywhere." I mean, I really -- it's sort of like not feeling like you belong at all. Not knowing -- being in almost -- I can't even describe it. It was like trying to survive in the sea with huge waves, and not knowing whether you will

come up. I remember I was taking biology. I took English for foreign students. I took a music course. I did that hoping that I might understand something. I forget what the fourth course of the first semester was. It was an easy course, though—the only hard one was the biology course. I took the test, and I didn't know what the hell I was doing. So the house mother called me in after the results came out, and she says to me "you got an F." And I didn't know what an F was. I mean, that's how out of it I was. And it took me until Christmas to be able to start really getting any English. It took me that whole first semester. Thank God I had this uncle who lived on the island, not the one in New York, that used to take me and feed me and worry about me and call me to ask how I was doing. They were really the parents I did not have here. They were the ones that gave me all of the support. And the Greek students-- it was good to have them. I remember another thing. One night, they said it was a Greek night. There was a Greek American girl who said why don't you join us for Greek night? I didn't know what it was. I thought all the Greeks were getting together. It was a sorority thing. And I had no idea. I never heard of a sorority. So I went there, and of course, they rejected me straight up. I couldn't care less because I had no connection. I didn't know the meaning of it. It wasn't anything, so it didn't make any difference. It wasn't until the second semester that I finally started to get a sense of what was happening. Now, I have to tell you that I had some wonderful experiences with the dean and one of the teachers there, and some graduate students. There was a Greek American graduate psychology student who kind of took me under his wing. I used to interact a lot with the graduate students because I would go in the library, and I would find them there because all I did was study.

KG

: No social –

LA

: Nothing. The first semester I would just sit at the end of my bed because my desk was there, and by the end of the year, the bed was concave because I never left it. There was

no way for me to socialize. I did a little bit with the Greek students, but I couldn't speak English. So all I could do was read, read, study, study. Talk about determination. My brother later told me he couldn't believe it because I didn't study very much when I was in Greece. And he couldn't believe that I worked so hard here. But I was so determined. It's funny because my parents said it was my choice. They didn't want to hear any of the problems. They were hardcore. You made the choice. Go do it, which was very good. So I had nobody to complain to. But there was a teacher, and I don't remember when I met her. There was a dean that did everything she could to find me scholarships or to find me jobs or any way to help me financially because financially, I was in very bad shape. I couldn't bring any money out of Greece at all. The scholarship I had, it only funded me partially. I was not fully funded. So eventually, I worked very hard. I worked in the cafeteria. That gave me my room and board. I worked very hard during the summers to save some money for the following year. I was in very bad financial shape, but I had this wonderful dean who, any time there was any opportunity for me to get some scholarship or a little bit of money, she made sure I got it. They named a building after her, so I keep thinking of her, Then I had this teacher, Dr. Disher, a child developmental psychologist who hired me to be her assistant. Here is an undergraduate, not knowing that much psychology or anything. But this was a way of helping me financially. And then one day, she wrote me a check for \$500.00

KG

: Wow.

LA

: Those days that was a lot of money. And she said, "you need it more than I do. It's sitting in the bank for me. You take it as a gift from me." I mean I couldn't believe it. It's like I had an angel watching over me. There was another thing that happened to me on one of the trips I took because I was so lonesome. I took the train and went to find the Greek kids in New York, and I couldn't find anybody. I remember I sat outside on the steps of one of the buildings

where some of the students lived and waited there forever. Finally, they showed up and I connected with them, then I took the train back. And I didn't know where to get off. I just didn't know. At that time I knew how to use some English, so I asked an older guy to tell me where the college was so that I could get out. He got out with me, called a taxi, put me in the taxi, paid the taxi, and told the taxi cab driver to take me to the school.

KG

: That's so nice.

LA

: My experience in the states and in New York was beyond description in terms of the goodness of people I encountered. I mean, somebody who didn't know me. I'm sure he was a parent, and he thought to himself, my daughter might do something crazy like that. It was the sweetest act of kindness. I remember another time walking in New York to see my uncle, and waiting to cross the street. There was a sailor and he was trying to pick me up, and I said I'm going to meet my uncle. Then he started asking me where I was from. And he says, have a good time with your uncle. It completely changed his approach. Very sweet again. So anyhow, all these little experiences I had were so important for me. Back at Adelphi College, the second semester was so much easier. So much easier. I took a sociology course, psychology, anthropology-- real courses. My grades started going up. I got the highest grade in sociology. I got a 98. Can you believe it?

KG

: At what point did you feel like you understood English?

LA

: At this point, I understood it.

KG

: By the second semester?

LA

: By the second semester.

KG

: Wow.

LA

: But I worked so hard. And it was the determination, but also the fact that I had no social life. I mean, I did nothing other than read and go to class.

KG

: At what point did that change?

LA

: Well, once I knew my way around, I became a different person. I started dating for the first time in my life. I fell in love for the first time in my life with a Greek guy, and we were a couple for a long time. I remember I used to go out to the Greek nightclubs and stuff like that. I started to drink and smoke. I did all the things that college students do, now that I had that kind of freedom. I remember wanting to shock my parents, and I said "you know what, I came home last night at 2:00, and I was out with the guys, and we were drinking." And my mother, bless her heart, said "you have all the values we gave you, so I trust whatever you do." What a wise woman she was. I mean, I don't know if I could do that, but I took lessons from her, and I hope I was able to replicate some of that in my approach to child rearing.

KG

: If I can ask, how was your relationship with your family maintained once you left?

LA

: It was very hard because we didn't have telephones. It was nothing like what we have today, so it was through written correspondence. They would write to me, and I would write to them. I came to the states in '51 and I didn't see them again until '55. That was only because I saved some money to buy my ticket since they couldn't send me money for a ticket. Then when I got home, they gave me some money to come back. But that was the only visit at all during that time, which was very tough.

KG

: So without your parents really in the picture and minus your uncles, who formed your support system during those years?

LA

: Well, actually, my teachers. As I told you, Dr. Disher, bless her heart. Ruth Harley, the dean, not the house mother. The house mother was a difficult one. She was punitive. But those two were very important. So was my uncle on Long Island. I also spent some times in the summer at their house on the water. They were my extended family. They had an adopted son; cute little kid. Then the Greek community, the Greek students, they were definitely important. I would go spend weekends at Barnard with my woman friend, the first one I met. I would sleep in her dormitory, so I had that. That was a very important support system. The Greek community, the Lucas group, was a very close community. Very close. And to this day, we keep saying wouldn't it be wonderful if one of us were to arrange a reunion? The interesting thing is that all of us stayed in this country, so the dream that they had that all of us would become educated and go back and help Greece never materialized. I think we helped Greece by being here. So that community was very important to me. My uncle in New York did not provide emotional support for me at all but he gave me financial support, and here and there, a few bucks.

KG

: I'm glad you addressed the idea that the program specifically thought that you would return to Greece. So I wanted to ask how much the idea of your heritage affected you.

LA

: Very much so. I took it very seriously that I was going to go back, and I was definitely going to work there and do everything I could to help my country. That became instilled in me very slowly that that was my mission coming here and going back. And I remember agonizing about that, truly agonizing because I loved this country, and I loved what I was doing here. But it was the commitment I had made. I remember one year we had a visitor to the program, a professor from Athens, a very wise man. I was assigned to be his escort whenever we had meetings in New York and so forth. I told him how, in a sense, I was getting used to so much of this country, and how much I loved this country. I

really wanted to spend more time, but I had to go back. I didn't know what to do and how to cope with that. I was telling him about that. And he said "Lena, Greece has very few products. We have a little bit of olive oil. We have some raisins, some tobacco, just very few products. All we have is people and ideas. You stay in the United States as a product of Greece." He totally liberated me. And I never felt guilty again because then I took it very seriously that I was going to be in this country and represent my country. So very often, I would say that even with my students, all of my students know about my Greek heritage and how I feel about it. I really take it very seriously. And in part, my achievements, again, I feel that I am doing it for Greece. I'm truly a product of Greece.

KG

: If we could return to kind of your development as a student and your undergraduate years. If you'd like to return to a couple of points, how were your career goals starting to develop at the time, or even just your interests?

LA

: Well, right away, in psychology – I mean, I loved it, truly loved it. I got so engaged in psychology and did some interesting papers, and experiments. Because I was so involved with the graduate students, too, I was very inspired by thinking research already, even as an undergraduate. I think I told you about my honors thesis, which was a very interesting piece of research in terms of how women choose their life's work, and what role the family plays in shaping those career aspirations. So I was very much into research in psychology and the focus on gender issues without even recognizing it. I can't believe when I think back that the first thing I did from a research point of view carried on with me so many years later. I knew I was definitely going to apply for graduate work. There was no question in my mind that I was going to get my BA and then move on. I think I was encouraged by the faculty. And I want to tell you that, in spite of the very difficult beginning and that first F, I graduated cum-laude, with honors. And later, I was elected in the Academy of Distinction at Adelphi. I think for

somebody who didn't speak English, to graduate with honors in two years was unheard of. But I did it, and that was, again, that determination and hard work -- and some brains I'm sure. But the graduate education was definitely in my mind. There was no question. So I talked to the dean of the graduate school there, and I will never forget how naïve she was. I said to her I'm very much interested in working with people, but also, I'm very interested in research. I have this inquiring passion in me. And she said you can't do both. Either you are a clinical psychologist, or you are a researcher. You can't combine it. She was a professor of Spanish. It's like I see her now and this is '52 or '53, and it didn't compute for me. Being a dean of the graduate school and to have this kind of dichotomy that you cannot be a clinician and still do research that feeds the clinical work didn't make sense to me, so I decided to apply to graduate school. And I was given a number of suggestions from the Lucas Bureau. I was applying for my Masters because the idea when I left Greece was that I would get my BA and my Masters and then go home. So he suggested Smith College, and Bryn Mawr College, some of the women's elite colleges, which I didn't know much about then. I didn't have the concept of different types of schools. So I found out that Ohio University was in Athens. So I said I'm going to go to Athens. It was crazy-- I went to Ohio University because it was in Athens. I thought there might be some Greek students there in Athens. I was still so naïve. So I did go to Athens, and I had a very good experience actually. I got my Masters there and, again, I had very, very good mentors. My advisor was a sweetheart. He was so good and so endorsing, so supportive. I remember I decided to do a very elaborate Master's thesis. He says to me, Lena, you don't need to do that. I said no, I need to study this subject better. So he said okay, go do it. And I'm glad I did it actually. It was a very interesting thesis. I was interested, again, on how foreign students acculturate, because of my own experience. How do they make the transition being foreign students in this country, and their adjustment? So I developed a test. At that time, I was dabbling into Freud and all that, and he had

discussed identification-- the ability of persons to identify with others in their own country and other cultures and so forth; a kind of flexibility. So I developed a measure of identification. I found a number of foreign students, and I administered the test, my questionnaire, and some other tests, psychological tests to sort of measure their identification back home. How well integrated were they in their own culture? And were they able to do the same here? Is it the psychological well-being of the person that enables the person to make the transition and adjust to a new culture? And I did find that was the case actually. So anyhow, it was very interesting for a Master's thesis. It was a very good piece of work. So at that time, I was finishing that, and I was planning to come back home. And my advisor said "Lena, since you're here, why don't you get your PhD and then go home?" I thought it made sense, so I decided to pursue the PhD. I applied to a number of graduate programs, and he advised me not to go into clinical psychology and to do counseling psychology instead, because with my plans to go back to Greece, it was a much more flexible degree. He told me that, as a clinical psychologist, you are not going to be able to get patients because the psychiatrists will have them. As a counseling psychologist, you can work with students; you can do all kinds of things. So he told me to do that. He gave me about four or five different schools that had very good programs in counseling psychology. I remember I applied and got accepted to all of them, but I chose the one that wrote me the nicest letter. Here I study higher education. If you think back to the way I chose my colleges, it's funny actually. But it didn't hurt me any, which is another interesting story. Most people assume that because I have been an achiever, and I have done very well professionally, that I must have gone to elite schools, and not to Ohio University or to the University of Maryland for my PhD. It's very interesting the assumptions we make. The decision was made that I was going to go to the University of Maryland. And at that time, they gave me only half of an assistantship. But I have to tell you, I walked in there, I talked to some of the faculty, and I

talked to the chair of the department, and I said I couldn't do this with half of an assistantship. I had no other means of support. And he immediately made some phone calls, and I was able to get the other half of the assistantship. That's another story. But to come back, I want to say more about my undergraduate years. I think about growing up socially and finding my sexuality, and that in those days, again, you were not sexually active. But at least falling in love and knowing what love is and the boyfriend that I mentioned, the Greek guy, he was about my age, maybe a little younger, a few months younger, but a year younger in college because I was advanced in school early on. So we were together, and then the senior prom came. I was going to go with him, and I had a woman that I had become very good friends with, an undergraduate, who was from Panama, a black woman. And she says Lena, I'll make you a dress for the prom, and she made me a dress for the prom. She was so sweet. It was very beautiful. And she made it all – she even bought the material. I don't remember paying any money for it. It was so sweet. So this boyfriend says to me I'm not going to the prom with you, and that was the end of our relationship. I was devastated. My first real love, actualized love-- the other guy in the conservatory had been more of a fantasy-- and that was it. So that was a painful experience.

KG

: How did that affect your idea of relationships?

LA

: I cried a lot. But years later, we picked up our relationship again when he was a graduate student, and I was a graduate student. But it didn't go very far. We both tried, but I had a harder time trusting the relationship. But he has remained a friend, and I would love to see him again. And he got his PhD in chemistry. He went to Harvard. And I saw him only once after that. I had to go and give a talk at Michigan State and he was a professor there. And we reconnected, and I met his family. It was nice. He took me to the airport the next day. So it was nice to reconnect. But that was a devastating experience for me. The other thing I want to say is that my friend who brought me to the United States, he would have

loved to have married me in the Greek kind of way, but to me he was just a friend. I didn't have any romantic feelings for him. And he remained a good friend. I went and visited him in Greece last year. So I would say even though I never – you were asking me before about dating and so forth. Even though I never dated in Greece, I fell in love more than once in this country. And I learned what it is to have romantic feelings and to date with ups and downs, the good and the bad.

KG

: More generally, your friendships with men, you didn't have a lot of experience with that in your childhood, correct? So in what ways did that affect you with being able to have male friendships –

LA

: Well, actually, what I have found in this country is that it's very hard to have male friendships. I would say since I've been married, I have had only two male friends that I feel close to. The one passed away unfortunately, and I call them my male girlfriends because there are very few men that are willing to be very open with disclosing and sharing like girlfriends do. Very few men. And I tease my husband because he has male friends, and I say well, you guys, do you ever talk about personal things? He says maybe a little bit. We talk a lot about politics. It's very hard to have friendships with men the way I have friendships with women. Men are not as open, or they're afraid to be in touch with the emotional part of themselves. This is sad. But I had a few here and there. But I have a lot of women friends. That's where my energy goes.

KG

: So to touch on that a little bit, either in your undergraduate or graduate years, just as you're feeling comfortable as becoming an American, I guess, after you've accepted that you are going to stay as a product of Greece here, what would you and your friends do for fun? What were the activities that you would do? What were the trends that you might have prescribed to at the time with those friends?

LA

KG

: When I was an undergraduate or graduate student?

LA

: Um-hmm.

: Well, being a graduate student was a different experience. As an undergraduate, I think we did a lot of stuff. The Greek students would get together and go to a movie and talk, or go to a Greek restaurant. And it was a very mixed group. There were very few women actually. To be exact, maybe there were three women, and the rest of the group was men. We were like brothers and sisters. Occasionally I would fall in love with one of them, and then there would be another guy that I fell in love from the same group. I always was falling in love. But there was very little we could do because we were all broke, too. And the guys worked very hard. A lot of the guys, I remember, washed dishes in the cafeterias of their colleges. We all did labor really to supplement our scholarships. We didn't like it, but we did it. It was sort of like it was understood that that's what happens. I did a lot of babysitting to make money. I took care of the kids for several families. So it was primarily some movies and some Greek dinners in cheap restaurants, and getting together to talk and reminisce about Greece. There was a lot of reminiscing. It was wonderful actually because we were all very homesick. You tried to adjust. You tried to become part of this culture. But there is always that yearning. And the fact that we couldn't go back created a lot of yearning for Greece. So it was very important that we had that group, very important for me. And I'm sure for them, too.

KG

: And you said that this changed in comparison to your graduate experiences?

LA

: Graduate school, that's when I got more acculturated because all of the students, all of the friends I had were American. I had, of course, some of the friends from the Greek group that I would see occasionally, but my circle of friends were mostly my classmates. And again, I was the second woman who got the PhD in the program, so there

were two of us. The rest were guys, and the whole program had 32 students.

KG

: How did that affect you having primarily male colleagues?

LA

: You know what? That's when I saw sexism really; the first time I encountered it. And I didn't understand it. The other woman was from the south, so she had a southern accent and kind of a flirtatious way of talking. And for some reason, some of the guys did not like her. One day a guy whispered something, and I asked him to repeat what he said, and he says all she needs is a good screw. I didn't even understand what he meant, but when I figured it out I said my God. The guys' mentality, they were very – I mean, it was a lot of sexism. It probably happened behind my back, but it was nothing I didn't experience straight on. I don't remember experiencing much competition either. I'm just trying to think back now. I'm such a Pollyanna though, too. I forget unpleasant things. I remember being liked by the students-- the graduate students, the male graduate students. And very soon, one of the graduate students became my boyfriend, so maybe that helped, too. There was some respect because the guy was also a classmate. I don't know if it had anything to do with that. I came to Maryland in '54. And I went to visit Greece in '55. It took me three years to get my PhD after my Masters. And I remember in '55, the first summer I went home, I told my parents I had a year and a half more of work, and then I was coming home. Then everything changed. I fell in love with my husband who was a classmate, too. I already knew my husband very well because we were classmates, and we were very good friends for a year and a half. I was dating another guy, and he was dating someone else. And then he finally started to flirt a little bit with me, and I saw an interest in him. And he kind of courted me through music because he has his BA in music, which is interesting. That was our connection. And he would say "let's go by the music school, and I'll play the piano for you." Oh, look what time it is. We should be stopping, because I have to be somewhere.

KG

: Oh, goodness. We might leave that for another –

LA

: I have to be to lunch at 12:00.

KG

: Okay. We'll stop here. Well, this is a great stopping point there because it's –

LA

: You'll bring me back. I'm in graduate school now for my PhD.

KG

: Yes. And we'll start with your husband and graduate school.

1.3. Session 3 (March 5, 2012)

KG

: Today is March 5, 2012, and we're back for our third session with Lena Astin. Lena, thank you again for coming and sharing your story with me.

LA

: You remember my analysis of what I did take from my early developmental years that shaped in many ways the kind of person I am. It's part of what I had already said. I'm going to back track for a while. I arrived to the University of Maryland the end of the summer of 1954. I already had my Masters. So it was going to be three years for me to complete my PhD. So when I arrived there, and I mentioned that, but I'll say it again, I was very lucky to have enough support from my faculty, so I was able to cover my expenses. So by my having two assistantships, half in the counseling center and half doing some research, I was set, \$1,200.00 a year. That was the total assistantship. And we lived on that, which is amazing when you think about it, right now. I lived on that until I got married. I lived with other women who were also graduate students. The graduate class, was a very small class. The program, the whole psychology department, had thirty-two students. And probably the PhD students, were about 10 or less. So very small and very close, all of us. There was another woman who was ahead of me. She completed her PhD before me,

and I was the second woman in the whole program to get the PhD. So you can see that in those days, there were not many women, which prompted me later on to study women with doctorates. Some of the men were married. And we were a very closely knit group of students because when you have eight to ten students who you study with, you take courses together, it's like a very strongly knit community. And my husband to be was one of my classmates. We were very good friends, and at that time, I started dating. As soon as I went there I started dating another classmate. But I was, as I said, good friends with my husband until he started being interested in me and me being interested in him. That didn't happen until the fall of 1955 after I returned from Greece. That summer I went to Greece to visit my parents. It was the first time I visited them since I left home in 1951.

KG

: What were your ideas of returning to Greece? You had said that you told them that you would return after a year and a half.

LA

: My plan was to finish my PhD and go back home. And I had already started to look for what were some options I might have in Greece in terms of employment. Not very promising. Most of the people I talked with, they did not encourage me about being able to find a regular job. They said I could volunteer and use my knowledge and skills as a volunteer but not get paid. I didn't do that much of an intensive looking for a job because I realized that I had some more time in this country to complete my work. And I did tell my parents that I didn't have that much more to do to finish my PhD and that probably I would be coming home in a couple of years, the longest. So I returned back in September to start my school year, and at that point, I noticed that my husband had become somewhat interested in me, romantically. He used to ask me to go and listen to him playing the piano, because he's a musician in addition to being a psychologist. And so we will go by the music school, and he would play the piano. So I started becoming interested in him as well. But as I said, in the meantime, I

was dating somebody else, and I was pretty serious, and he was serious with me. So November, and I remember the dates exactly, November 18, he asked me out for the first date. I used to get – I think I mentioned that earlier, I used to get occasionally migraine headaches. And the day he asked me out, I had one of those terrible migraine headaches, but I said I'm not going to miss this date no matter what. I'm going to make it. So we did go out, and we went to the Library of Congress to hear the Budapest Quartette. So our first date really was through our connection with music. And believe it or not, we got engaged shortly after that, on December 5.

KG

: Wow.

LA

: So it didn't take very long, because we knew each other. We were good friends. And it was a matter of seeing how we could connect just being alone outside the classroom so to speak, outside the seminar room. So I remember we decided to go ahead and get engaged. His parents were excited but also shocked at the same time. They never had met me, and all of a sudden, he goes home and announces that he was going to marry this woman. So my parents were even more shocked because I wrote to them shortly after I came back. After I had seen them, and I had said that I was coming home. I wrote to them that I started dating this very tall guy. My husband is 6'5. The next letter was I'm very interested in this guy, and I'm thinking of marrying this guy. So these letters were one after the other in a very short period of time. My mother said "tell me a little bit about this guy. Where is his family from? What nationality is he? What religion is he?" So I told her that he was English and a little bit Scottish. So I asked my husband "what's your religion?" He thought about it, and said the closest is Unitarian." He used to go to the Unitarian fellowship. So I wrote to my mother and said he's Unitarian. So my mother, bless her heart, she looked up and found out about Unitarians. And she wrote back, and said "I understand they are very nice people." I thought they were going to disown me. But here it

was, I said "I'm marrying," and that was the end of my returning to Greece. And she in return wrote the most beautiful letters, and was very supportive. When later I asked her about this, she said "I cried a lot, but I wasn't going to lose you or alienate your future husband, so I had to be very supportive and very loving." I saw such wisdom in her, which I took it to heart because later on with my own kids, I tried to remind myself what would my mother have done. Anyhow, at that time my brother was already traveling through Europe on his way to the states, so he didn't even know that there was a man in my life, a serious relationship in my life. So I went to meet him at the boat when he arrived from Greece. And I said to him this is my fiancé. My brother walked away. So I said to my husband, I think he didn't understand because I said it in English. Then his friend comes over and congratulates me. And my brother said I heard it, but I wasn't sure that I really heard it. So anyhow, he was shocked, completely shocked and didn't take to it as well as my parents did. He thought it was crazy that in such a short time I made such a major decision. I just had started dating the guy, and then here I am, I'm marrying the guy. As I said, we were engaged in December, and we got married in February, during the break between semesters. His parents were wonderful. I can't say enough of his parents of the love they showed me. Here was somebody from another country. They hardly knew me. And I remember his mother saying "I always wanted to have a daughter." She had two sons. She started making me clothes. She was a fantastic seamstress, which I was also very responsive to it because I didn't have my parents. So she became a wonderful substitute mother for me.

KG

: What were the differences that you had noticed between your mother and his mother?

LA

: My mother, I would say, was more liberated, even though she didn't work. And his mother, even though she had a Master's degree, she was highly educated for a woman of her times. She had worked for a while as a journalist. But she

still had much more traditional views about women's roles. That showed much more later on when we had the kids. My mother would write to me and say why are you staying home and changing diapers? Why did you get all of these degrees for? And Sandy's mother, she wouldn't be as direct about it, but you could tell she was not approving of my working when the kids were young. She gave up her profession and became a stay at home mom. But always regretted it, which is very interesting. So she had this kind of approach – avoidance about the whole thing. She admired me for my achievements and being a professional woman, but at the same time, her own stuff would come up in terms of not being okay that I was not at home with the kids and that I had a nanny. She was very ambivalent about it. Anyhow, just to finish my experiences at Maryland, I would say that overall, I had a very positive experience. The only time I felt that there was a sense of discrimination was when I wanted to have statistics as my second major. And my advisor said that was not what I was going to do. Let's forget that. And said go and do social psych as a second major. I remember that I wanted to prove him wrong so I took every statistic course offered. I said I'll show them that I can do it. But of course, I didn't have it in my record as a second major. But other than that, I did not feel any discrimination in the sense that I was treated the same as the rest of the students. They were very supportive. My advisor just was an unbelievable guy. Sandy had the same advisor. Just a wonderful guy. He couldn't do enough for both of us, and for me, it was such an endorsement. So anyhow, my graduate school days were not in any way traumatic, and I never felt there was such a thing as discrimination because if you think, it was also my advisor for my Master's degree that suggested I go ahead and get the PhD. I didn't have any feeling that somehow women cannot do it. And my family too who said yes, you should go and do it. We will support you. Not financially, but emotionally. And the faculty at school, I was very well liked by them. I was respected. So there was nothing about feeling discriminated until I really got into the labor market. That is when I became a conscious feminist when I went out

in to work, and I saw the discrimination. I did my dissertation on empathy – I thought it was a very interesting dissertation. I wanted to measure empathy during the actual therapeutic encounter because I felt that if you measure empathy by paper and pencil tests, you don't get the sense of what it is to be truly empathetic as in the therapeutic encounter. And it was a very creative piece of work, I would say, because I was not even that much into technology in those days. Not that I'm in it now. I took actual therapeutic sessions, and I had my brother-in-law who is an actor enact the actual statements the clients had made during the therapeutic encounter. And then my subjects, who were graduate students, seated behind a one way mirror, will receive the recording of actual client, as enacted by my brother-in-law who changed his voice and approach. My subjects would have to respond to the statements as a therapist would have to respond. And then this was a way of measuring empathy during the actual situation. In turn I had a group of judges who had to judge the amount of empathy indicated in the subjects' responses. There was a very high reliability in the judgments made by the judges. It was a very good piece of research. We were supposed to write it as an article in order to graduate. That was part of the requirements in those days, that you couldn't get your degree unless you took your dissertation and wrote it as an article for a scholarly journal. I wrote it just to get my degree. And I didn't do anything with it until much later, which I published it, almost ten years later. I finished in 1957, and I published it in the mid to late 1960's when I started doing research because between 1957 and mid 1960's, I was primarily doing clinical work and teaching, and I never did any research. So we got married in February. We finished our work at the same time. Actually, we took the qualifying exams at the same time. In those days, you had to show proficiency in two foreign languages. So we had to do it in German and French. French I knew some, so I did fine. In German, I didn't know a word. So my husband and I started studying a little bit of German, and we hired a German graduate student to teach us a little bit so we could

pass the exam. We managed to do all of this and to also do the dissertations. We did all of this at the same time, together as husband and wife. That's how we started our work together. It was in February of 1956 that we got married and here we're still working together and publishing together. That's a long time.

KG

: You were a power couple.

LA

: Well, in those days, actually, we were two very good students. But then what happened, because the women were not as well accepted in the labor force, our careers followed very different paths until we came here to UC.

LA

I mean, when we talk about my career and what I encountered as a professional woman, that is what made me a very strong feminist. But, I want to tell you something else, which fascinates me actually, how I had accepted the stereotypes. I didn't even question them. And the stereotypes I accepted was No. 1 that my husband had to make the choices of what we did professionally and that it would be okay if he gets a higher salary than I do. I thought that's what happens. Women work, but they're not the breadwinners. I had accepted those stereotypes. So we moved to Lexington. My husband, instead of going into the army, he had to do the equivalent of the army, so he was a commissioned officer for the public health service. So we went to Lexington, Kentucky in '57. And we both worked. The hospital was a federal penitentiary, but also, it had a unit for people in the military that could come if they had psychiatric problems. It was primarily a federal penitentiary for drug addicts. It was the most famous in the country in terms of treatment of drug addiction. They did most of the research there and the treatment, as well. I don't know if it still exists. A number of the patients were volunteers, who came in the place to withdraw from addiction. So that was my first job, the first two years after my PhD, I worked as a clinical psychologist, with hardcore drug addicts, which was the hardest job I've ever done emotionally. It was upsetting

to see these young people, talented people, so strung out and so messed up psychologically. The way they were ruining their lives. I mean, it was two years of hardship, emotionally, for me. Many times I thought I would quit and do something else because I was only 25 when I got my PhD. And here I was working with hard core, drug addicts, users of heroine. That's what was the drug of choice at that time. Young people, artists, musicians. The women, were all prostitutes. That's how they made their money to get their habit going. The guys, were involved in very minor crimes actually, so they would do sometimes short time in the penitentiary. They were primarily stealing things. So my first job, in many ways, was traumatic emotionally for me, so different, from working, in a mental health community setting as part of my training, even though I did work with psychotic patients as part of my training. But nothing in terms of sociopaths, people who lived – the underground life kind of. So it was very tough. We also had our first child in Lexington. We only stayed for two years in Lexington from 1957 to 1959 because that's the only time my husband had to do as part of the service. During this time, we also managed to go and visit Greece, and my parents met Sandy.

KG

: With your son?

LA

: No, it was in 1958, when we went there. It was wonderful really because Sandy saw my land for the first time. It was a wonderful experience for both of us and for my family. We managed to save every penny we made to be able to go to Europe because our salaries were very low. I was making \$7,000.00 a year. That was my first job. But it was more than what I used to make as a student, by far much more. And I think Sandy's was probably \$5,000.00 as an officer.

KG

: Did you know at that time that you definitely did not want to continue in that?

LA

: Do you mean that line of work?

KG

: Psychology?

LA

: No. It was not the clinical aspect of the work as much as the population I was working with. I knew that I didn't want to work with that population. That's why I was ready to quit and get some other job. To give you an example: I was working with a white guy - there were a lot of minority patients, he met a woman there who was also a patient. And the two of them after treatment when they left, they stayed in Lexington for a while, so I was seeing him as an outpatient. They were staying off drugs, but the way they were making their livelihood, he would find her Johns to get her clients as a prostitute. And he would go to the horse races and pick pocket and get money that way. It was like another world. He would say to me, you know, if there was money in the wallet, I was a good citizen and put the wallet in a mailbox. If there was not money in the wallet, I threw it in the garbage can. And I felt they were doing okay because they were abstaining from drugs. I mean, all of a sudden, you begin to think it's sort of like that was nothing. I mean, abstaining from drugs was the most important thing. I started to change my thinking of what is okay and what is not okay because you deal with such a different population, such different cultural norms of how you behave. So anyhow, as I said by that time, I was able to separate a little bit really and not feel devastated by hearing their stories. I got depressed actually hearing the stories. But by then, I was able, as I said, to separate. I guess you have to in order to be able to treat these people.

KG

: What was the background of most of your clients?

LA

: You had everything. You had the gambit from very low socioeconomic backgrounds to the very high ones, including doctors and nurses who were addicted. The doctors and nurses had access to drugs. So they were not into these petty crimes. But the rest of our clients or patients were into petty crimes because that's the only way they could support their habit. And they were very smart. That's what used to

upset me. They were very smart and very talented, the majority of them. As I said, artists, musicians, very smart. And then their lives were completely destroyed from addiction. The other thing was also that I had no success in treating them because the treatment modalities we had then were psychotherapy, and that's not how you treat hardcore drug addicts. At that time, we didn't know. They would withdraw from the drugs, and then they would stay there so we could see them in group therapy or individual psychotherapy. That didn't work because they would go back to their neighborhoods, and they'd start all over. And as a matter of fact, either I would hear that they were re-addicted or that they died from an overdose, or they would come back, the same clients. So for two years, I would not count on a success story, one success story. So it was a very strange job as your first job after your PhD. But I did it, and I think I learned a lot. I polished my clinical skills, and I was quite good at it considering that the population I had to work with, and also that I was very young. They were all older than I was. The majority of them were older. We had some younger patients. So to continue, I had the baby, and then we moved. We went to Baltimore. I decided at that time not to work for about six months. And then I got a job part time (50%), two days a week at the job and half a day at home.

KG

: To go back to your pregnancy, what was your reaction once you had found out that you were pregnant? Was this planned?

LA

: Oh, it was planned.

KG

: Okay.

LA

: I'm glad you asked, because the norms again were that you get married, you have children. What was atypical was that I was also trying to be a professional woman at the same time. These are the '50s. Remember, the '50s how we see them in movies and all that. I mean, it was that the women stayed at home. That was exactly the model of

womanhood. We know it from our history in women's studies. But once the guys came back from the war, we went back to the home. And it was all the stereotypes with the apron and so on – I have pictures of me with the apron. I had lots of aprons. So I was, in many ways, an anomaly because I was doing everything that was expected of a young, married wife having the children, being there, cooking, taking care of – and at the same time, wanting to be a professional woman. So it was a contradiction really. And as I said, thank God for my mother that was very supportive of my being a professional woman. And I think in many ways, Sandy's parents were very proud of me. But also very ambivalent, including his father who, on the one hand, was very proud of me for my brains, but not sure of my being out there working. He was a very well known physicist in charge of a major agency in Washington DC. He read my dissertation. He was very proud of my achievements. But at the same time, he wasn't sure about my professional aspirations. I remember at one point, I was appointed to a commission, and he thought it was weird. I, as a woman, appointed to a scientific commission. It was interesting. Both of them – I was getting the messages from them of the double standard, there was no question. But what was okay for me was that they loved me a lot. They took care of me. I remember, Sandy and I, we would go every Sunday, and they would feed us, because we were so poor, they would feed us a wonderful roast beef, and all that good food. They took care of us as good parents take care of their kids. And I loved that, to finally have a family, and the warmth of a family, having been up to that point a survivor, all by myself.

KG

: So you're talking about the double standard that the parents had and also the idea that you're kind of leading this double – well, not double life. But you're doing two roles at once.

LA

: Yeah, yeah. I was doing what was right for women to do, to be the good wife, to entertain, to do all that stuff. And at the same time, to work. But it was okay though to have a nanny

or to have somebody to help me. I didn't feel any guilt about that.

KG

: So you did have a nanny?

LA

: I did from the beginning. Yeah. I had somebody who lived with us. In Baltimore was the first time I got somebody who came while I went downtown to work. It was very far away where I was working. And she would come and take care of John who was a real infant. I started working when he was about six months or less, maybe four months.

KG

: What were the effects of that either on your own psychological state having to separate yourself –

LA

: Well, to tell you the truth, I never thought twice that I wasn't going to work. The only reason I didn't work right away was because we just moved. And by the time I got settled into a new location, to a new house, find doctors, do all the stuff that I needed to do. I felt I couldn't work full time because he still was too young. But I always felt – I never questioned the fact that I was going to work.

KG

: What I had wanted to ask was were there other women that were similar to you?

LA

: No. Nobody in my neighborhood. Nobody worked. The professional women were at the workplace. I worked at the University of Maryland Medical School. I worked with epileptic children. It was a clinic for epileptic children. And the director was a woman MD. The rest were men. And most of the residents were men. I was there to help the residents with their training. I had an instructor's appointment because I would do the psychological diagnostic tests, and then I would talk to them about the tests. So basically, that was my job, to do diagnostic work, and then train the residents and interns about the psychological makeup of these kids.

KG

: So then other than the response that your mother-in-law gave you, were there other perceptions that co-workers, colleagues, whoever else might have had about you?

LA

: Again, during those times, neither at the Lexington Hospital nor with all of the people I worked in Baltimore. I did not experience any discrimination. In Lexington I did group therapy with one of the psychiatrists, and I don't remember being belittled. He had a lot of respect for me. So I don't remember during those years any discrimination from my co-workers. The same thing in the clinic at Maryland. I remember most of the people I worked with were MD's. And if there is any discrimination, it's how they feel about psychologists. But not a gender discrimination. Either I was completely so well defended that I didn't see it, or maybe I was so happy that I was able to get jobs, which is true. I mean, I got the job as a civilian in Lexington, and I got the job at Maryland. I remember I wanted a part time job, and that came my way. I don't even remember who suggested that I look into that. And I was highly regarded there. So both of those experiences were very positive. Actually, when I first encountered discrimination was in the '60s. When I felt that being a woman I didn't have an equal access to the workplace. But up to that point, maybe because I was a little bit of an anomaly. I don't know. Just as I'm thinking, I never even thought about it until now. Why I really did not experience it, and I felt that I was treated well by my co-workers. I was respected. I don't remember any painful experiences. Even the third job, which I had, when we went to Chicago from Maryland. Let me back track for a moment. I got pregnant again, because we thought we'd like to have the kids close together. It was my decision to have my two children fast, and then move on with my life. I didn't know I was going to have boys, but I had two boys. So the two boys are 18 months apart. When we were in Baltimore, planning to move to Chicago, I got pregnant. So I decided not to work because I was going to give birth. So that was the only time that I stayed off the labor market for a whole year. We moved to Chicago, and I didn't go to work until the following

year because Paul, my second son, was born. And then I got a job teaching at a small college, which I chose because it was only 10 minutes away from home, and this way I felt it would be easy for me with the two kids since I still felt that that was my responsibility, taking care of them. That's where I held the double standard. Everything I did, it was sort of I would do it, but it was not at the same, on equal basis with my husband. His career took precedence. His job was more important. Mine I would do it, but it was not the important thing. And it was my doing really. And it was supported by the culture in many ways. So you don't question it as much, which is interesting in retrospect to think about it.

KG

: What were other expectations of women at the time?

LA

: Again, when we were in Chicago, all the women that were the wives of my husband's colleagues, were not working. The only women that worked were the women I met in the workplace at the college where I was working. So in our social life, I was the only one in those days among the wives that was a professional woman, which is in itself interesting. I remember actually one of the wives later on saying to me "if I could do what you're doing, I'd be out there myself." I did not feel any resentment from other wives. Sort of they will say Lena is lucky that she has that, which is very interesting. Going back to Betty Friedan "the disease that has no name." They felt it, and they were looking at me, and here I am. I have the kids, I have my social life, but I also have part of my life that is my own, my work.

KG

: And this is the early '60s?

LA

: This is now when we're back from Chicago to Washington DC.

KG

: Okay.

LA

: This neighbor saying "If I could do what you're doing, I would be out there myself." That was in Washington, D.C. So

women began to really question their own lives. That was the mid '60s. But back in Chicago, I got this job teaching. And I was teaching full time actually. The job was very near home. So that made it easy for me. But again, my husband has different recollections than I do. If the kids got sick, I felt I was the responsible one to run and take care of the kids. And of course, I had the flexible job because I was teaching, and he was in full time research. So his job was 9:00 to 6:00 at his office or 9:00 to 5:00. While mine, I would go and teach, and then come home. So I would teach two days a week, and I would do most of my teaching preparations at home. So even though I was working full time, it looked like part time. So I spent a lot of time at home.

KG

: What were you teaching at the time?

LA

: I was teaching in the area of child development. It was a teachers' college. And I was a psychologist in those days. I was not in higher education. So even though my area of expertise was not in child development, I had to learn it. Be ahead of the students by a few chapters. And I did a lot of the counseling with students. They didn't have any services for counseling for students. So I was the one that the referrals were made to, so if students had problems of any psychological nature, I would see these students in counseling.

KG

: Were you okay with being a teacher during that time? Was that something that you had set as a goal as a career for yourself?

LA

: Again, I didn't think in terms of a career. I thought of being employed in my area of expertise. And being in a job that was convenient. I knew I wanted to work. There was no question in my mind. I knew that I wanted to do work that was meaningful and that I felt competent in. But I didn't think if I do this, then this will lead to that. There was nothing like that in my mind at all that there was such a thing as a woman's career, which we know it from our

research that women don't think that way. The culture has changed now, but in my days, the culture was not supportive of women thinking about careers. For me, it happened much later. And it happened by getting advice from a man, an important man who was my husband's boss actually, who gave me advice of how to really think career wise.

KG

: If we could talk a little bit about what you had just noted about the ways that society or culture influenced that. Could you just talk a little bit about your observations even reflections now and what that meant in terms of what you saw for men and women?

LA

: You know what, I think if anything, probably all of this was in my unconscious. All the experiences were being stored in a very subliminal way because I really thought that the proper thing was to support your man. I had bought into that stereotype. So wanting to achieve was more my passion. I loved my work, and I loved being engaged. Not thinking that I'm a professional woman as much as that my work was something that I personally loved to pursue. So really, it was very easy for me, as I said, to accept the stereotypes and not question them. And in many ways, to feel like, I have my husband, and I can have my children, and I can entertain. But at the same time, I have something that is my own. Sort of this kind of double life, which in retrospect, I pursued my dream, I pursued the PhD. My generation didn't pursue PhD's. There were very few women PhD's in my generation. When I did the study of the Woman Doctorate in America, I looked at two cohorts. 1957 PhDs and 1958 PhDs. There were so few women PhDs that I had to take both years, and I still had less than 2,000 women total with PhDs. So that tells you how much of an anomaly I was. But I didn't feel that I was an anomaly. An interpretation on my part is that maybe men, professional men, like professors or my colleagues in the workplace at that time did not feel as threatened because there were not that many of us that threatened their positions. So it would be a woman here and there. It's nice to have a woman here and there. But they

didn't feel threatened because women were not going to take their jobs. I don't know. I'm just trying to interpret why I didn't experience discrimination until much later when there was much more of an influx of women being highly educated and entering the labor force.

KG

: Can we talk a little bit about the nature of your relationship with Sandy and maybe some of the expectations that you had for each other in marriage?

LA

: Actually, I always said, to this day I would say that, even though I feel very liberated as a woman, I feel I'm a strong feminist. But we've developed patterns in the home that are very much gender related. I take care of all the social things. I'm the one who keeps the calendar, who does the inviting of who we're going to entertain, and he does all of the men stuff. He does the income tax, which he's doing right now. From the beginning, our roles were very gender related, which is interesting. What happens is that you do it because that is what is expected and then you get good at what you're doing, so you continue doing it. So for me to learn to do taxes and all the financial stuff, I say I don't have any interest in it, which I shouldn't say as a feminist. But I don't feel my competence is there. So as long as I have somebody else to do it, it's okay with me. You see how you perpetuate the stereotypes by doing it during the times that it's okay to do the stereotyping. To be a stereotyped housewife despite the fact that I was a professional, too. But then you become good at it, and then it's a division of labor. You rationalize it. So I don't feel uncomfortable about the stereotypic roles. I never felt that way – on the other hand what upset me is other people's perceptions of how we live our lives. I will never forget in Chicago, we had two little kids. I was working, and Sandy would come home from work at the usual time of 5:30 or 6:00. And his boss used to say "I can't believe you go home early, it's like he didn't use the word that Sandy was being henpecked, but somehow, he was accommodating to me too much. And if he didn't accommodate that much to me, he would have gone to the

moon as a professional man. His boss did not have a working wife. He didn't feel that he needed to go home. On the other hand Sandy had much more of a commitment to the family and to me than his boss had. So he looked at Sandy, and he was puzzling why Sandy is so attached to the family. And he would say that to him, which used to infuriate me. That to me was a definite discrimination against women and holding on to all the stereotypes. The fact that I was a PhD, and I was a professional woman, and I had a job of my own, as far as he was concerned it didn't count. It didn't compute for him, which is interesting. But in terms of Sandy, I would say that Sandy always supported me in my work. He never felt that somehow I shouldn't. And I was thinking as I'm saying it, that he grew up with a woman, his mother, who had a brilliant mind who was very confident and very resentful that she never really realized her talents. She would say that to me. On her good days, she would say you're so lucky to be doing what you're doing. And look at me. I never pursued my work because my husband would never accept it. But she made the choice. Of course, she was a generation before me. That was even more unusual and more atypical. It was hard enough for my generation, but for her, you can imagine. So maybe for Sandy it was the fact that he had a mother who was frustrated from not having pursued her own passions. I don't know. I never asked him. But I just thought of it right now as we're talking. But he never resented my work.

KG

: Can I ask you, so during probably the first 10 years of your marriage, you moved around a lot.

LA

: Very much.

KG

: What kind of discussion was there before these moves?

LA

: There were no discussions. Now, that's the stereotype again. Sandy made the choices. Sandy was this brilliant mind, young guy, going to the moon. So he was being pursued. That's the difference. That he was being pursued, and I always followed. He would make the decision when

there was an offer for him. If it was a good offer, he would decide, and I would go along, and I'll try to find a job. And that has really paid its toll on me in a way that I have been resentful about it. In retrospect, in those days, I was not upset because I didn't know any better. The only resentment I had those days is how difficult it is to move with two little kids. And I would always say oh my God, I have to find another nanny. And oh my God, I have to start all over again in a new house, in a new neighborhood, new schools because all of those were pretty much my responsibilities. New doctors, new pediatricians, new this, new that. That was the painful thing for me. And Sandy didn't understand that. Because he didn't experience it, he didn't have any empathy for that. Why are you so preoccupied with the nanny and who is going to be the nanny and how you're going to get a nanny? Why are you making such a big deal – I said, God, I cannot do what I'm doing unless I take care of that. I don't know if men are any different now. It's interesting because my two daughter-in-laws are not career women, which is another interesting thing. Brilliant, both of them, but neither of them has followed a career. So my sons have very different life experiences. So whether they did it by choice to marry them or they encouraged it, that's another story. We'll get to that later. But it's interesting to me.

KG

: To talk more about your sons, to go a little bit off of the expectations for rules of marriage, what were the expectations that you had for yourself or that Sandy might have had for you in motherhood? What were the arrangements that you reached in raising your children?

LA

: I don't think we had conversations about it. Whose responsibility is what. Again, there was not the same consciousness really in terms of discussing this. I would say that the way we arranged things was that in the early years I was much more involved. But at the same time, Sandy was very much there as a father, especially with the boys as they were getting older. He had much more of a presence in the child rearing. Whether that was because I needed more of

his help, and I asked for it, or he saw it, and he felt he needed to do/so. But we didn't have really conversations about whose responsibility was what. I don't remember ever having arguments about that either. Or resentment on my part. We finished our PhDs at the same time. We were very equal when we finished. And then it went like that. He became a star very early in his career. And I was slowly developing professionally. I never stopped working, except for the period of time between the two pregnancies. But I never tried to get jobs that would make me very visible because I didn't think career wise. So here is Sandy moving up like a star and here I am slowly progressing and making sure that I keep up with my profession, my technical skills. But not conscious that I need to pursue, as I said earlier, a career. So again, I didn't feel that it was a resentment in my part those days. In retrospect, I have questioned whatever it should have been this way. When I see how next generations negotiate careers and family, I say why my generation took it for granted, that the wife's career was secondary, or to that of her husband's. It's not okay. But for those times, it was okay. It's very interesting to see how we have changed really. And I'm glad things have changed, although in many ways, relationships may have become harder. Let's face it. Women have changed much more in what they expect from life than the society has changed with respect to women. So I think in some ways, it might be harder for many women.

KG

: So going from your job in Washington DC, correct? What were the other positions –

LA

: Okay. I left Chicago in May, so here we go again. If you want the chronology, Lexington, two years; Baltimore, less than a year. So we got there in September, and we left in the summer. Chicago, we were there from '61 to '65. And we came to Washington in '65. By then, the boys are a little older. I still needed help. So we moved to Washington. Again, Sandy got a fantastic offer to be the director of research for one of the major associations for higher education in Washington, the American Council of Education,

with all kinds of resources and freedom to develop his own office of research. I mean, it was a substantial job. We had just bought a house in Chicago, and of course, we had to turn around and buy another house in Washington. And I didn't have a job. So I felt that I had worked full time as a teacher, and I was a very good teacher and respected. And I go to Washington with high hopes that I will get a teaching job. And that's where for the first I came across such a thing as sex discrimination. That's the mid '60s. I remember I would go wherever there were teaching openings, and I was rejected because they said I had not published anything. "You finished your PhD in 1957, and now it's mid '60s, and you haven't published. We know from all the evidence that unless you publish early in your career, there is very little likelihood that you will become a scholar." I remember saying to one of the guys who was the chair of the psychology department at GW, "those studies were done with men, right? But women have very different career trajectories." And I said "I know how to do research, my life was arranged in such a way that I never got involved in doing research. I taught in a small college. Nobody was expected to do research, but I know I can do research." That didn't go anywhere. And this happened more than once in Washington. Finally I got two research offers. It's interesting, the craziness of academia, that I got research job offers, but I couldn't get an academic offer because I hadn't published. That's kind of crazy. But anyhow, what happened in Washington, I had mentioned it to you earlier, was that one of my husband's bosses, he was the vice president at the American Council on Education, an economist, and I really liked him. I had a very high respect for him. So I said to myself, I'd like to get some career advice from him. That's the first time that I thought of career advice. Maybe I should think differently now. Mind you, it's close to 10 years post PhD. And I said to him, "I really don't know what to do. There are these research job offers and there is the possibility of doing some administrative work at a college. What should I do?" And he was the one who suggested I get involved in research. And he said, "Sandy is pursuing a

research agenda in the area of higher education, get a research job within higher education. You might get closer to his work, and it might make more sense as you move on. Think about long term career objectives, it might make much more sense." So I did. I decided to accept one of the research job offers. It was working for a Commission on Human Resources in Higher Education. It was a full time research job. I hadn't done research other than my dissertation research. I hadn't even published the dissertation piece I wrote. So the first thing I did in the job was to dig it out, polished it, and sent it for publication. And would you believe it, it got accepted right way because there was very little that was done in that area. So I didn't even have to update the literature review. I just was able to publish it right away and in a good journal. So I'm with this Commission on Human Resources, and there are two other men and myself, three of us in the research team. The director, a young sociologist, and myself. And then there are 12 advisors, all men. The Commission was part of the National Academy of Sciences, so you can imagine. Very stuffy. All these guys were up there in terms of visibility and notoriety, and position. And I remember meeting with them trying to conceptualize the research. We were supposed to do a national study about the development and utilization of talent in this country. And I remember meeting for two months with this group and my two colleagues, and the word 'women' never came into the conversation. So one day, I got brave enough, and I said "it doesn't make much sense to me that we will be talking of talent development, and we don't talk about women as a source of talent development in this country." They looked at me like where did I come from. And they said you know, Lena, the reason we don't talk about it is because women, even if they get educated, they stay home and take care of their kids. That didn't make sense to me because that was not my personal experience. And I said "well, do we know that?" And then they looked at me again. And I said, "what is the evidence?" It's a good thing I said that to them. And they were stunned. And they said, "well, we don't know really. We know that highly educated women,

are very important for our society because they transmit social and cultural capital to their children. That's the only way they utilized their education." So then I said, "since we don't know it; it behooves us as a national commission to study that. Don't you think? They said, "well, if you're interested, do it."

KG

: Wow.

LA

: So that's what started me doing research on gender. That is mid '60s now. So of course, based on my own experience, and being very sensitized about gender discrimination and of course the women's movement beginning. (The "Feminist Mystique" had come out in 1964), I said, "okay." They gave me permission. We have money in this commission, and we're going to do it. So the first thing I thought I would do was to study women with PhD's.

KG

: Can I ask before you go into that, what was your awareness of any other kind of research that was being done on women at the time?

LA

: Until I started doing my work, I didn't know of any other studies, because I was in child development. I never had done research, so I was not exposed to any of the literature or anything. Only when I started doing my own work on the subject was when I exposed myself to other literature. There was a classic book by Jessie Bernard, very famous sociologist, who wrote Academic Women. Somebody had done the book Academic Men, and it was biased in terms of his only looking at men and never even raising the question of women. So Jessie Bernard thought she would do something on the topic of Academic Women. But she didn't do her own research, she synthesized what was available in the literature about women's work and women's interest in work, and women in the professions. All of her writing has been done mostly this way. Classic, wonderful work she has done in the sociology of gender. So she did that book, and it was a beautiful piece of work actually. So that was one thing.

Then there was another book out that looked at women with PhDs, by Eli Ginsberg "Lifestyles of Educated Women."

LA

: Also in 1963, there was the President's Commission on the Status of Women report.

KG

: What did that – how did that affect you?

LA

: So as I said I didn't know that this literature existed, because my work had been on child development and guidance in the elementary school. Only when I thought we needed to do an empirical study of highly educated women to see what happens to them in the labor force, which produced the "Woman Doctorate in America," only then I started to read the literature because I hadn't done any research, before that. So I shifted really my interests, my scholarly interests completely. And since I hadn't done research, as I said, whatever I read was about child development. So I didn't know any of this stuff at all. But I did design the study to look at women with doctorates, women who got their doctorates in 1957 and 1958. And the reason I chose those two years is because, I wanted to have a longitudinal perspective since I was following them up in the mid '60s, I wanted to get a retrospective look as to what happened to them in their careers since the question was whether they had worked or stayed at home, and what was the nature of their experience as a group of highly educated women. What did they do and feel in terms of family and work issues? So the study was very important. First of all, important to me because it started me on my research agenda on gender issues. And because of the questions I pursued. I had asked a question in the survey "had you ever felt discriminated in the labor market?" And boy, things poured out. So I learned a lot from this study. It had an enormous effect on me personally but also, it became a classic. We found out that this was not the case, that highly educated women did not work. We found, actually, the opposite - that highly educated women entered the labor force and stayed in the labor force. And if they discontinued

their work, it was only 10 percent who left the labor market for a short time, less than a year and a half, 14 months, to be exact. And so this became really big news.

KG

: If I can ask what was the male reaction to this on the council?

LA

: Well, I think that particular finding had a lot of implications. And this book became a citation classic because that particular finding was so important during those times, and it has been cited extensively because it was very important for us to have that piece of information. Now, within the Commission, what happened was that, my work became highly regarded, especially by the chair of the Commission, a psychologist who was at that time in charge of AAAS, the American Association for the Advancement of Science. And he has been very important in promoting me and my work – I call him "my silent mentor." He opened doors for me without even me knowing. And it was because of my work at the commission, and his respect for me that – if anybody would ask him for names of people to serve on committees and commissions, national groups, he would always give my name. I have to tell you of an anecdote that really tells you something about our thinking, my thinking, those days. I got a letter to serve on a science education commission of AAAS – a very important commission. I got the letter, and I came up, and I said to Sandy, "they must have made a mistake. This must have been meant for you." And I gave it to him. And he says "I don't think it has anything to do with me." And then I started thinking. I said I guess my work with the commission and my research in the commission must have something to do with that. Can you believe it? How you can accept what is appropriate for a woman versus a man? It's sad. It's a sad story that I still did not see myself as having done enough to have such an appointment. I was the only woman in this new Commission, and every time I walked in the room, all the men would stand up because you stand up for a woman. Make sure I have the chair right and all that. Some of those experiences seem so unreal to me, now. But

anyhow, so that work was so critical for me that serving for two years in the first commission completely started me, as I said, on my research agenda, on behalf of women. During these two years with the Commission I did a couple of pieces of research looking at discrimination, and I started publishing like mad. My sociologist colleague and I, did a piece of work, which I think was so critical that later work on gender equity in employment and sex differentials in salaries by others was based on the model we developed. The statistical model we used for that study became really the model, which later was used by economists in studies of sex discrimination in employment. So it was a classic piece of research. So really, the two years there made my whole career. I mean, I zoomed. I published, as I said, like mad. After that we left again, for one year. Sandy was given a fellowship at the Center for the Advanced Studies in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford. At that time, I had all of my data on Women doctorates and I was housed at an institute at Stanford, where I wrote my book, *The Woman Doctorate in America*. So when I got back to Washington, I was getting offers, all of a sudden. So I got a job as a research associate at the Bureau of Social Science Research, and I started having grants and doing a lot of research and writing. By the late '60s, we're beginning to become very aware of what was happening. And the pioneers of the women's movement were becoming more visible, ready to speak out. More meetings of women and more work on women's issues. A lot of the women who were very prominent in the early years of the women's movement had their training by being involved in the Civil Rights movement. They were already very strong activists in the Civil Rights movement. A lot of my colleagues later on, were the women who had marched in the Civil Rights movement. So all of a sudden, because my work – and my findings, I'm beginning to develop an identity as a feminist, as somebody who now is going to make her life's work on issues concerning women. Also at that time, women started to become very active in their professional associations. That's a wonderful history, and I'm sure somebody must have written it since then. I know the

women in psychology have written their history. Very briefly what happened in 1969, a group of women in psychology, started the Association of Women in Psychology, and they marched in the national convention of the psychological association, and they closed the employment office there. They presented 52 demands to the American Psychological Association. During those days, advertisements for jobs used to say "men preferred." It was a very small group of women. I would say nine or ten women who did that at the annual meeting. Two of their demands among the 52 were accepted by the Association. One was the request to appoint a task force to study the status of women in psychology. And the second was to provide child care services at the convention. Those were the only two things that the Association felt that it could comply with. So when they decided to have the task force, they asked me to chair it. That's 1970 and that was the first time that I was given a very important task. Also, an opportunity to do more work to study women within psychology. We had a wonderful group of people in the task force. They appointed two women from the Association of Women in Psychology, they also appointed some former presidents of the American Psychological Association (APA). They gave us one year, with the charge to do a study of how women were faring in the Association. But very early on, we decided it was not going to be just a study, we were going to be an activist group. We will do the study, but at the same time, we will begin to meet with important bodies within the Association and demand that they look into what their practices were. So it was not a passive study. It was an activist piece of work – it was scholarly activism from the beginning. We asked to be appointed for an extra year. And we were putting the screws basically on all the department chairs and all the deans around the country. All the training programs in psychology and how they were dealing with women versus men in their training, their internships. We asked them even then if they offered women studies. We also felt that it was important not to have such a group that lasted only two years. So we insisted that there would be a standing committee within psychology that would be looking

at issues concerning women. So we managed to have an ad hoc committee the first year, and then a permanent committee on women. The other thing we did was to create a division of the psychology of women. Because there are so many subfields in Psychology, each subfield has its own division within the Association. Now the divisions are called societies. So a lot of the work and a lot of the power is within these divisions then, societies now. So we didn't have anything concerning research specific to women. So we thought we needed to have a division of the psychology of women. So we started that. I have such a wonderful memory about how we did it. We had to put a call all over the country and asked for interested women to come to DC, to the APA headquarters and see if we could draft some bylaws and begin to get some signatures because in order to have a Division, you need to have the support from a large number of members from all over the country. And I remember a group of women showed up paying out of their own pockets, to do that. They came to Washington DC, and we met in the offices of the Association, and we drafted the bylaws. And the division became a reality. I was the charter, first president of the division. So we didn't do only the study on Women in Psychology. We made sure that we had mechanisms within the Association that would keep the Association focused on women's concerns. The Committee on Women in Psychology was more the activist group and the division was the scholarly arm. Later we also started the journal, Psychology of Women Quarterly. And I remember going with another woman trying to find a publisher. We visited many publishers around in the country, and nobody wanted it.

KG

: What were their reactions to you?

LA

: That such a journal was an ephemeral thing. But to this day, the journal is still going strong. We have a very viable journal that is published by the University of Chicago press. No publisher in the beginning was willing to take us on because they said "women studies? What's that? Psychology

of women? What's that?" But it was wonderful, it really was, that the women found other women. And there was such a connection. And it was so wonderful to see how we all stuck together. And boy, there was so much energy and such power in the group. Psychology was one of the early disciplines to do this. So then of course, I was very helpful to women in other professional associations and all of a sudden, all of the professional associations started doing that. That was very important because academic women depend so much on their professional associations for their professional lives, their careers. So it had to be a change within the professional organization, within the culture of the organization, in order to undo some of the discrimination in the hiring and the promotions in academia.

KG

: Can I ask about the support of your husband during that time?

LA

: If anything, he was proud of me. I don't remember my husband ever saying no to me when it came to my passions. I never felt that he was not behind me. And I think that's why it has made it possible for the two of us to work together, because both of us are very strong people. He completely respects my ideas. Whenever we work together, and if I have suggestions for change, he never gets defensive and likewise. I mean, we are a very good team together, intellectually. A very good team. And that I think has been probably very important. It's not only my stubbornness and my persistence, but to also have somebody who doesn't bang heads with me. He's very supportive and very proud of me, very proud of me. And never felt any jealousy. But again, he had nothing to be jealous of because he already had reached the highest levels of achievement. I remember when we came to UC.

LA

, and we'll talk about UC

LA

later. And my kids said well, what is your salary? What's dad's salary? So I told them that Sandy was making more

money than I did. And they said why? I said because he wrote more books than I did. And they said "yeah, but you had the two of us." I said "from the babes' mouths. Go say that to the committee here. I deserve more because I had two children."

KG

: While this is happening, your sons are in their Late teenage years, correct?

LA

: When we moved here, my kids were 12 and 13 and a half.

KG

: To California?

LA

: Yeah. In 1973. They were in junior high school.

KG

: What are the kind of values that you and your husband were trying to instill in them?

LA

: I remember this little episode. They were learning the language of the street. So they were in elementary school, and one of my kids made some derogatory remarks about a neighborhood girl and said "she has the rag on." I said "don't you ever use that again." So in a sense, I was not accepting of anything that was discriminatory against women. They saw me, and they saw their mother being very passionate about feminism and women's issues. I was very strong in my feelings. So they got it. They saw our lives. By now, I'm very engaged in work. But I was very fortunate, with the job I had with the Commission. My boss, bless his heart, he was a widower raising five kids. He said to me "Lena, I don't care if you leave early, if you take off because the kids are not well, as long as you do the work." "I know exactly what it is. I took off plenty of times to go and buy them coats and shoes." So he gave me total permission not to feel guilty if I stayed home and worked from home. So those two years with the Commission, which was my first really full time job, I was able to leave by 3:00 and be home for the kids when they came home from school. I still was playing the role.

KG

: Yeah. Definitely.

LA

: But at the same time, I had that kind of support, which was wonderful. So I did have help. Not a live in help. I did for a while, and then she left. And after that, I didn't have any more live in help. And the kids went to school very nearby. I was not involved at all with the schools, my kids' schools. They would call me for PTA and that and the other, and I would say I'm working. I don't have time. And I liked it that I could say that and not feel guilty because that's not something that I could relate to. It's not part of my upbringing. I didn't even know what PTA was. So I was still in some ways – I was doing it my way. We were very much involved with our kids in music. If I remember anything, it was that we both felt very passionate about music, and both of our kids are – music is so much part of their lives. But still, at home, I was the one who was responsible to come home and cook dinner. And still, the division of labor was very gender related. So the kids watched that.

KG

: It sounds like your mother was extremely influential on your concepts of motherhood. What are some ways in which you thought that, at the time, at least – and also upon reflection, that you really wanted to integrate those into your child raising experience?

LA

: She was very sociable. The good days before the war and after when things started to get a little better, she loved to have her girlfriends over for tea. She loved beauty and beautiful clothes. Very feminine. But at the same time, a very strong person. My father was more the soft one – he was not at all macho like the Greek men are. Completely the opposite. So she was the strength in every way. So she had all these very feminine qualities but also was very strong. The lessons I learned were more from modeling after her. And even when my son said I'm leaving and going to South America for six months, I never said no. And I said how can I say no? My mother let me go and gave me all the support when I came to this country. So I would say both of us, my

husband and I have given our kids a lot of freedom of choice. And they have – I mean, our eldest son had a very nontraditional educational trajectory, dropped out of college twice. But we let them both be – a lot of support, a lot of loving and a lot of acceptance of who they were – making their own choices in their lives. And I have to say, they are fantastic kids. Now that I see them as adults. They're wonderful, wonderful young men. And they're wonderful to their kids. They're just unbelievable.

KG

: So talking about raising your kids during this time of the late '60s/early '70s and the issues that were popping up and history. I mean –

LA

: I'm very aware. Also, Sandy and I did a huge study on campus protest, which we published. It's a classic book. It got an award. We studied the protests around the country. So my kids experienced that, too. So my kids saw us as scholar activists very much so. And I think this is in part why they're also very passionate about issues of justice. It is from seeing their parents being very much involved in that.

KG

: Could you talk about some of those issues that you experienced or witnessed during that time?

LA

: Well, first, as I said before, they saw me in terms of my own activism. That I was very much involved in a leadership role. Not only as a scholar, but also in a leadership role. And also they saw both of us – their father, too. We did also the first study on minorities in higher education. So they've seen both of us carving issues to study that are very important in terms of justice in our society, and equity in our society. And they've seen that in our work because, all of our work has been about issues of equity and justice. So my kids have seen it. You don't even need to tell them as much as they've seen our politics. And they have emulated the same politics very much through their own lives, too.

KG

: That's a totally different childhood from what you were brought up. You had said that you weren't aware, other than the concept of survival, of political affiliations at the time. But for your children, was this something that was engrained in them?

LA

: They've seen it in terms of the kind of work we chose to do. Our two kids are very different from each other but they are also very similar. The oldest son who was a revolutionary as a young person, he went to Berkeley because he was going to be an activist. And he almost was jailed the first year in college. But then he shifted, and became very spiritual. He became more interested in cultivating the inner self rather than being out there as an activist. And continues to this day. He meditated a lot. He was a yogi for many years. They're both interested in politics, the right politics. But the youngest is more of an activist, politically. The oldest is much more analytical about politics and of what's happening rather than being out there with his politics. He is much more the contemplative type. His music is also contemplative music. That's the music he writes. John, the oldest son as I said, dropped out of college twice. He read Yogananda's book, and was completely turned on by the idea of going inwardly and meditating and so forth. And I said he's still searching. He's on a lifelong journey, spiritual journey. He went to Santa Cruz after he dropped out of Berkeley because he didn't feel activism was his call. He went to Santa Cruz, but he hadn't found himself yet, so he dropped out of Santa Cruz. And finally, he went to Hampshire College, which is in Amherst, Massachusetts, it's an experimenting college. No grades, no departments, a lot of freedom to pursue your own interests. What he studied there was the similarities and differences between western psychology and eastern psychology. Later on, he went and got his PhD in health psychology. And he's very much interested in alternative and complementary medicine. The use of meditation and relaxation techniques and health and well being. His main interest are how we can provide for people's well being, physical and psychological well being. That's his task. And his

music is a very important part of him. Paul, the youngest of the two, followed a very traditional trajectory. He went to college. He finished in four years. Then he came back. He went to Greece for a year and became fluent in Greek. He's my Greek son. He and I speak in Greek.

LA

: My other son didn't learn any Greek. I never spoke to them in Greek because my husband didn't speak Greek, and I was working. So there was no interest in my part to teach them Greek – maybe if I was a stay at home mom, I would have taught them Greek. I don't know. But Paul is very Greek. He's more Greek than I am. So he came back and came to UC

LA

and got a Masters. He got a double Masters actually, in public health and in Latin American studies. He became a total activist. Actually, he did his Master's thesis, teaching women in Mexico nutritional principles of and while there he built a community center in Mexicali. He's a real social activist. Later on, he became a school teacher. And more recently got his doctorate in education. He teaches school, and he was just appointed principal of an alternative school. So those are my two sons. I can tell you more about them another time. They're very important in my life.

KG

: Oh yeah, I would think so.

LA

: I just adore them. I couldn't have asked for better sons. In some ways, I say, maybe I was made to be a mother of sons. I don't know. They're wonderful, and they love me a lot. I mean, they couldn't do enough for me. They're wonderful. They're very bright, have enormous integrity. Both Sandy and I connect in so many levels with them. It's so wonderful. What can I say?

KG

: They sound like –

LA

: I can talk some more about my life now as a grandmother and as a mother-in-law.

KG

: Yeah. That would be great. Maybe this would be a good stopping point then. And when we continue next time, we can talk about it.

LA

: I can also tell you a little more about my life in Washington as an activist.

KG

: That would be great.

LA

: Because I was very involved there. And all the stuff that happened there, I mean, that side of me. And then of course, what happened to me when I came here. That's another story, big story, too.

KG

: Yeah. So would you like to continue later?

LA

: Yeah. I think it's 12:00.

KG

: Great. Well, thank you again, and until next time.

1.4. Session 4 (March 14, 2012)

KG

: Okay, welcome back. It's March 14th, 2012 and this is Kimberlee Grandholm here with Lena Astin. Lena, thank you for coming to our fourth session.

LA

: Thank you for being here.

KG

: So we wanted to pick up where we left off at our last session, which was talking about your conscious decision to be involved with scholarly activism in the women's movement. Could you expand a little bit upon that?

LA

: Yes, actually I reflected a lot on it when we talked last time and I was trying to think about what precipitated the kind of work I began to do in the '60's. What was happening to me personally and what was happening in our society at large? The whole thing started in the mid '60's and it was the result

of my being appointed to the National Commission, which I mentioned to you earlier, to study talent development and utilization in the United States. So at that time, what was happening that made me, on a personal level, very conscious of the inequities, was the fact that my husband and I had finished our PhDs at the same time. We were equally trained and equally talented, but still his career was in an upswing and mine was more like I was going along working because it was very important to me to work and be engaged. But I was not really given the same opportunities to grow professionally. I encountered a lot of discrimination when we moved to Washington, D.C. I couldn't get a teaching job because they said I hadn't published, even though I was teaching at a small college. I knew that I was well-trained and could publish if I were to become affiliated with a university. I became very aware on a personal level of the inequities, especially given the conversations, which I mentioned in the earlier session, with the members of the Commission. I was developing a real awareness and consciousness. At the same time, there were a lot of things happening around the country that I became aware of and helped me to be able to really connect with other efforts that were critical in the '60's. Of course, the most important was the Civil Rights Movement and the racial inequities we saw in the early '60's. I was very aware of that. In 1963 came Kennedy's Commission on the Status of Women. I was not aware of it until I started doing my own work. I am trying to reflect on some other critical things that were happening in the '60's that made it possible for us to have a second wave of the women's movement, but also that supported my own growing awareness on a personal and professional level. I think the women's movement has been critical for me intellectually, in seeing myself as an activist and scholar. Another event in the 60s, which I mentioned earlier, was the book "The Feminine Mystique," so conversations became much more public about what was happening to women and why women were staying at home and taking on the roles of good mothers and good wives. Not that women didn't like those roles-- I loved my role as a mother, but that was not

all I wanted to do with my life. So that was an important and critical book. And then for me personally, the other very important piece of work was Jessie Bernard's book, "Academic Women." So all these things were happening in the '60's. Also in the '60's, we had a number of women legislators that were very visible, active and verbal about their concerns about women. So that was another important thing happening in our society.

KG

: What were some of the concerns?

LA

: The whole issue of inequality, the rights of women in the workplace, the rights of women in the home and in society at large. Also in 1966 the National Organization for Women was established. The goal of the National Organization for Women was, and I quote here, "To bring women into full participation in the mainstream of American society now, assuming all the privileges and responsibilities in a truly equal partnership with men." I think that was an important statement and that their work was very critical in the '60's. When I started becoming aware personally and saw what was happening, that really provided support for me to begin to do work that was very meaningful in terms of understanding how education and our institutions and structures in the workplace affect women's development, and to begin to highlight inequities both in education and in the workplace. All of the issues were very critical to me. Besides the book that I did on "The Woman Doctorate In America" and the articles that I wrote, all had to do with the role of education-- undergraduate education and a little bit about high school education—on women's development. So for me, from '65 to '70, my focus was very much on bringing forward the pinnacle knowledge about the role of education in women's lives and how women fare in the labor force. So when we moved in the '70's, I continued this work with more energy and more understanding because a lot of things were happening that began to support my research. 1973 was the year that I moved from Washington to Los Angeles. I was

doing a lot of research and a lot of writing, which resulted in my being able to come here to UC

LA

as a professor. I started doing research in the mid '60's, and within eight years I had done so much research that I was appointed as a full professor, which normally takes many more, and that happened because I felt very passionately about my work, and because there was a lot of support for this type of research. Those were such interesting times, let me share with you another story. In 1973, Alice Rossi, a highly regarded, very famous sociologist who has passed now, decided to do an edited volume on academic women titled "Academic Women on the Move." It was a book following Jessie Bernard's work, which was much more reflective and analytic of what was happening with academic women. Alice Rossi and Ann Calderwood identified scholars around the country who were doing this kind of work and asked us to write specific pieces for this volume. We all felt that the work and message were very important and that it was critical that it be taken seriously, read, and have policy implications. So the discussion was whether we should use our full names or initials so people would not dismiss it because it was written by women. I remember being on conference calls with the rest of the authors and discussing this. I remember it very vividly because I stood up and I said, "No, we're gonna have our full names and we'll do great work and I want everybody to know that women can do wonderful empirical research and scholarship." I said, "That's a statement we have to make, not disguise ourselves in order to be accepted." And we did decide to go with our full names. So you get a sense of the conversations and kind of activism that was happening in the early '70's.

KG

: If I can ask, what was the reaction from the community, specifically the male community, for having your names published that way?

LA

: Well, I have no idea about that, but they knew that this volume was written by women. Interestingly enough, I

invited a male colleague of mine to co-author one of the chapters I wrote, and he was the only male author in the volume. He and I had done a lot of research together and he was very interested in these issues. He is the one that did the piece with me on sex differentials in salaries and employment. He was my colleague at the Commission and he and I talked a lot about these issues and he was very sympathetic, very much in tune with my thinking, and also very interested in this kind of scholarship.

KG

: You bring up a great point, though. Was there a lot of participation from men during that time on the scholarly part of the Women's Movement?

LA

: Looking back at the Psychology Task Force I mentioned earlier, there were three men appointed to the Task Force. These were men who were very visible within the Association. Two of them had been Presidents of the American Psychological Association and the third was a well-known scholar. So I think that what was in the mind of the then-President of the Association (who appointed the Task Force), was that we needed to have men who were very visible and credible in order for the Task Force to have credibility. The mentors of the Task Force were selected in a very conscious way so that the report would be read by the larger community. I have to say that the three men who worked with us were dedicated to our cause and we all worked very hard. In those days we didn't have computers, so we would sit around and talk and cut and paste. It was during those early years of the '70s that Bernice Sandler was reading a document about the application of the Executive Order that was issued by President Johnson about the importance of not discriminating in employment. If an employer had money from the Federal Government, they could not discriminate on the basis of race or sex. It might have been age as well—I can't remember if that was added in later. Bernice was reading this document and she realized that the higher education community was getting a lot of money from the Federal Government for research, so she

went to the Women's Equity Action League, and organization of feminist female lawyers, to ask for help. She went to them and said, "We should sue higher education institutions because they discriminate against women since they have large research contracts from the Federal Government." So they did sue 250 institutions.

KG

: Oh my gosh.

LA

: That's what I think led to the affirmative action policies and guidelines, which came out in 1972. I remember one of the lawyers, who worked in the Federal Government and was very instrumental, put preliminary guidelines together and asked for my feedback because of my research in higher education. That happened before the guidelines were issued in 1972. The guidelines were very important for higher education because it made them very conscious that they could not, in a blatant way, discriminate against women in their hiring and promotion practices. I remember that here at UC

LA

, the chancellor was able to make appointments called Appointments of Opportunity, so if you found a very qualified woman, there was money set aside to go and actively appoint such a person. So this kind of appointment was actually used when I came here. There was a lot of ferment and activism in the late '60s and early '70s. In '69, the first Women's Studies Program was developed and offered, and I was asked to look at women's studies and write a piece about it. I don't remember the date

KG

: I think I have down that in 1971 you conducted national research on women's studies.

LA

: Okay. It was a commissioned article. The Journal came to me and said, "Would you tell us about this thing called Women's Studies?" At that time, I think we had like 13 programs around the country—that's all. A colleague and myself went to the programs and asked them how they got

started, what their issues were, what the early courses were, and so on. As I look at my own work, I ask myself what the most pivotal pieces of work were that had a lot of policy implications. I think one was definitely the Woman Doctorate in America. I think this book was very important, as was the piece on Women's Studies. It was also translated into French because there was international interest in what was going on in The United States. What was this thing called Women's Studies? I didn't have that much data because there were not that many programs, but at least it was a statement that was made out for us here, and also internationally. So that was also important. The other was the article I wrote with Alan Bayer where we demonstrated the salary inequities and developed a formula for how to measure them. And there was a lot of research, not only by me, but by other people around the country, to demonstrate the practice of discrimination in higher education. There were some interesting studies. In one, they would take the same resume and they would change the name and inevitably the men would be preferred, even though the resume was identical. So there was a lot of work being done to begin to demonstrate empirically how discrimination was operating in higher education. Women's Studies began to flourish in the 1970's. There was a lot that was happening that supported me in my mission. My work at the American Psychological Association was very important because we were able to establish a standing committee and a journal. The same thing was happening in other associations, and a lot of awareness was being created at the professional level,. In 1973 I came to UC

LA

. By then I had become very visible because of my work and I also had published a lot. Both my visibility and my scholarly performance were very important for getting the appointment at UC

LA

. When I came here, I made a very conscious decision that every year at UC

LA

I would do something on behalf of women. I was very conscious about it, whether it was a committee I was going to be involved in, or a task force, and so on. There were a number of women at UC

LA

who knew of my work, so as soon as I came here I was able to get involved. It was so nice to see the sisterhood operate. I remember Karen Rowe, an Assistant Professor, invited me to have coffee with her as soon as I got to UC

LA

and she became my colleague and co-founder of the Center for the Study of Women. There were some younger women, the Assistant Professors and graduate students who were much more aware of the issues. The full professors here had gone through the ropes and so forth, but they did not have the kind of awareness that the younger women had. It was the graduate students that wrote the first proposal to establish a Women's Studies program here, which was not accepted by the administration because it was written by students and not by faculty. So the Executive Vice Chancellor, David Saxon, established a committee to come up with a recommendation to determine whether we should have Women's Studies at UC

LA

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KG

: Was this 1973?

LA

: As soon as I came practically because finally the Women's Studies program was established in '76, if I'm not mistaken. As a matter fact, I have the original proposal in that black folder. So we did make a proposal that we sent to the Executive Vice Chancellor, David Saxon, about the importance of establishing Women's Studies here. Later on, there was another committee that was appointed by the College of Letters and Science to come up with another proposal to establish why it was important. There was a presentation of the proposal to the Executive Committee of the College of Letters and Science. I will never forget that

meeting because there was a lot of discussion about what was next for the Women's Studies program. The men were very skeptical about it. But it happened and we had Women's Studies and I was very much involved from the beginning on the Advisory Board and as a teacher in the program. I developed the first course on Women in Higher Education.

KG

: I wonder could we talk a little bit – okay, so before we get to that, could you talk about even the interview process? Like how you were contacted to come here and then your beginning steps and being integrated into the university system and then – sorry to throw you off here.

LA

: No, no, no. That's an interesting story because I had a very non-traditional career trajectory within the academy. I mean, most people come as an Assistant Professor, so they go through the ropes. I came sort of from the outside, you might say. I came from being a scholar associated with research organizations and getting my grants and doing my research and publishing. Not as part of my academic work, but as part of my own passions and the things that I cared to work on and publish. So I was actually recruited because of my visibility at that time and because everybody felt that we needed to do something about women, I had the opportunity to interview for a lot of jobs. All of sudden things changed-- from the '60's, where I was being rejected, to the early '70's where I was being sent letters asking me to consider jobs. I was considered for the Presidency of Wellesley College twice. And I had offers to direct the Radcliffe Institute at Harvard, and then also to direct the Barnard Center of Women. So a lot happened before UC

LA

. And at that time, my husband and I had made the decision not to go independently, or that Sandy, my husband, would get a job and then I'd follow. This time we were both going to do consider job opportunities, so that I could find a job that I wanted and he could find a job that he felt good about. So I took more of the leadership role in the decision-making about jobs. I took an interview at Scripps College to be the

Dean of the Faculty. My husband my came to explore the possibilities at UC

LA

because we had some colleagues here. Rosemary Park, who was Vice Chancellor and then also a professor her at UC

LA

, was instrumental in what happened. She also happened to be a Trustee at Scripps. So she says, "Even though I care about Scripps, I'm a Professor and Vice Chancellor at UC

LA

, so if we can get you and Sandy here, I would promote that." She was instrumental in getting us both here. As a matter of fact, since she would be retiring in a few years, she offered her faculty position for an appointment for Sandy. So they had one appointment for me and another one for Sandy and we both came here in '73. I was being interviewed for the appointment, not knowing much about what happens in a research university because I came from a small college in the early '60's. I presented my work and I didn't care what they thought about it. I was not anxious at all. And I remember that people were more curious, the other faculty, about having somebody whose work was mostly focused on women. I had done some work also that was not only on women because I had some grants, which I think I mentioned. We had a large grant to do a study on campus unrest. We had done another piece of research on open admissions at the University of New York. They had instituted open admissions instead of selective admissions and we studied the effect of the new policies on students and the institution. We wrote a book on that. We had also done a study on what happens to disadvantaged students in higher education. At that time, we didn't call them "minorities" or "people of color," but educationally disadvantaged students were primarily African-American. The Ford Foundation had established scholarships for these students for higher education, so we did a study to see what happened to these young people who came from disadvantaged educational backgrounds and got fellowships or scholarships to go to college. We published a book on that as well. So I had done

quite a bit of work that was in addition to the work I had done on women. Also through the Commission we published a book on Human Resources and Higher Education, which was voted as one of the hundred classic books in higher education.

KG

: Wow.

LA

: I think it helped that I had done research on not only women, but also on higher education in general. I guess they felt I was more credible. I felt welcome here and, as a matter of fact, I didn't start at the beginning level of a Professor, I came in at the next level. Each level is about three years. Once you become a Professor, you wait three more years to become Professor II and then up the scale. Promotions are forever at UC

LA

. The other thing that happened that helped me with my activism was that I was appointed to Chair the Academic Affirmative Action Committee. That was very important because of my research interest. I was able to do a lot of research in documenting the status of women at UC

LA

and juxtaposing this against the national scene because we had data at the Higher Education Research Institute. So we did a lot of work on how we look here at UC

LA

and how we compare nationally. I was also involved with Women's Studies. We had an Association of Academic Women, which was very important but unfortunately, we don't have it anymore, and for a while I was president of that. It was an organization that was formed to create community among women, but also to give academic women and faculty women access in a formal way to the administration. Being able to document what was happening to our women here became very important for our activism with the Central Administration at UC

LA

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KG

: What was happening?

LA

: Well, there was a lot of evidence that women were lagging behind in their salaries, in their promotions, in moving up the academic ladder. What I also discovered, which was very interesting, is that men had more of community that helped them to learn the system faster than women. Male assistant professors would say, "Let's go to lunch and tell me a little bit about how to get promoted here." And the women never had that assertiveness to ask full professors for help. "How does this happen? How do you do that? What do you need to do to get promoted here?" The men had learned the system but the women were lagging behind. And I remember as part of the Association of Academic Women I invited the Chair of CAP, which is the Committee on Academic Personnel to come and talk to our group. What are the steps in the promotion process? What happens? How do you develop your resume? So we had to really open the discussion and learn the system, because the men would go for something we call accelerated promotions, but women would wait, causing them to lag behind. Men would find a way to ask for an accelerated promotion and move faster on the ladder, and women would be, as I call it, the good girls—"wait my time, do my work and then put my papers in four years later," or whatever the time period was for the next promotion. So women were lagging behind in promotions. There were also differences in the salaries. Another thing that we were able to do, through the Affirmative Action Committee and through the Association of Academic Women, was to bring people from the outside who were doing some of this work. It always helps, in any kind of transformation, to get people who were very well known nationally. For example, we had Mary Rowe, who had done a lot of work at MIT, come here and tell us how they managed to promote women faster and move women up the ladder and increase the number of women. What were some of their practices? We brought her here and had Chancellor Young come and listen. But through the Association of Academic Women and through the

Academic Affirmative Action Committee, we not only did the empirical work that was necessary to demonstrate the inequities, but we also took an activist position. I remember at one point, a group of us decided to self-appoint and go meet with the executive vice chancellor. We knew that the men in administration used to have coffee and talk about issues. Thank God, we now have a lot of women in the administration here in leadership roles. But in those days, there were no women in administration. So we met the Executive Vice Chancellor, Bill Schaefer, once a month informally in his office and shared with him what was happening at UC

LA

. Sort of like how the men used to have their coffee and talk, we created an informal force, and I think it was four of us, that would call and make a date with him and tell him what was happening to women. So there was activism here, very much so, and also a lot of energy. And I think it was supported because of what was happening nationally. Let me share with you the story of how we started the Center. Because of my work, our Institute was viewed as a Center that was doing research on women. There were a few Centers around the country that had started doing research on women within academic institutions. So a group of these Centers met in New York City– I'm trying to think of what year it was. In the early '80's. It might have been 1981, and we decided to create the National Council for Research of Women so that we could have more of a voice as a group instead of all of us working separately around the country. I came back from that meeting very enthusiastic and very turned on by the idea and I said, "We've got to have a Center at UC

LA

." My Center was just myself doing some research, it was not a real Center. So I remember I met with a group of my colleagues from Women's Studies and I proposed the idea of doing something about that, and I wrote five pages, sort of more like a mission statement for such a Center. And then it was Tama Kaplan, who is no longer with us here, who said

"Let me write a larger proposal." And then Karen Rowe became very involved. I only wrote the mission statement, five pages early on. But it was Tama Kaplan and Karen who took over and really wrote the proposal for what this Center would look like. Karen and I decided to really move this proposal and we started talking. We talked to the Provost and he said, "It needs to be driven by research more. It's too activist, it needs more scholarship and more research." So we changed it again. Then what we did, which was very wise really, we had an open meeting with the faculty for anyone who was interested to come and hear about this idea. And a lot of people showed up. We told them of our idea and then we said, "If you really think that this Center deserves to be here, would you send a letter of support?" So we had the proposal, which finally passed muster with Ray Orbach, the Provost, that it was research-driven and we indicated how many of us were doing research and publishing, and that we had support from the community. The next step was to present it to the Chancellor and the Vice Chancellor, which we did and they approved it, but then it had to be sent to the Central Administration of the University of California because it was going to be an Organized Research Unit. And it happened. So the Center was created. It's an interesting history. And I know Karen is a real archivist. I think she kept everything from that process. I'm sure I have some things around, too, but she's the one that kept a lot of details. It was wonderful to have the Center, which you know, and it has really blossomed since those early days. So I think that the Women's Studies Program and the Center have been very critical for women on this campus; very important in providing the kind of intellectual home and personal support in a community of scholars. That's very supportive not to be alone, to know that others are doing this kind of scholarship. I think that both the Women's Studies Program (now Department) and the Center have been critical here. And I truly cherish the fact that I had the opportunity to be so involved with both efforts. It was my dream when I came here and I said, "Whatever I do, every year I have to be doing something on behalf of women in some capacity, in

some role." And it did happen. So that was wonderful for me—in the '80's and the '90's, very much so. All of my work really was – a lot of my research, most of my research, I would say 90 percent of my research-- dedicated to research on the education and career development of women at every level. Just to backtrack a little bit, I want to tell you about the origin of this because that was very interesting, too. Carole Leland and I had worked together on two projects. One was at Brown University. Brown wanted to study how women were fairing once Pembroke, their college for women, became part of Brown, which had been only for men. Some of the women trustees at Brown wanted a study of how women fared now that they were absorbed by Brown. I met Carole here in California, actually, during the year we were spending at Stanford. So she was a friend and a colleague since '67, and remains a very good friend and a colleague. Then we did another study about women returning to education. I had a grant to do that, and Carole participated in that, too. Finally she and I talked about doing something along the lines of women in leadership roles. So the first thing we did was to call together a conference of a group of women. It was like a who's who of women that were visible in the women's movement and within higher education, along with women from other sectors—from business, from politics and from higher education. We wrote a proposal to Wingspread. Wingspread is a place in Wisconsin that the Johnson Foundation has provided resources for to hold very critical conferences. They call it the Wingspread Conferences and they get a lot of publicity, so it's important. It's like the Aspin Institute. So we managed to write a proposal and we got funded to carry this conference with women, and it was actually called Women of Influence, Women of Vision. That's why the title of the book came later on. And the idea was to talk about where we were then. Somehow I think it was '83. So the idea was to take an account of where we were in terms of our work, how much progress we have made, to do sort of a retrospective look, and then to see what remains to be done, what should be the issues of the future. It was really a think tank approach to these questions. So we spent

some time and it was a wonderful discussion and wonderful opportunity to really energize all of us. And then at a point, Carole and I decided that we needed to do more work after that conference. There were proceedings of the conference, but we wanted to really do a national study on what's happening with women right now. So we wrote a grant proposal to the Ford Foundation and Exxon and both funded us to do this work, to do this research of looking at women who were instrumental in bringing about the second wave of the Women's Movement really. We studied three generations of women. There were a number of women who were doing a lot of very good work before the '60's, but they were sort of in the periphery of the institution working on behalf of women. And those were primarily the Dean of Women in colleges and universities. We call them the predecessors. Then we had the women who started to do work in the mid '60's who were the pioneers of the Women's Movement. And finally we had the third group, the inheritors, women that were mentored by the middle group. So we had three generations of women. The questions we asked were about their personal lives and their lives within the movement, and what precipitated their work and how they worked to promote women, women's welfare and women's position and status in society. And that's how the book came about. It was a wonderful experience to talk to these women. And I think this book, I think it is important in terms of, not only as a historical document of the women's movement, but also getting some insights about where is leadership coming from women. How does women, when they have opportunities to act as leaders, how do they enact leadership really? And I would say that what we learned about women has informed some further work that Sandy and I have done with a number of colleagues. Actually, two things came out of that: A monograph of how we provide guidelines to train undergraduate students for leadership roles. It was based a lot on what we learned from women really. The guidebook is about Leadership for Social Change and Leadership Development for Social Change. Our book on women is about a non-traditional way of thinking about leadership and

expanding our idea of having leadership that is not just positional, which all the studies before have done. We really looked at non-positional leadership, which informed the literature on leadership. So I'm very proud of this work.

KG

: I'm interested to know –

LA

: Sorry, I'll stop for a while so you can ask me.

KG

: Oh, no. No, no, no. Going off of that, how did you see your role as a leader at UC

LA

during that time, especially in the beginning years? And I kind of cut you off when you were starting on Women's Studies, what was your role as a leader in creating that program?

LA

: I think in one way I was helpful was through my leadership on behalf of women at UC

LA

. It was first that I understood higher education because of my research. I was a scholar of higher education, so that was very helpful to know about the institution of higher education, to know about faculty issues, because of my research. So that was very helpful in my leadership role within UC

LA

in promoting the status of women at UC

LA

and organizationally to make some changes such as Women's Studies and creating the Center. So that was very helpful. And the other thing that was very helpful was my national involvement, because I was very much involved nationally. I was on the Board of the National Council for Research on Women. So I had a national perspective on what was happening in other institutions with respect to activism and scholarship on behalf of women. So I had that kind of knowledge and an understanding of higher education because of my research in scholarship. So I think both of

those were very helpful in my activism here. And also in having the respect of my women colleagues, as well as the men colleagues, and to be very visible within the administration here. I was very visible. I did have a lot of leverage, I think, with the administration. They knew who I was and I used that. Like I got along very well with the Chancellor. Also during that time, I was appointed as Associate Provost at the College of Letters and Sciences. When the college was reorganized, I was a member of the reorganization committee that figured out how to change how we structured undergraduate education at UC

LA

and also how we have structured the college. So I was a member of the committee and then the decision was made to create the position of Provost of the college as well as an Associate Provost for undergraduate education. They hadn't made a commitment to undergraduate education yet, but they thought, "My God, we have too many undergraduates here and we need to pay a little more attention to what we do for undergraduates." So I was appointed as Associate Provost. My portfolio was to think creatively about undergraduate education, however, I had to do it with very limited because they hadn't thought it through very well. I was in that role for four years, and I was able to do whatever I could, in terms of undergraduate education – again, I feel that that helped me. I became more visible to the administration, and also more knowledgeable about the whole organization that is called UC

LA

. So that was, I think, very helpful in my work on behalf of women.

KG

: Speaking of students, could you tell me a little bit about what your students were like? Specifically in Women's Studies.

LA

: My work here?

KG

: Yeah. I mean, how did they compare with the times? And speaking of them, you had talked about, I think, power of protests and the student activism. Were you witnessing that at the time while you were –

LA

: Well, the activism happened more in the '60's. My work on that was done in the '60's, with the activist student protests. And I think they were very important for higher education. I think it changed higher education dramatically in two ways. Higher education practiced in loco parentis, but as a result of the protests they were given much more of a voice. They asked for it and they were given the voice. So all of sudden, higher education started appointing students in committees. So I think the protests were very important and I'm glad we chose to title the book "The Power of Protest." The protests worked to bring out change. We don't like protests, but they get the attention of the powers to be. I think it was the protests of women through the caucuses in the professional organizations that led to the changes and the transformations we saw. So to come back, you asked me, I think, about my own work with students here. The only association that I had with undergraduates was through Women's Studies because the program I teach at is the graduate program. All of our students are getting their Ph.D.'s. That's my work here, training people to get a Ph.D., and become either faculty or administrators within higher education. Very different clientele than the undergraduate group. But I loved teaching undergraduates in Women's Studies. What I enjoyed the most was the final seminar, which was a research seminar in Women's Studies. I'm not sure if it still exists. I haven't kept in touch now. Remember, I retired in 2002, so it's been ten years. And in this retirement, I have focused on more recent research, which we can talk about. So basically how Women's Studies students changed, I would say that the women I encountered in the later years have become much more vocal, much more demanding than they used to be. I think that a lot of the awareness has come from ethnic issues, ethnic identity issues. So you can the women's status and ethnic identity

status combined, and both have strengthened the women's voice, I think, within Women's Studies. It would be interesting for me to ask my colleagues in Women's Studies whether they have seen the same changes I have. My first course in Women's Studies was when I was at Stanford in 1967. I developed two courses there. Then when I was at Brown, I developed courses in Women's Studies. And then here in the graduate program in '74. I developed the first Women in Higher Education course. But I think it was only after we had Women's Studies that I could get undergraduate women to take the course. Before it was only graduate students. So the program was established in '76 and I co-listed my course from 1976 to 2002 when I retired, but I don't know when was the last time I taught Women's Studies, I did see that change in women taking the course.

KG

: You had said earlier that when the Women's Studies Program was founded that there was a lot of male reaction to it. Could you explain that?

LA

: It's very interesting and we were talking about that the other day when I was with some colleagues, and one of the women who was on the Executive Committee at the time remembers a guy on the committee saying, "What is the next course? Would it be Clown's Studies?"

KG

: Well, goodness.

LA

: You can think of the attitude. They looked at that as such a female, such a stupid thing, such a crazy thing. What is it? What is Women's Studies? I mean, can you imagine equating to some studies about clowns? I mean, I cannot – it was so negative. And I remember that very well, actually. He was so negative in the group. But you know what? We had some women in the Executive Committee who spoke up. They were both Assistant Professors, but they had heard about the study and the proposal and they were very excited and they thought it was a great idea. It was very interesting, actually, to hear them, how they came out and supported it and

challenged their male colleagues. It felt very good. So they made it happen.

KG

: So comparatively, was UC

LA

behind in forming a Women's Studies program? Or were they still –

LA

: Well the first program was offered in 1969 and when we did our study in '73 I think there were less than 20 programs. I would say we were up there early on. We were in the cutting edge and definitely in the cutting edge for the Center, too. So we're not far behind.

KG

: In reference to the Women's Studies Program versus The Center for the Study of Women, was there a lot of confusion in what the two were supposed to signify on their own?

LA

: Well, it was the same people. The same people who taught Women's Studies were also the same people who were engaged in the research. So there was this overlap in the relationship between the two. So I saw a very close – personally, I saw a very close relationship because of who the people were that overlapped the two entities. For me, I see the Center as being the place where you do the research, where you think about these issues as a scholar, where you have the scholarly support, and then Women's Studies is the place to teach about these issues. So it's a very close relationship really. And I think it has been maintained.

KG

: Uh-huh. Were scholars expected to do research independently and be supported through the Center or were there specific projects that were set forth at the Center's foundations?

LA

: Well, the original idea was that we would be able to get grants through the Center and scholars would be able to work on these grants at the Center. But during my time as the Director and when I was on the Board, the biggest

problem was that the people, and we did work hard on changing it, people were promoted in their departments. So it was very important for them to be perceived as doing research in the department, rather than in the Center. And at one point, we were able to go around it, and for people to list their work with the Center and the department, and for the Center to write letters on behalf of the scholar when they went up for a promotion. So the Center had a voice and I hope it's continuing. I don't know, but I hope it's continuing because it was very important. Because otherwise the women who did their research as part of the Center and then had to be promoted in their department, the department could have made it very difficult for them. It was like, where are your loyalties really? Are they in the department or are they with the Center? I would love to know what's happening now and whether things are much better for everybody. But the original idea was to have the Center get grants directly from foundations or the government or wherever.

KG

: Could you talk a little bit about your role as Director and your involvement in The Center for the Study of Women and when that ended? If it's ended?

LA

: Actually, it was interesting because at one point, and I don't know who initiated the project, we were asked as Directors to talk precisely about this question, "What did we do during the time that we had the responsibility for leadership of the Center? What did we do to promote the Center, to promote the work of women at the Center?" They gave us three or four questions as Directors to write and I have it Have you seen that in the –

KG

: No, I don't think so.

LA

: What I did to respond to those questions, I went back to the two years I did that work and read the annual reports to recollect what what I saw as important issues and what were my contributions as Director at that time? So I forgot it now because I wrote it some time ago.

KG

: Okay.

LA

: But I'll dig it out from my computer and I'll forward it to you.

KG

: Okay. To go a little bit –

LA

: What I saw, just to answer your question, what I saw as my role was to do everything I could to strengthen both Women's Studies and The Center for the Study of Women. I was very interested, and Karen, as well, the Founding Director, we were both very interested in engaging women in the community as part of the Center. We felt that it was very important to have larger visibility and larger support. And we did have, for a period of time, we had some women in the community that we asked them to be our outside Advisory Board. And then there were women that we felt could help us with fundraising, too. As a matter of fact, two of the women, one has passed away, but the other Bea Mandel, is still here with us. She also served as Director of the UC

LA

Foundation. Very visible women at UC

LA

. And the other one who passed away was Joan Palevsky, a very wealthy woman and a strong philanthropist on behalf of women. So some of us from the Center even met at her house for lunch once. So both Karen and I felt very strongly that it was important to have that association with women in the community and to have their support. And Penny Cauter, who is still involved with the Center, was part of that original group of advisors. So that was something that I felt strongly about. The other thing that I remember was a conference we did. A professor from Architecture and Urban Planning came to us and asked if we could work with him on a conference called Learning From The South. He was very much into South America and he had some resources. So we brought a group of women from South America that we sponsored as part of the Center as a dialogue of how women in other

countries, specifically South America, experienced the issues that women confront in the workplace and in education. It was a fantastic meeting. I will never forget it. I mean, it was so powerful. For the meeting, we brought women from the local community, so the South was not only South America, it was also East L.A. and we brought women who were in leadership roles within the Latino community and the black community. They came to UC

LA

and represented mothers who lost their kids through gang fights and killings. And there was a woman who was working in a committee that tried to look after women who were in household laboring and she tried to educate women for their rights who worked as maids in households. I thought it gave quite a wonderful opportunity for the Center to become much more of the community. As part of the conference, we decided to go and visit the local women in their own neighborhoods, so they came to UC

LA

for a day and we went to East

LA

for a day. And I have to tell you, when we were in their space, they became so powerful and so outspoken. I remember one of them said to John Freeman, "No, it's our turn. You stay there, we take over." It was wonderful. When we talk about the barriers in terms of how we're perceived in the community, is to really not only bring them here, but for us being there. I mean, it was such a wonderful experience. I mean, I will never forget it. It was very powerful for me. Unfortunately, we didn't continue that work. We had somebody who worked with us who did a lot of the leg work for this project, an African-American woman who was part of the Center at that time, and she left. We had all these intentions to continue that conversation with the women of the community, and she had the access really. She was wonderful to have, but then she left us and we didn't continue that work. That was during my time as Director. For me, it was very powerful and very important. I was very interested, of course, in what we were doing here., but I was

also very interested in connections with outside communities. And I always saw our scholarship, the need for our scholarship to be translated for changes in the society, changes in the institutions. All of my work, all of my research had kind of that thrust to "Why am I doing this research? What do I want to see happen?"

KG

: How did your personal research during that time evolve here at UC

LA

?

LA

: I'm trying to think about what I did during those years. I had this wonderful access to data at our Institute, so I was able to do a lot of work looking at the status of women nationally as undergraduates, as graduate students, and as faculty members. I focused a lot of my work on faculty because I felt very strongly that if we're going to make some changes, we have to have more women faculty, and the women faculty have to have more status in our institutions. So a lot of my work was to look at this whole question of the treatment of women and the visibility or lack of – or the invisibility of women faculty. So I was very much interested in the kinds of decisions we make to promote faculty. What are we looking for? What makes somebody eminent, how do women become visible really? What is it – because in promotions, the things that people look for is not only the research you are doing, but also letters of recommendation and how you measure up with other people in the field. I remember when I was at the College as Associate Provost, the Provost will insist on evaluating each person on how they measure up with the five best people in the field around the country. And so the whole issue of women's visibility nationally, in terms of their scholarship, is not only doing the scholarship, but how do you become visible. So I became very much interested in that area of research and I did some writing along those lines. What else did we do? We did a very major study on minorities in higher education with a National Commission. A member of the Commission, a Latina, and I,

we did a monograph on Latina women. So in a sense, again, a lot of my work, even on other topics, always brought in the perspective about women, whether it was around minorities or other populations. So a lot of my work was to inform what I was learning from my studies of women, but also to inform other work within the Institute. So then in 2002 when I retired, we started our research on spirituality. Although I'd been working on that since 1997, it basically came back to the question: how can we make it better? How can we improve the culture within higher education? How can we have an institution that is good for everybody and treats everybody equally? So the spirituality project has to do with how we become authentic as people, more caring about other people, because I feel that if we promote a culture that respects the strengths of others and encourages the development of self-awareness and caring, then that will also change the whole system, which will be good for women, as well as for people of color. So those are my passions, the whole equality issue to make an institution that is equitable and fair and good for everybody. So the spirituality fits in that way, but how can we help people really touch base with their inner selves and their own authenticity and integrity? I think I mentioned empathy in my early work, and it's interesting like I have come full circle.

KG

: Yeah. How did you decided that you were ready to retire in 2002? What was that decision [inaudible]?

LA

: It was a very conscious decision. I decided that I didn't want to stay around and have people say, "Well, when is she going to leave so they can open the space for a younger person?" Really, it was that conscious decision that I wanted to leave and make a space available for a new person to come, for a younger person to come. It was that easy. The decision was that easy. It was a good decision, it had a good underpinnings. Also, it was a very good time for me because when I retired, it was the best year professionally for me. I had gotten the first Certificate of Appreciation from the women's community here for service to the community. I

had gotten from my department the teaching award, and from my professional Association, I got the Career Achievement Award. So I got three awards, right? Service, teaching and my scholarship and I said it's a perfect time to retire. But it was not that easy. I even had a little bit of therapy to process it. Six sessions with somebody because I was – my identity was so strongly tied with work. And I said, "Oh, my God, I'm losing my home." As a matter of fact, I had a dream that I was homeless. And in my dream, which is interesting, I felt like I didn't have a home, but also very free that I didn't have a home to care about, to worry about, that as a homeless person I was free to do and go as I wished. That kind of thing. My Dean wanted to give us a party and I did not want a party, but we did have a party later on. I didn't want to be called retired or Emeritus, I sort of resisted, even though it was a very conscious decision. But having the research project on spirituality was wonderful because I was still at UC

LA

and very engaged. I was here practically every day doing the research. I had students, graduate students who were research analysts, so for ten years until when we closed the project last November, I was very involved. So that was a very good transition. So now I feel very good about retirement. I call it a second retirement. I feel as if I have closure now.

KG

: So I wanted to ask, so with your retirement, are there still similar studies being done here at UC

LA

in the area of your expertise?

LA

: You know what is interesting? Even though I would say I have trained at least 60 Ph.D.'s or more, very few men and mostly women, I did not have inheritors to this work. There's only one person that is doing work on gender, one of the faculty members who was our student. None of my students really did work on gender. They care about these issues, so you would expect many more of them to do this research.

And the reason is based on a very conscious decision on my part, because I wanted students to find their own questions and not to do the research I was doing. I was very clear on that. In our faculty, the majority of students work on their faculty's research and projects and they do a piece of research with data faculty have collected. I was completely the opposite. I always told my students, "You figure out what your passion is and you pursue that." And I have to say I loved it because I was learning a lot from them since they were doing research on things I knew very little about. So maybe I might have a handful of students who did research that's similar to mine. Not similar, but at least on gender concerns. But the rest, worked out everything that had to do with higher education. And as I said, I learned a lot. I had a seminar with all of my graduate students involving work on their dissertations. I did that from the beginning, a seminar on dissertations. So I would have students doing different dissertations with me every other week and we would talk about the research. They helped each other, it was a very nice community among them. They would read each other's work and make comments. Doing a dissertation is a very solitary thing and this helped them to keep each other on task. It helped them to move along and complete the work. My seminar became so popular that I had students that were supervised by other faculty who would come and register in my dissertation seminar. I have one student whose dissertation was a study of the Center actually. She did a fabulous dissertation.

KG

: She was talking about the role of The Center for the Study of Women and how it's changed over the years. And I guess if you don't remember a lot of the details of it, I was just gonna ask if you thought that they were accurate as to what the Center represents today.

LA

: You see, I don't know where the Center is today. When I was involved, I was very involved. I attended the seminars, I was in the lectures. But then I separated.

KG

: And what caused –

LA

: So I don't know exactly what's happening now.

KG

: What caused your separation from the Center?

LA

: I started doing different research on spirituality and that took a lot of energy. I had to learn a whole new area really, and I wasn't teaching anymore. I was not on committees anymore. So I was like a freestanding scholar doing research on a different topic. So I think that's what probably led to my separation from the Center. And also the fact that I had retired. It's important to be able to separate. I have separated from the American Psychological Association and I do not go to the meetings anymore. At the American Psychological Association I was very involved. I even ran for President of the Association. To run for President, you have to be nominated by 10 percent of the Association, and I had all of the women behind me. But I didn't succeed. Somebody else, a man, got the Presidency, but it was very good for women to have a woman running. It was a very good experience for me and for APA. But now I feel totally separated from psychology and APA. I hardly even read psychology journals anymore. And it's good. One has to separate.

KG

: Uh-huh. All right, so this is kind of a big shift, but to go back to some of the social aspects of your move to California.

LA

: Of my life?

KG

: Yeah, so going back to the '70's, I guess, you had talked about coming here, being recruited by Scripps and by being appointed at UC

LA

, and you were granted immediate tenure, correct? And your husband was as well. So talking about the move itself and

the transition, could you talk a little bit about those social aspects?

LA

: Well, first of all, it was wonderful because it was the first job that I didn't go after, but instead they went after me. It felt very good. So in moving here, I had two teenage boys. That was not very easy, bringing up boys in Los Angeles. And for them it was very different, the wealth that they saw in other kids and how parents spoiled their kids and my kids got very confused because coming from the East, it was a very different life to come here. Also in the East, because you have winters, kids play outside only in the summer. Most of the time they played inside the house. So here all of a sudden, the kids had the freedom. So it was very different for me bringing up my sons here. Also, I was very involved in my job. I was working very hard because my research continued to blossom. Before I did only research and writing, now all of a sudden I'm doing research and publishing, plus I'm doing teaching, plus I'm doing committee work. So it's like my work expanded enormously from what I was doing before. On the other hand I loved California and I still love it. We have made many friends here. My social life is very extensive and wonderful. So California has been good for us and I love where I live. We have two houses: one up in the hill overlooking the city and through the ocean, and one right on the water in Malibu. We go every weekend to Malibu. I read a lot of dissertations in Malibu, so the students used to tease me, "That's why your comments are so kind and nice, because you're working sitting on your deck looking at the ocean." So that has been wonderful, that part of our lives. I'm very grateful.

KG

: Now, that house, the first house, is this the house that you had moved into originally?

LA

: Uh-huh, we never moved out of there, yeah.

KG

: Can you tell me a little bit about –

LA

: So when we got it, it was not even finished completely. It was in the planned community up there, and it was the model house. Sandy and one of my sons had moved to

LA

already but I had to finish some work back East before I could move. I came one weekend and I saw the house we bought it. I went back and I couldn't even remember the house. I said, "Did it have a basement?" I was thinking of the houses on the East Coast. And I said, "I didn't see a place for the washer and dryer." So I had no idea of the house. So when we moved and we fixed it, we built the garden and the pool, and one day I saw the view, which I didn't even see it when I was there, and the view is to die for. On a clear day, it's like you sit-- the house is all glass-- so you sit and you see all the lights and everything. It is beautiful. It's beautiful all during the day and the night. So it's a gift. And I didn't even know it was gonna be that pretty, that wonderful. So it has been a very good house for us. It was hard for the kids because it's up in the hills. You drive 1,200 elevation, it's about three and a half miles all the way to the top. It's the last street before the Santa Monica Mountains. It was hard for them to get around because it's not easy. They rode their bicycles down and then I had to pick them up because they couldn't come up on the bicycle. But then also being by the mountains, my son, who lives in Topanga now, my Greek son, he always loved the mountains and nature so he would pack up his backpack and take the dog and would go out there and walk and just love it. And that's why he moved to Topanga because he has the same scene there. He told me recently that the chaparral in the Santa Monica Mountains is like in the Greek mountains.

KG

: That makes sense.

LA

: And didn't even know that. So he discovered that and said, I guess, it was in my soul. And the water, of course, which I grew up by the water in Greece. To be in Malibu by the water is just perfect. I'm telling you every time we drive there I get a smile. There hasn't been one day that I have taken that

house for granted. Not one single day. And we had a lot of parties for students, a lot of socials for students in both houses. Recently one of the women here asked me if she could have her retirement party in the Malibu house. It's a sweet place, a very sweet place. So I'm telling you life here has been very good. As I wrote once, it's a life worth living. Truly, I love everything, my friends, my kids, my family, my grandkids now.

KG

: I wonder if your mindset changed significantly knowing that moving to California that your job and this house that you had, these would be, I assume, permanent positions that you intended to keep because in the past, like you had said –

LA

: Oh, we moved.

KG

: Yeah.

LA

: We didn't know it was gonna work that well. But when we came here we hoped that it would be the place we would stay. And we did. This was '73, I mean, it's a long time when you think about it.

KG

: Now to go back to your sons, how did your role of motherhood change in their teenage years and bringing them up as adults?

LA

: You know what was interesting with my sons? They've seen me, since they were born, be very engaged in reading and writing. And I remember I would sit and do my homework, of course, from my kitchen. My oldest son would sit next to me and say "Do my work, too." So the kids have seen me really in this role. My youngest was very ambivalent about it. He would say to me, "Why aren't you like the other mothers?" and "You have an accent and they don't have an accent." This is my Greek son, right? "And you're not blonde and you don't play tennis." He had an image of the mothers that he saw among his friends and I was kind of atypical for him. But at the same time, the same son in his room, he had copies of

my book in his bookshelf. And it's interesting that both of the kids got their doctorates, one in health psychology and the other got a Doctorate in Education.

KG

: Did your relationship with Sandy change at all once you had both been appointed at UC

LA

?

LA

: Oh, I have to tell you I became much more of an outspoken feminist. Before, I always thought it was my responsibility, everything. Not only the social life, but the kids and dah, dah, dah. And I remember two things that happened here, and they're funny actually. First, we had an Executive Director, when we were in Westwood for the Institute. He was an economist and one day I went into the office and he said, "Where is Sandy?" I said, "He's at home waiting for the fence man." And he said, "Sandy's waiting for the fence man and not you?" I said, "Yeah, I have work, so I came and he's waiting." It's interesting because his wife did not work after they got married. It was later that she went on and got a law degree and she is a hot lawyer. She is the Vice President of Sony. She's a litigator, but she did it all after the kids got older, so he had a different image of what a woman does. She was at home, the kids grew up, then she could become a professional. And he challenged her, "Okay, see if you can go do law school." He challenged her and she went and, of course, she did it all. So another time Sandy looked at the boys and said, "You know, Lena, the kids need a haircut." I said, "Take them." I never did things like that before. And the third thing I want to tell you is that one day I came home and I said, "Starting tomorrow, each one of you is gonna cook a meal." Three meals will be done by the three of you. They were shocked. Sandy would cook by the book and he would take a recipe and if he didn't have one of the ingredients, he would panic. "What do I do now? It says sour cream, I don't have sour cream." And one time I came home, he was having the whole head of garli, not peeled or anything, and was chopping it. I said, "What are you doing?"

He said, "It said a clove of garlic." He didn't even know what a clove of garlic was. So anyhow, he cooked by the book. John did the easiest thing possible. We had hot dogs and hamburgers, that's all he could cook. And Paul was the creative one. He would look in the refrigerator, he would take something, he would decorate it. But anyhow, the three of them cooked. So those were the three things that I sort of declared in my family's independence. But never before. I didn't do anything like that before. So I really took charge of my life. Absolutely, it was good for them.

KG

: So the boys, when you had first moved here, they were in their younger teenage years.

LA

: Yeah. We moved in '73, so one was born in '59, so he was 14. And the other was born in '61, so he was 12.

KG

: Now, I ask this because before you had moved, you had said that a nanny was a huge help during this time. Did you still have house help?

LA

: When we moved here, I had help once a week to clean the house. I didn't have a nanny at the end of our time in Washington, DC either. I had a regular housekeeper, she came every day in case I wasn't home when they came from school. I had a wonderful boss who said "If you do research, you can do it from home as well as you do it in the office. You don't have to be in the office." So I had that kind of flexibility with my jobs in Washington, which was great.

KG

: Now this is – to backtrack again to your teaching, you had noted that you threw many parties for your own students at your own house. I'm interested to know how would you describe your teaching style at the time? What was your role as a mentor to your students?

LA

: Well, I have to tell you, that's a very good question because I always felt ambivalent about thinking of myself as a professor who knows it. I used to bring it up with my

students in my seminars. I remember one time in one of the seminars I said, "I don't think you guys need me because you can read this stuff and you can talk about this stuff." I was trying to always define my role. What is my role as a teacher of graduate students? Graduate students are a very different population. But I have to say, I was a very good mentor. Both Sandy and I got the first mentoring award that was established by the Association for the Study of Higher Education. It was just wonderful because they asked the students to write letters about their memories of us. And the person who presented the awards took parts of the letters and read them to us. It was just absolutely wonderful. And I have it at home, what they gave us. Another time, we were not able to go to a conference, but they still asked us to write an essay about mentorship and what mentoring means to us. So at one of the conference sessions they presented pictures of us and told everyone what we had to say about mentoring. So my role has very much been as a mentor, rather than a classroom teacher. Because of the institute, we always had graduate students who worked with us as research assistants. And the connection of the former students is still very strong. Some of my close friends are my former students, and it's wonderful. When Sandy and I turned 70, the students threw us a fantastic party and some of them even came from out of town for it. It was just wonderful. So we both really have had a very significant impact on our students. I call them my children actually. And now they have children, students who have gotten their PhDs with us, so not only are we grandparents, we're grandparents with our students because a number of them are professors. It's like three generations down. It is fascinating to see really how it goes.

KG

: So to switch gears again, I'm sorry –

LA

: That's okay.

KG

: I wanted to talk about some of the events that – well, one of them specifically you had mentioned in, I think, our first

session. We talked about fires that you experienced living in California. I was wondering if you could talk about the fires or other significant Los Angeles events that you remember, like the riots?

LA

: Well, the fires, I experienced two fires. One when we had to evacuate from Brentwood and one in the house in. I was working in my study and I smelled something and I went downstairs. My housekeeper was downstairs and I said, "Are you cleaning the fireplace?" She says, "No." So I went out and I saw the smoke and then I tuned in and said we had to evacuate. And Sandy was on his way to the airport to pick up one of our sons so I couldn't get ahold of him. So I left, I took the dog and I took, actually – the only thing I took, we had an envelope with sort of important papers, birth certificates and stuff like that. So I took that envelope and I took my jewelry and I did what I had heard thieves do, take a pillowcase and throw everything in the pillowcase. I did that. My jewelry, the important papers, and my dog. And then I went down, my brother-in-law and sister-in-law lived in Westwood, so I went to their house and finally I got a hold of Sandy. Nobody could go up the hills in Brentwood. But Sandy and one of our students and my son managed to go up to the house. I had read that you put your pictures in the freezer so they wouldn't burn and you put your silver in the swimming pool. So my kids had a ball throwing the silver in the swimming pool, which turned black because of the chlorine. It took so much work to polish it back. And they even took electric serving dishes threw them in. They took out the food from the freezer to put the pictures. So I came back home and the meat and the chicken and everything from the freezer was on the floor in the garage. But we survived it. It was interesting that I didn't feel the need for anything else from the house. The jewelry, yes, because it has such meaning for me. It was jewelry from my parents, things I bought in Greece, things that Sandy had given me. So all the pieces of jewelry have associations with occasions and with people. So that's why it was important to me. It's crazy, isn't it? I was burglarized once. I had a wonderful

collection of American Indian jewelry and a lot of art jewelry from Greece. They were all gone. Fortunately, a lot of my jewelry from Greece from my parents and Sandy, I had them in the bank. But I lost the first piece that Sandy gave me when our first son was born, a pearl necklace that was stolen. And something that my mother-in-law had given me was stolen. So there were some good things that were in addition to my art jewelry. I still regret it. The pieces of my heart. I think it was the guy who usually washed my windows. It was an inside job. And because I trusted him completely I would leave him at the house and come to school, I'd say, "When you're finished, just close the door!" I didn't have an alarm system then. They even took pins off my lapels in my closet. So he and a friend did it, there were two of them. I know that it was him because when he came back and I told him about the burglary I said "Well, since you didn't finish, come back next week to finish it." He never came back to finish them. He disappeared. Never found him or any of the jewelry. The reason I mentioned this is that I wasn't at all anxious about losing things, and I think it goes back to the idea of losing everything during the war. It doesn't mean anything as long as the family was there. You're together. And I felt the same way when we left Malibu because of the fires. Probably I felt more sentimental about Malibu because of the house. You can't find houses anymore on the water that you can afford. So anyhow, those were California experiences for sure. And the big earthquake, it was another experience. Thank God that all those houses up in the hills are built on rock ground, so they shake, but not as badly as other people's places. And the riots, I was in my office on Wilshire in Westwood. They moved our office from UC

LA

there to retrofit them after the Northridge earthquake. I remember looking through my windows at the riots and that experience was very powerful. And those have been, in a sense, traumatic experiences that give you a pause about what is important in life, what you value.

KG

: I wonder how awareness of activism or otherwise changed on campus over your years, either from faculty, from students, from the community.

LA

: My feeling is that, which is unfortunate, we're taking things too much for granted and that's what bothers me. And I think most people think that everything is okay now, which it's not and we have plenty of evidence that it's not okay. So what bothers me is really that we, women, are not as activist as I wish we were, or as we were earlier on. And I don't know, we don't have sort of the spirit of a scholar activist mentality that we do our scholarship for something more important for change in society. I don't think we make that connection as much anymore. I don't know, maybe I'm wrong. We have become too much part of the institutional culture.

KG

: What are your expectations of women involved in higher education, or even just feminism for today?

LA

: It's amazing how many women college presidents we have now but I'm not sure about their feminism. As a matter of fact, we had dinner with a woman college president the other day, Sandy and I, and told her about our book on women's leadership and I'm mailing it to her today. I'm not sure they're exposed to feminist literature. So I don't know. I have a concern about it. I have a concern about younger women, taking things for granted. I try very hard to bring attention to these issues for my granddaughters. As a grandmother, I see it as my responsibility to educate them, turn them into feminists really, to be honest. So whenever I have the chance I try to expose them to that. And they listen. And they're amazed about some things. I said to them something about the Equal Rights Amendment, they didn't know about it, how we fought for that. I want them to be very aware. My daughter-in-law here in Topanga, she's a strong feminist and she wants her daughters to be feminists. She had started, actually, in Topanga, a mother/daughter group. Now practically all the kids in Topanga, all the girls,

have mother/daughter groups. The idea started with a feminist group at Wellesley, in Massachusetts. She read the book about it and she got very excited and started that group for her two daughters and now, as I said, other mothers have done the same thing. It's good for the girls and it's good for the mothers because the mothers resolve a lot of their own issues with their mothers through the group meetings and discussions. So anyhow, she wants both of the girls to be exposed to the work that is happening here at UC

LA

, so I brought my 14-year-old granddaughter to a seminar on the gender gap that Linda Sax teaches. Linda Sax wrote a book about the gender gap and she teaches a seminar on the topic. So I brought Amalia to the seminar and you know something? She was more engaged than the UC

LA

freshmen. She asked questions, and she responded to the professor's questions.. And she was the one that had already seen the exhibit, the photography exhibit in the Annenberg about movie images. She was even more sophisticated about what was happening about these issues than the college students. I was very impressed. She's a very interesting kid. She's taking classes at the community college actually – both of my granddaughters were home-schooled. The younger one is going to a regular school now, but the oldest is still being home-schooled and takes courses at the community college. She's unbelievable. She's an amazing kid. Just amazing. I mean, she has taken lessons in cooking. So now she's being asked by some people in the community to go and cook for them. She makes money out of it. Also, she has developed an approach to fashion and design, so one of the other mothers took her out to help her shop and paid her for her help. She knows how to sew, she knows how to cook. I want to backtrack for a moment about my sons. I always thought that I was the right mother for sons and the right grandmother for girls. With sons, being a working woman gave them a lot of freedom. And they didn't have the conflicts that mothers and daughters might have at a certain age. It's sort of – they developed beautifully– I would say it

with pride, I was not an intrusive mother at all. So the kids had a lot of freedom and they had a lot of respect for us as parents. They had expectations. Both of our kids acted out, which was good for them. They had to do that. But they both turned out to be just fantastic people, fantastic people.

KG

: What were some of the problems that you experience with them?

LA

: Well, my oldest, who was the perfect kid through high school, finished high school and went to college and all of a sudden he didn't want to be perfect anymore. He started questioning everything and dropped out of college and lived up in Berkeley, became a street person, used drugs, did everything. He was searching for his selfhood. He read a great deal and made his livelihood. He worked in a house of autistic children and also worked in a pizzeria and made pizza. He was self-supporting because we told him that we would only support him if he was in college. But he was searching for himself so he read the autobiography of a yogi, the book of the self-realization fellowship by Yogananda. So he started meditating and he went inward, very much so. And he is still on that journey, his journey of self-discovery. And all of his work is really on how we create the right environments for people's well-being. That's really his whole approach to health-psychology. He is a very sensitive guy, he writes a lot of poetry, he composes his own music, he performs, and he has done quite a few CD's. He has his own website, John Astin, at Integrated Arts. I'll write them down for you. I'm telling you, both of our sons are wonderful human beings. And I have to say that, I'm bragging, but my kids adore me. They are so wonderful to me. I get emotional talking about it. For my 80th birthday, the family here, the four of them made me a scroll, "80 things we love about Lena." It's so loving, it's so wonderful, and all of them send notes to me for every occasion. They're very thoughtful. That's all I can say. My Greek son has made me so many videos of Greece with Greek music. He has translated Greek poems and read them on a video he produced. I mean you

know all I can say is that I'm very grateful for them. I just, I couldn't ask for anything more. They're wonderful

KG

: They sound wonderful.

LA

: They are very special people. And now I have these three girls. I have made a promise to them, which I have kept, that I will take them on trips. So I've taken them twice to New York. And so they get to know me, I get to know them, and they get to know each other. Because the one is an only child, she lives in Santa Cruz, and I want her to feel connected to her cousins. Not having siblings. So now they want to go to France, to Paris, next summer, which I might do if my energy holds. I'm going to take them to Paris. And Sandy and I have taken them on all sorts of trips together.

KG

: Now as a grandmother, what are your expectations for your granddaughters of course but also for this age of women that's growing up how do you reflecting on your own life what kind of wisdom do you hope they will be able to take from your experience and your research and your contributions?

LA

: I want women to be strong and independent. That's my wish for them. And to be very socially conscious. To care about their environment, about their society, about the "other," to be very engaged in what is important in life. To contribute, to be of service. I'm cleaning my study right now as I mentioned, and I found something to remind myself. Two things that drive me are my need to know and the importance for me to serve. Those are two of my key values - to know and to serve. That's what drives my life and I hope that for my granddaughters and for young women today.

KG

: I think were nearly finished but I wonder if there's anything else that you would like to share about yourself that we might have missed or any advice that you would give to future generations?

LA

: You know, as I look back in my life, when you get to be 80 years old, you look a lot back in your life. I see, first, the importance of friendship. Friendship, which I didn't even mention. Friendship to me is critical. And my friendship with women is very important. I have many women friends and I cherish that.

KG

: Do you believe that that was um developed through friendships that you had at UC

LA

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LA

: I have friends from UC

LA

and I am friends with colleagues, close friends, that we call each other very often. So I have friends from the work, colleagues. I have friends from my students. I am very close with a woman who was my student in 1974. She's in her 70's now; she came back to school as an adult so we have a close friendship. I am friends with another woman who was my student, very close friends. So I have very close friendships with women that were my students. I think those are the most of my sources of my friends really. But you know, neither they nor I take our friendships for granted. We believe in cultivating our friendships and caring about each other and it has worked out. It is wonderful. What can I say? My friendships are very important to me and women friends are very critical to me. So I would say that's another thing that I would love women to really think very seriously about the importance of friendships with other women. And to cultivate that. and to cherish it. Also, I believe in a lot of playing. I'm very good at playing. I'm very good at work and very good at playing. I wish I had brought this to read you. Some years ago I chaired a major organization that was I the chair for 3 years actually and I'm very proud of my work. As the chair of the board, you decide on a theme of for the national conference and I remember that I said what we need to do is stop worrying about ourselves and worry about others. And I called it "Beyond Ourselves." I was the chair of

the board, but the President of the Association was the manager of the Association. He said, "No Lena, the big issue right now is technology." I said, "We can do that another time. On my time, we're going to do this". So we did actually, we had a fabulous conference, and as a result the organization committed to the idea of promoting service learning and community service in high education. That conference was critical for setting the agenda for the organization. And I remember when I was stepping down, the President wrote a special greeting in which he said jokingly that they were getting worried about me because I was sending a fax from Greece, a letter from Maui, notes from Malibu. "Who is she? What is she doing? Is she working really or playing all the time?" So this reminds me of the importance of playing, that's another thing that I tell my students. You have to balance in your life. You have to have a lot of play and fun in your life. You can't be all work. And Sandy and I are very good at that. We have a timeshare in Maui. We go to Hawaii once or twice a year. We have done all of our we take we took all of our sabbaticals together, either in Greece or Hawaii. We do try to renew ourselves. We find ways; we also love music in our lives. So I tell my students and all the young people: "Work hard but also play hard."

KG

: I think my last question for you would be what are your goals for...?

LA

: Right now?

KG

: Yeah.

LA

: You know I haven't decided yet because hopefully I will live to be 90, 95, I don't know, I hope. If I stay in good health. So you know I need to think constructively how to use that time. Something that has come back to me and renewed me is the whole idea of reconnecting with women's issues, because I had separated from it. So that's one thing in my agenda. To get to know more about what's happening with

our Center, what's happening also with the National Council. As a matter of fact, what they have done at the national council, they have a committee that they have appointed of past board members, an emeriti committee. That would be sort of advisory to the council. That would be fun really, to sort of see where the Center is, the council is and how I can help. So I'm starting to think that way. And also working on my memoirs, something for my granddaughters. Those are the two agenda pieces. And do more fun reading-- fun reading which I haven't done. I don't want to do another research project. That I know. I mean I've run out, I've done it. I've collected so much data in my life. And I've written so much that I don't want it anymore. So I have to change what I'm doing. I was going to go back to my piano days but I had a terrible accident. I fell down the stairs. And I injured this arm so basically I have my motor ability but I don't have my sensory feelings. My hand doesn't have the sensory recovery and it's 3 years now and it's not going to recover. I cannot type and I can't play the piano with this hand.

KG

: Trumpet.

LA

: Sandy says, "Use this hand, you know, there are some pieces that are written only for the right hand." But I haven't returned to the piano. So what I thought is I will take some voice lessons because I always wanted to sing. I love jazz singing. So I did take 11 lessons but I was not good at them. I had a wonderful teacher, a jazz singer and educator. And I said to her, "Well, am I in nursery school, preschool, where am I, in my progress?" She said, "Well, maybe, first grade." So that's it. So I sent her an email and I said, "Cathy I'm frustrating myself and I'm frustrating you, so no more lessons for me." I couldn't do it. It's like it's in my soul, but it doesn't come out in the voice. I did it because she said to me one time a long time ago: "Anybody can sing. Just try to develop those necessary muscles and you can sing." Easier said than done. I don't know my goal is for the next 10 years. Most of my friends say I should find a way to mentor more people. I say, "But how do I do that?" I'm not in any

situation that I can do that. One of my great strengths is that I'm a very good facilitator when I'm in a group meeting. I'm very good at that. But you need the structure so I don't have that right now. So we'll see, I'm open.

KG

: I'm sure you'll find it; you're such an incredible person. I really thank you for sharing your story with me.

LA

: You have been wonderful.

KG

: Aw, thanks.

LA

: You have been such a good listener. Thank you.

KG

: No, thank you and if there is anything that we need to add to this I will definitely let you know, but thank you Lena.