CB: The Center for Women's Global Leadership, which we started in 1990, was understood as a center that would help develop the leadership capacity of women globally. Not necessarily in government leadership like the Center for American Women and Politics. But, women who were taking leadership. I asked that in founding the center, I asked that we start on women taking leadership on human rights, and women's human rights in particular.

Oh, and that's ended up being the theme forever, although, at first it was meant to be for three years. But, it has several major focuses. One of which is doing things that enhance women's individual leadership through leadership trainings, development, that enhance the strategies of women globally, on global issues. So, we've done a lot of work of bringing women together in consultations. Initially, primarily on violence against women and looking at how to put violence on the human rights agenda.

It also does work with the United Nations around these issues. So, we work both kind of at the grassroots training level with individual leaders, but we also work in helping them to access the international arena, and particularly the UN, which has led us to also be advocates ourselves in the international arena.

Then we also do student work on campus, where we involve students in this work and hopefully help them have a more international understanding of their work.

JC: Well, how do you do it? How do you do it all?

CB: [laughing] Well, when we first started, we were kind of in the dark, what is this going to mean? But, I think the core programs have been really finding, finding ways to bring women together. It really started out of the connections I had in the women's movement globally already. I had been thinking about this work for a long time.

So, we built on connections I had with women in other parts of the world. And we also built on the connections that graduate students from around the world who came to Rutgers had.

JC: Mm-hmm [affirmative]

CB: Oh, and we brought them in to it, to really try to understand where are the women's groups in other countries, what are they looking at? Now, we've been a part of that for 25 years, so, it's a lot easier. We go to the UN, we already know who the other players are, what are the organization. The work we did initially was very much on getting women's rights understood as human rights.

Now, we're working on more specific areas. So some of the current work is looking at, for example, the issue of violence gender-based violence in the workplace, and there's centers doing some work with the ILO, the International Labor Organization, on a convention that we hope will be binding and useful for worker- ... We're working with labor unions.

So as the work has evolved, people come to us, also. And we come up with different strategies for doing this work.
JC: Though, what would you say is the, the biggest impact that the Center for Women's Global Leadership has had?

CB: Well, I think our biggest impact came, really, pretty early, was in the early 90s, in establishing the idea that women's rights are human rights. This is an idea that grew out of the Global Feminist Movement. I date it back to 1985 in Nairobi in the Third-world Conference on Women that the UN held. And many women in different parts of the world began to think about what would it mean to frame this?

So, we were kind of the coordinators of a strategy at the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in 1993. And I think our biggest impact, we didn't even know it was going to be our biggest impact, but was making that idea visible and understood around the world, where the world tribunal of women testifying about abuses, and showing how they parallel other human rights abuses, but are invisible because they happen to women.

And much of the work since then has been to continue to develop what does that really mean? So, we had testimony about rape as a, as a crime, in war. We had women from Bosnia at the time, and Herzegovina and the war that, and the, in Europe, we had women there from Africa, from different wars.

Now, many people have been involved, including the center, in sort of, okay, how do you make that real? How do you follow that up? How do you prosecute it? How do you get reparations for women? And that continues to be the work. But, I think the biggest impact of the center was being part of the strategy to break open that area of work. And probably secondly, bringing women together from different parts of the world to network with each other. So, women had lots of networks in Latin America, or in Asia. But, what we focused on was bringing women from all of the continents, plus women from the US, and working together, two weeks, intensively, that built relationships of trust across regions.

I just came back from a conference in Brazil, and I saw many of the women who had come to those institutes in the 90s are still building this movement through those kinds of relationships. So, in a way, it's an ongoing impact of building and helping to build networks of trusting cross-cultural work.

JC: The phrase "women's rights are human rights," and "human rights are women's rights," is sort of Hilary Clinton’s big rallying cry-

CB: Right.

JC: And how she became, sort of, exploded into the, really the international scene, I would say, how did that phrase get to, how did it get from your lips to Hilary's ears?

CB: Well, it got from, it got from our lips and by that I mean I think a lot of people in the Global Women's Movement really initiated it. But, we built the strategy for putting it in Vienna, and we started lobbying Hilary Clinton’s office as First Lady, and saying that she should be supporting this movement.

So, it was really pretty direct. We were, we were lobbying her to say these things. And we're really glad that she said them. But I want people to realize that it took a movement. She says "it takes a village," well, it took a movement to get those words accepted and that really starts in the early 90s with feminist groups working at the UN around the Vienna World Conference, and then it culminates in Beijing where you have a much bigger audience for that, and that's where she says it.
But, she says it means, to me, that it, it's out there in the world. But, I think it's important to also remember that somebody has to make it happen.

And, much of the work of the movement around women's human rights is still in the trenches, working to make that a reality, to make it-

To go beyond the rhetoric, to "how can that actually change the situation for women on the ground?"

JC: You came to Rutgers in 89?

CB: 87.

JC: 87. And, you had been an advocate, all of those years, working-

CB: Mm-hmm [affirmative]

JC: Around, sort of working in the-

CB: Yeah.

JC: Wilderness, on your own.

CB: Right.

JC: What was it like for you, coming, coming to an academic institution for the first time-

CB: Right.

JC: -in your career at that point?

CB: Right, well, I had worked at a policy institute. The Institute for Policy Studies in Washington DC. So, I had some idea about institutions, but it was a small, you know, sort of lefty, 25 people, thinking we were changing the world on Capitol Hill. So, when I came here, I had been working as an independent consultant and sort of what I call "wandering in the wilderness" about global feminism. I had this instinct that the next step for women, all around the world, and certainly in the US, was also to link up globally.

so, I was trying to figure that out, and I went to different places, I got the opportunity to go. And then I got invited to apply for the Laurie Chair. So, when I arrived here at first, I was a little bewildered. How am I going to do this activist work in New Brunswick, New Jersey? But what really brought me here was the center of power that women already had.

And I would never have come here, the Center for Women's Global Leadership would not exist at Rutgers if there hadn't already been the Center for American Women and Politics. There hadn't been a Mary Hartman Dean of Douglas College, creating institutional ways to bring new ideas. So, I think Rutgers was already one of the leading women's studies programs.

So, there was already a sense that women here, were not only doing feminist work, but they took power seriously, and they took the power of the institution seriously. And they used it to bring in
projects like me, who, was not an academic, I'm still not an academic. But was a, a theorist and writer, and someone who, as an activist, saw the potential, at Rutgers, to widen the ideas I was working on in the movement.

The first year and a half, I didn't expect to stay here. I thought it was a two-year appointment. And, when Mary Hartman proposed that I stay and create the center, I was a little nervous at the beginning. Because I thought I'll lose my activist edge. And she said to me "oh, you take care of the world, I'll take care of Rutgers." And it was that kind of solidarity and support that I had not experienced very often in an institution like Rutgers. And, and that really, I think, made it possible to do the work here.

JC: Oh, great. So, you came, you started this global center, what was the first thing you did?

CB: The first thing we did was we held... well, the first major thing we did is we held what we called an "international planning meeting." And we brought together about 15 other women that I had met from around the world. The woman who had started the Women Living Under Muslim Laws Solidarity Network. The women who had started a project that was in Latin America was already talking about, sort of, how to bring human rights into, from the discourse of the military dictatorships into the feminist movement.

Women, I had met, or had identified through their writings, and we brought them here for a week, and we said "okay, we want to do leadership development for this movement, how do you think we can do it? And we put out our ideas and it was really that planning meeting that affirmed the idea of bringing women here for two weeks every year to meet and network with each other and develop that further. And we also put out our strategy of, you know, shall we make violence against women the center of this? Because we felt it was an issue that women everywhere had, and it was the best away to break through some of the cultural barriers. Because there was no country that didn't have violence against women.

So we talked through all those ideas, we asked some of them to join our advisory group, then we started peddling it to Ford and MacArthur and all the foundations to get the support to start these leadership institutes. And the first leadership institute produced the strategy of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, which we started in order to make the link between violence against women in human rights in the 16 days between the international day against violence and human rights day.

JC: Mm-hmm [affirmative]

CB: And, we started with probably a dozen countries. And now, that's grown into almost 185, 86 countries in the world, where this activity takes place. We didn't know that that would take off. I mean, I think, the thing is that, for me the strategy has always been consultative. If we talk with the women we want to work with and think through our strategies together, then, we can play our role. And our role has been as a catalyst, but it's not separate from all the groups that we work with around the world.

JC: Oh, great. Great, talk some more about the 16 Days of Violence Against Women. 16 Days of, not, that's not what it is?

CB: 16 Days of Activism Against Violence Against Women, or against gender-based violence, depending on who you talk to. We've used both words.
But it was really, well, in 1971, when we started it, we were looking for dual-level strategy. We were looking for strategy where we would take this idea to the UN, kind of at the global level, and we were looking for a grassroots strategy that would build the base. Because, our power in going to the UN as a handful of feminists was not that we were the most powerful organizations in the world. But, that we had a grassroots movement behind us.

So, the 16 days was the grassroots strategy. It was to say, in as many countries as possible, between November 25th, a day that Latin American women had declared, initially, as the International Day Against Violence. So, we started by taking a day from Latin America, not from the North and, building up to Human Rights Day, December 10th. We said as many activities as you can do in those 16 days to show why violence against women should be understood as a human rights issue, and bring awareness to this linkage and what it would mean.

And we had been doing and experimenting with doing sort of hearings, tribunals, speak-outs. So, we suggested that, but, we also said "do whatever makes sense in your country." And so it started very much as an international campaign with some common themes. But, in which people did whatever activity made sense to them.

They focused on whichever issues of violence were most relevant to them, they focused on protest, or they focused on working study groups, whatever they could do. Because the conditions, of course, are different in every country.

But, we publicized, and this is before the internet, we publicized, through a calendar, what everybody was doing. I mean, we literally put together a calendar and faxed it all over the place. And, you know, we thought faxes were amazing because you could actually get something instantly. And then women began to catch on to the idea. And two or three major organizations, Women in Law and Development Africa, a network of women that had grown up out the Nairobi World Conference. They took it on throughout Africa and became one of the strongest campaigns on gender-based violence in Africa.

Another network took it on in Latin America. So the, it really grew by the women who had been in our meetings. And then every time we had a leadership institute, we talked to more women about it.

And, we also were working with people inside of human rights organizations, inside of the United Nations. We were and NGO civil society university-based center. But, we understood that women everywhere were interested in these issues. So, we did a lot of work across sectors.

And so, one of our colleagues in the UN began to initiate the campaign inside the UN. Now, the Secretary General of the United Nations opens this campaign every year.

Wow.

There are governments in Latin America who think they are obliged to report on what they've done on violence against women during this campaign. I mean, it's, it's spread to that point where-

When is the first day of the 16 days again?

The first day is November 25th.
JC: November 25th, okay.

CB: Which was called the International Day Against Violence Against Women by women in Latin America in memory of three sisters, the Maribal sisters, who were killed by the Trujillo dictatorship in the Dominican Republic. So, that, that's the origin of the actual day. For us, it was useful, because it comes 16 days before Human Rights Day, so we could define a specific period that literally, the 16 comes from how many days were between those two days. No-, nothing-

JC: It's amazing it's so well-know, that it's not better-known in the United States.

CB: Well, I think, unfortunately, because we wanted to be international, we chose a date, that, in the United States, always comes at Thanksgiving. And that's been one of the barriers to getting people in the US to do it. Second barrier, and I complain about this all the time, with my colleagues in the US, it's that people in the US don't tend to respond to things initiated outside of the US. So, even though, we're here at Rutgers, they see it as an international activity.

And I think we're getting better about that, but it's taking time for people in the US to see themselves as part of a global activity. But, it's not a good timing on campuses, it's not a good timing in the United States. I understand that.

JC: Yeah, totally. So, tell me about the students.

CB: Well, I think I've had two major ways of relating to the students. When I first started the center, we worked a lot with international students and they tended to be more graduate students, and they were actually helping us understand the program, 'cause they often came with their own experience as women in their countries.

Today, I teach more undergraduate students, and what I find really exciting is, first of all, the students at Rutgers are so diverse, and they come from all over the world, if not their generation, their parents' or their grandparents'. And so, they're very ready to hear about women in other parts of the world. And we get a spark, that I think, might not happen in some places where they're more distance.

And, many of the students I've had have gone on to major in women's studies, have gone on to get internships working with groups internationally I'm really happy that some of my early graduate students went on to be on UN Human Rights Committees.

They've gone on to be really active in the field and, and it's one of the wonderful things about teaching here is that, there's opportunity for really influencing lives, and they are ready. I don't teach students who don't want to be here. So I get the students who are looking for something to do more in the world. And I find that very exciting.

JC: How important do you think, so-, you came in '87, it's just actually the year after, or I think, the faculties had merged a little, probably didn't even grasp what they're, whatever that meant.

CB: I didn't at the time. [laughing] Yeah, right, yeah, right.

JC: Did you sort of feel a sense of Douglass', of the earth moving under your feet as the faculty began to shift into a, more of a Rutgers-focused thing, do you, did you feel any loss of an institutional base as the faculty merged?
CB: I didn’t, I think I didn’t experience that because the faculty that I was relating to were mostly the people who were coming together for women’s studies. And, I didn’t even realize, in the beginning, that they had been in different colleges. And I was affiliated, first, with the women’s studies faculty, and then with the Bloustein School of Planning. So, in both cases I was never affiliated with anything except Rutgers, where they were already together. And where they had pretty strong sense of why they wanted to be together.

So I think, I didn’t feel that, but I certainly felt later, in the 90s, and in the early 2000s, the sense of threat to Douglas as a women’s college. And I think the fact that it didn’t have faculty any longer probably did contribute to that. Even though I hadn’t realized it, because then there began to be this sense that it was all for Rutgers. And I felt the women-specific nature of Douglas was actually very important and I think they’ve found ways to rebuild that. But not having a separate curriculum of Douglas and faculty, certainly affected the identity of that.

JC: All right, okay. So, do you see a challenge that’s facing the college at this particular juncture in 2016 as we’re on the cusp of, fingers crossed the first,-

CB: [laughing]

JC: Woman president being elected?

CB: Well, I think there is a challenge to all of us who have worked in kind of women-specific areas, and I include myself. You know, of course, we work with men all the time, in different organizations, but we have had a, an identity, as women-specific places. And now, I think we are being challenged to see how to take that work into the world and open more to men. I believe men should and can be feminists, and I think more of them are willing to.

And that, that, exciting, but it also challenges some of our women-based identity. And, of course, the transsexual world is challenging women-based identity, so I think we have to be constantly updating how we talk about. I mean, most women in the world still experience a very gender-specific reality, and we must address that.

But, at the same time, I think we need to find more openings I find myself going back to calling it feminist, because when you call it feminist, it’s no longer identity-based, it’s open to anyone to be a feminist. To me, feminism is a politics. And, in some ways, we said “women’s human rights,” we’ve said “women’s leadership,” because the world was kind of battering us down as feminists. But, if we lose the politics of a feminist or, whatever word you want to use. A pro-woman, human rights-based, a womanist, different words that we’ve all used. We still need to have that politics to understand that the mission is not just women’s identity, but about a world-

JC: How do you define, how do you define a feminist politics?

CB: Well, that’s a tough one, now. In the days of feminisms, but, I think, I go back to a couple of things that I find really helpful. First of all is to, I think feminism has to be about understanding the structures of power. And it has to be a critique of any systems of power over. And so, in that sense, it’s, to me, very interconnected with race/class and all the other issues of power. Secondly, I think it’s about putting the experiences of women at the center of your analysis. And understanding, and that, again, requires thinking about many different women.
We used to say the experiences of women as if it were one. We know now it's not one, but yet if you put the experiences of women at the center of the analysis. For example, in human rights, I always say "ask women where did they feel the greatest violation of their human rights?" It's almost always around either reproduction or violence. That's a, that's a re-centering of human rights around women's' experience. Now, men also experience violence and threats to reproduction. But, those issues were left out because women were not at the center of the first definitions of human rights.

So, it's not that you leave men out, but that you see the issue differently, if you start from what are women's experiences and what are diverse women's experiences, which leads us to the intersectionality. To me, and then what are the institutional powers. What are the ways the institutions are built around those differences and how do we respect diversity, but tear down discrimination and institutional domination based on difference?

JC: How successful do you feel Rutgers has been at that over the last-

CB: [laughter]

JC: -since you've been here, the last whatever. The 32 years, 22 years.

CB: Well, if you asked me to, how successful the whole institution would be, I could, I could say the glass is half empty. The institutional changes are so difficult. If you ask me how successful Rutgers has been in allowing and nurturing a series of feminist institutions that I think, overall, do make a difference in the world. I think we are shifting. We are part of shifting the way knowledge is understood. I think that the ways in which our research re-centers some of these questions, the way in which the feminist art project had this fabulous exhibit on the fertile crescent. Bringing women's art from the Middle East to the entire, not just Rutgers, but to Princeton, where Rutgers is teaching Princeton about what women are doing around the world.

I mean, I think Rutgers has been phenomenal in allowing the space and giving us the opportunity, but it hasn't changed its own structures very much. That we all understand changing a hierarchical medieval institution like a university, it's going to take a few more years. But, I think that there's some, there's seeds of that that are sown here.

JC: Why is it important to have a Center for Women in Art here?

CB: Well, I think-

JC: As part of this consortium?

CB: I think the Center for Women in Art is such an important part of expanding the consciousness of what and how we see culture in our midst. And, you know, I'm not, I'm not an artist, but I'm a person who is very interested in how culture shifts and understands itself. And so, I really think what they bring I have them come and speak to my students every year so that we can understand the way the culture artifacts also are a part of shaping our notions of what female and male positions and possibilities are.

And so, I think it's a very important piece of understanding how, how the job needs to be done at so many different levels.

JC: How has, as you look at how it's [Center for Women’s Global Leadership] formed as one of, like, your children grow up and go away, and they turn out in ways that you weren't expecting.
CB: Right.

JC: Are there things that the center has done that you're, that you're glad to see but weren't expecting?

CB: I, interestingly, I think that the center has with Radhika [Balakrishnan, current Faculty Director of the Center for Women's Global Leadership], in particular integrated itself into some more parts of the academy that because I wasn't an academic and she is, I didn't even see. So, she institutionalized a course where they take women to the UN. Now, I was always bringing interns and students to the UN and that was a part of their learning experience, but I hadn't actually imagined building that into the curriculum because I don't think like an academic about the permanent curriculum, or she's certainly done work on thinking about the macroeconomic structures and how women are affected by that. That I wanted to see, but it's led to coalitions with groups not women-specific groups that maybe I never imagined, you know.

So they're beyond the human rights world and into the economists and so forth. So, each person brings their view of where women's leadership, and we said women's global leadership because what we really meant wasn't just leadership on women's issues, but how women view the globe and what kind of, where does that take us? So, starting from human rights, she's evolved more into the economy and the economic questions. Krishanti [Dharmaraj, current Executive Director of the Center for Women's Global Leadership] brings another history of different kinds of cultural institutions and has worked in the west coast. And, so, I see her kind of interpreting that leadership in some other ways.

I think that that's probably good, but, you know, I still have my old core, you know, of, of networkers that, that is my vision of my, my period, but, it must move on.

JC: Yes, yes.

CB: Yeah.

JC: The world turns.

CB: Yeah.

JC: The world turns. So when, if you were asked to sort of assess the impact of the Institute for Women's Leadership, the, the core group of the consortium.

CB: Mm-hmm [affirmative]

JC: On the university and the world, how would you answer that?

CB: Well, I think the consortium's impact in the university is probably clearer to me than the world as a whole, but has been to really bring a concerted power base to the different varieties of institutions that are a part of it, so that we don't just operate as separate or competing groups, as I see in other universities often happens to the different women's units, but it really brings a concerted presence, it gives us a place to strategize together, to understand that the survival of all of us is part of our survival, and I think it's made the university look up and see that this work is bigger than it, imagined.
So I think the impact in the university has been very powerful and very good. The impact on the world tends to happen more through the units. I think that, but the fact that we come together, I mean, now, if I think about impact on the world, there are many different ways. But, for example, by being really connected through the institute, people who have come here in my programs learn about the women's studies program. They learn about, oh, other centers and institutes, and they often end up working with some people in the other centers and bureaus.

Which, if they just came here and we didn't have a consortium I think it would be less likely to happen. The, the first day, we give them consortium brochures. And they find things they're interested in, and, you know, some of the women I worked with have ended up working on women's health with some of the other faculty here. And so I think that it, it builds that potential for spreading out and multiplying the effort.

JC: There's certainly a more, I mean, I'm, and, I've never seen, been in a room with a group of women who work cooperatively.

CB: Right.

JC: Like-

CB: Yep.

JC: That's a really-

CB: Yep.

JC: Spurt of joy is to say-

CB: Exactly.

JC: You know, with my-

CB: Right.

JC: Home institution is not like that.

CB: Yeah. I don't think very many are. I really think that that's one of the things that, that's one of the things that attracted me to come here, the two-year offer attracted me, but once I came here-

JC: Mm-hmm [affirmative]

CB: That kind of collaboration and cooperation, even before the IWL was formed-

JC: Mm-hmm [affirmative]

CB: Was a mode of working here. And I had spoken in women's studies programs all over the country in very different ways and I had never seen that degree of collaboration. So, it did help me want to stay when I got the opportunity.

JC: So, you were here before the IWL was formed?
CB: Yes.

JC: Ah, okay, so how did-

CB: Right-

JC: Tell, tell me that story. [laughing]

CB: Well-

JC: Tell me what it was like, say-

CB: Probably everybody has their own memory, but my memory of the IWL is that Mary Hartman, who is the grandmother of all of us, and probably had her hand in the founding of at least half of the units in the IWL, were in some ways, founded by or under the tutelage of Mary Hartman at some point.

And, she used to have the directors meet from time to time. Just, she just, 'cause she thought it was a good idea. And she and Ruth Mandel, in particular, used to have breakfast meetings. I hate breakfast meetings, but they used to try to get me to come to the Hyatt Hotel at 8:00 A.M. and we would have breakfast meetings. And I remember, the one time, the three of us saying -Mary Hartman, Ruth Mandel, me- “Wouldn't it be great if we built something on this?” And I really think Mary is the originator of the idea, because she saw the power of what was an informal collaboration. And she was looking to move past just running Douglas College and she proposed the idea. Carol Smith was at the IRW [Institute for Research on Women].

There were only about five of us at that point. And we had this collaboration. And she said "let's institutionalize this." We first wanted it to be a school for women's leadership. We actually envisioned something more like the Kennedy School, you know the Rutgers School for Women's Leadership. We had a much bigger vision. We couldn't get the funding for that bigger vision and the university had very strict rules about how you could be called a school, which, you know were much too complicated.

So we had to give up the school idea, but we kept meeting and that's how we birthed in the early, in the early '90s. Not long after I came but it didn't exist before I came. I remember being part of those initiating conversations with the three or four of us, how to build this into an ongoing institution.

JC: Were you there at the, on the day that they, those, the two buildings on Riders Lane. Were you-

CB: Oh!

JC: There on the building day?

CB: Oh, yes. Not only was there in the opening day, that, the story is, the first building on Ryders Lane was to be the first building on Ryders Lane was an old house, like all of these buildings at Rutgers, it was being remodeled. Because the Center for Women's Global Leadership was in the basement of Voorhees Chapel, as was the Institute for Research on Women, the two groups that are in the first building. And the building was being remodeled for us.
And about a month before it was to be opened, there was a fire and the building was so damaged that the insurance company said "better to take the money to build something new." And that's how the money, that's how we were able to build the first new building. Then, Mary Hartman, of course, continued to raise money for another building. But, I think almost all of us started in the basement of the Chapel on Douglass College.

Because those were the rooms that Mary Hartman had this dean to give to women's studies. To the Institute for Research on Women, to the Center for Women's Global Leadership. At least the three of us all started in the basement.

And then, gradually, we were able to move into these buildings. Mary Hartman taught me the power of money and property, because men from the university would come to those buildings after they were built, and you could see they got a whole different idea who we were by the space.

Because space in institutions like this is power. And I, I really I would never have built buildings. You know, I'm a global activist, I would never build property. But, I am so grateful that I was in an institution where somebody saw that as part of the vision for making the things we wanted to have happen.

JC: Yeah, that's a great story, thank you.
CB: Great.
JC: [laughter]
CB: Yeah, there's great stories behind all of this-
JC: Mm-hmm [affirmative]
CB: That probably only Ruth [Mandel] and I are left that really remember all of that, but.
JC: Yeah.
CB: Yeah.
JC: Yeah, well, that's great. Well-
CB: Yeah.
JC: Mary [Hartman] remembers a few.
CB: Well, Mary remembers it, yes, but do you, I, hopefully, you've, yeah, you've interviewed Mary.
JC: I've interviewed her twice.
CB: Of course.
JC: And I feel like-
CB: Yeah.
JC: I could-

CB: No, I meant the ones who are still here on campus, but, yeah-

JC: Yeah.

CB: Yeah, yeah.

JC: Yeah, the ones that are still on campus.

CB: No, but Mary, you definitely, yeah, you have Mary.

And, and, I mean, this is just, just may be what you want. But, I think Mary nurtured everything, and Allison [Bernstein] was the perfect next director.

Because she saw that base and she said "now it's time to fly." Her first strategic plan was called "blue skies."

CB: I mean, it was a strategic plan, but she called it "blue skies." Now, her, we're going to take this base that you've all built, which was much more focused on the separate units, and take it to some new places. So, the new health project, the new media project, the chair for Gloria Steinem. These were all things because Allison came from outside and said "you have something amazing here, but it's time to take it out, take it out.'

JC: Take it into the world.

CB: Take it into the world on another level.

JC: Right.

CB: Yeah.

JC: Wow.

CB: Yeah.

JC: As you observe the other centers, are there, you know, what do you observe to be their impact on the university and, you know?

CB: Well, I think the Center for American Women and Politics is, of course the oldest of the units, and probably the most impactful, in terms of the nation. And, I think CAWP has really been able to show the university how important solid research and information on women in politics is. And, I've seen it go from being at the margins to at the center of the discussion and the quality of the work.

And I think it's, you see now, new Centers on Women in Politics, or... and they all look to CAWP as the model. So, that's probably the clearest and the easiest and the powerful women.

JC: Mm-hmm [affirmative]
CB: Students meet all the powerful women of the US occasionally from the rest of the world through CAWP and what the programs that they do. I think the Center for Women and Work has actually produced a lot of information that I see, for example, in the press, I see in *The New York Times*, work that they've been doing. I see through the media more. It's not, it's not an area where I've been in their programs.

But, I see how there, again, looking at what is the situation of work in the world today and where are women so I think it's had certainly had a public presence and visibility and, the Center on Violence through the School of Social Work-

JC: Mm-hmm [affirmative]

CB: -Is now involved in developing guidelines around sexual assault on campus that are being used by the federal government. So, they're newer, but I can see that their work is also, oh, beginning to be influential in the world and how we look at these issues. And I think that's kind of the model here, that the centers and institutes are the bridge between the academic, theoretical part of the university and the public world.

And in public policy, in bringing together how ideas and strategies and actions affect each other. That's probably another one of the hallmarks of the IWL community. We, we do bridge theory and action and, to me, that's very important, because, that's central to all the work I care about.

JC: What happened to the women's college at Duke?

CB: It got merged, like so many of them. And the only good thing that emerged is some of the women's college activities got taken up by women's studies. And the women's studies community still thrives, but it's not the same as a women's college. It's- the college as a separate environment is gone.

JC: Wow.

CB: Yeah.

JC: And is that a good thing, is net good or net bad?

CB: I would say it wasn’t good when it happened, but it seems to have been what's happening everywhere and probably by now, I don't know if I think it's net good or net bad, honestly. I didn't want it to happen, but I wasn't, I, I'm not a big donor, so I wasn’t having any influence in- [laughing]

JC: Were you, you were an undergraduate there?

CB: I was an undergraduate.

JC: And so what was the name of the women's college there?

CB: It was called the Women's College. And the, at the undergraduate level at Duke, where Duke University Trinity College was the men's college and Duke University Women's College was the women's undergraduate college.

And the women's undergraduate college was much higher academically than the men's undergraduate college at that time because it was, because it was more exceptional.
JC: I'm sure it [Rutgers University] probably still is a predominantly white college. But it's-

CB: Oh, it's changed, it's changed even in the 25 years I've been here.

JC: In what way?

CB: In the, in the visibly racial diversity... Oh, I think the State of New Jersey has changed that its base, probably, has become more and more immigrant population.

And the Rutgers has done with students what we don't think gets done well yet at the faculty level, which is to really diversify the student body to represent the state. And, no, in the classes I had in the early 90s there were certainly women of color, but not nearly as many. And I think that the, the, both the university and the state have changed, and that has become, really, much more dynamic.

And, it's also changed in the sense that the world has changed. I mean, looking back at those pictures and the remnants of the old women's college idea of, you know, preparing you to be a good wife, to be you know, to be a good entertainer. Oh, to be a homemaker. Those were opportunities as you show in the film. But, the world isn't like that anymore. Women now know you have to go to college to be prepared to work and make your own way.

You know, you don't, you aren't assuming that you're going to be the second breadwinner. And I think that has also changed the seriousness of the students. In terms of, at least the ones who really care. They're, they're not just there, they understand that they're there to figure out how to go forward in their life. And in women's studies, they're there because there's a part of them wants to do something in the world as a woman, or change the world in some way, which is a very, for me, a very privileged group to teach. I'm glad I've always taught students who wanted to be there because they want to see a better world.

JC: Right, yeah, I know-

CB: Yeah.

JC: We talked, well, several that we've talked to said that that first course, 'Knowledge and Power,” has actually changed their trajectory.

CB: Right.

JC: Of-

CB: Exactly.

JC: Their course.

CB: Right, I think it's a very powerful course. And I think opportunities that the centers certainly are- ... Center for Women's Global Leadership. I mean, we've had interns and work study students who came to work with us who had no idea about anything global. You know, who said that it's changed their whole view of themselves and the world. Sometimes their careers change, what they study changes. They become women's studies majors, but they also want to go on study abroad, they also want to, you know, get a chance to go to work in some other country before they settle down here. I mean, it's
really broadened their opportunities and I know that's happened with the, with the Center for American Women and Politics, too. That, you know, just opens up the world to them.