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Catherine Gallagher Interview: Paula Fass and Christina Maslach, "Academic Pioneers: Women at Berkeley in the 1970s and 1980s." Interviews with Berkeley's pioneering women professors, Berkeley, CA. Conducted 2019-2023.

Christina Maslach:

Okay. So we just wanted to start off with a few demographics like name, birth, your early education, and coming into Berkeley.

Catherine Gallagher:

Okay. My name is Catherine Gallagher. Actually, it's Mary Catherine Gallagher, if you're looking for my personnel file. Catherine Gallagher is my professional name, and I was born in 1945 in Denver. My parents moved to California in 1947. I was raised on the peninsula, in San Mateo, and my school was Notre Dame, in Belmont. I think a lot of families after the war who were interested in educating their children and had large families moved to California because it had a good public university system. They took the future of the kids into consideration.

Christina Maslach:

Okay.

Catherine Gallagher:

I graduated from high school in 1962 and did my first undergraduate year at the College at Notre Dame because I was only 17 my freshman year, and my parents didn't want me to leave home. Then I came to Berkeley in the fall of 1963. I got married and left after my sophomore year because my husband wanted to go to school for a graduate degree. I was supporting him. I went to work in the trade union movement. We moved to Los Angeles where he was getting his master's degree in city planning. I worked for various trade unions and in political movements and campaigns. I had a daughter and was out of school for almost six years. We then got divorced, and I came back to Berkeley to finish my B.A. and then went on to graduate school.

So that's the story of how I ended up here as a graduate student and a single woman with a five-year-old child, in the early 1970s. She grew up, went to the Berkeley schools. I married someone else in 1974 and had another child in 1977, two years before I finished my PhD. My first job was at the University of Denver. And then I was hired back in the English department at Berkeley after one year.

Christina Maslach:

So tell me a little bit about, what was going on at Denver that you decided to take a job there?

Catherine Gallagher:

Well, it was the place where I was offered a job. The Denver English Department was the only one I applied to where it wasn't known that I was married to a faculty member in the Berkeley History Department.

Christina Maslach:

Okay.

Catherine Gallagher:

So they were willing to take a chance on me. My husband was on sabbatical, so we went as a family for the first year, and after that I intended to commute. Denver was a very good department, and they were very kind to me, and they mentored me. And it was nice to start off teaching a year at a place that was relatively small. I had of course taught English 1A here as a graduate student for several years already, but at Denver I taught my first lecture courses.

Christina Maslach:

Right.

Catherine Gallagher:

Much to my surprise a job opened up in my field at Berkeley the very next year. I applied for it without much hope, thinking that it was too early for them to hire me back. But they did. And, with two kids, and a husband, and a house already in place here, I felt very lucky to be asked.

Christina Maslach:

Yes.

Catherine Gallagher:

So, that's how I ended up on the faculty here. It was quite a big surprise, in fact. We really didn't think that it was possible I could be hired back here so quickly. We had higher hopes for Davis or some other place in the neighborhood. I had applied for jobs at Yale and Princeton that same year as part of a long-range contingency plan that, if nothing came through in the Bay Area, then we would both relocate to the East Coast, where the greater density of colleges would make it easier to work at different institutions without a lengthy commute. Yale also offered me an assistant professorship that year. And then the Berkeley job came through, which was marvelous.

Christina Maslach:

Didn't have to go to plan B.

Catherine Gallagher:

We didn't have to go to plan B, thank God. And, I didn't have to commute back and forth to Denver, which would have been a possible but unpleasant commute. With one kid in preschool and one in high school, it would have been very hard. So yes. We were super happy to get back to Berkeley with the family intact.

Christina Maslach:

So, you say there was an opening in your area.

Catherine Gallagher:

There was an opening in my field, so there was a national search.

Christina Maslach:

Okay. But, I mean, how did you learn about it? Through the grapevine?

Catherine Gallagher:

Oh no, no. In the field of modern languages, everything was very well organized and advertised in the seventies. There was a job list that came out twice a year from the Modern Language Association. All departments listed all of their jobs in that. Of course, the whole thing's online now, so it's updated all the time. In the old days, everybody had to get all of their information in by September, in order for the job list to come out. It came out in October. And then applications were sent in October; people were interviewed always at the MLA convention in late December.

Christina Maslach:

Oh, at the MLA. Right, right.

Catherine Gallagher:

Then there were campus visits. Then there were offers usually made, you know, in January.

Christina Maslach:

Right.

Catherine Gallagher:

So that's the way it went. There was a later job list which came out sometime in the early spring. And if you hadn't gotten a job, then you would be looking at that. So that's the way it always worked. You never had the feeling that you didn't know what jobs were open; that simply wasn't a worry.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah.

Catherine Gallagher:

And, there was also a department placement officer, who happened to be Frances Ferguson [now at the University of Chicago] at the time I was on the market. She was then an Associate Professor and was extremely helpful to me. She told me to apply for all the open jobs at research universities, not just the six best. And she insisted I should take any job at a research institution regardless of where it was because one had to start somewhere. I trusted her advice more than I probably would have trusted a male professor in the same position. She didn't have second thoughts about whether or not I should put my career first, as possibly a man might've had about a woman with children married to a Berkeley faculty member.

Christina Maslach:

That was that -- it was just about you, and your career.

Catherine Gallagher:

That's right. Yeah, so I think having Frances there, who was also married to a faculty member and also had children, made a real difference. She conveyed the message that if you really want this, if you're really serious about your career, you may have to make some temporary sacrifices. At that time, the university was no longer refusing to hire couples, but they hadn't yet moved to a policy where they thought that maybe hiring couples was a good move in terms of the stability of the faculty population. There was no longer a nepotism rule, but there was no encouragement to

hire spouses at all. And no one on the English Department hiring committee talked to anyone in the History Department.

Christina Maslach:
Yeah.

Catherine Gallagher:
Although, apparently somebody in the History Department - a friend of Marty's - thought maybe someone should talk to somebody in the English Department to give them a little encouragement. He talked to the wrong person on the English faculty, who exploded about the idea that a member of the History Department should be interfering in the English Department's search. I was told that story years later when I asked why one of my senior colleagues had a habit of sarcastically calling me Mrs. Jay. [My husband's name is Martin Jay.]

Christina Maslach:
Oh really?

Catherine Gallagher:
So although the History Department was not involved—they didn't make it a retention issue—there were some people who thought that encouragement might be given, And at that time, you just didn't take such initiatives

Christina Maslach:
Right.

Catherine Gallagher:
Things change, but they change slowly.

Christina Maslach:
No, it takes some doing. Oh my gosh. So, the job interview, the whole process went okay? Because it was coming back soon after you've been a student.

Catherine Gallagher:
That's right. There were definitely people on the faculty who had read my dissertation and were very enthusiastic about my coming back. My thesis director, not so much. And he was at the interview and asked rather hostile questions. Some people in the room thought that was both strange and a bad sign. You could feel the awkwardness and constraint in the room. They didn't want to start arguing among themselves about how I'd already addressed my thesis director's questions in the dissertation, and I was trying not to point out that if he'd read it carefully, he'd know the answers. I had actually received very little feedback on the dissertation from my director, and that was becoming apparent in the interview. It was more embarrassing than really damaging, but it threw me off my stride. He left the department soon after that. But I think I was caught in the crossfire between rival faculty groups, and the argument wasn't really about me.

Christina Maslach:
There might've been different people vying for the position and you weren't in?

Catherine Gallagher:

Yeah, yeah, something like that. But there was no second runner up that they were willing to offer the job to. There was a rule in the English Dept. at the time that if a recent PhD was a job candidate, she had to be what they called "head-and-shoulders" above the next person on the list. They would hire a close second rather than their own PhD in order to keep the department from becoming inbred.

Christina Maslach:

Okay. So your first quarter or semester, I'm trying to remember where we were at that time.

Catherine Gallagher:

We were quarters. And so my first quarter was a lot like graduate school teaching. First of all, I was teaching the same course that I had taught in graduate school.

Christina Maslach:

Really?

Catherine Gallagher:

Yes, they started everybody out teaching 1A, 1B. So, I was back in 1A, 1B. But I also had to teach the requisite number of lecture courses later in the year, and I had taught several of those at Denver. The class sizes were smaller there, but I did have to write the lectures, and so a lot of them were done.

Christina Maslach:

So you had quite a bit under your belt, so to speak...Being in a professorial role. Before you even started here.

Catherine Gallagher:

That's right. Yeah.

Christina Maslach:

That's nice.

Catherine Gallagher:

So I felt relatively comfortable in the role, one of the things that became evident right away was that the students were kind of on a par. Denver had a good fellowship program for honors students, and those were the students I had mainly taught there. They were at a fairly high level. Denver is a relatively expensive private school, which draws from private high schools. Many of the students were well prepared and worked hard, although some also seemed to feel entitled to just goof off. In contrast, here in the late 70s and early 80s, especially in the English Department, we had many transfer students coming from community colleges, where they weren't so well prepared, but they were certainly willing to work. The English Department takes in more transfer students at the junior year than any other department here. What many of those students lacked in academic background, though, they more than made up for in life experience and seriousness of purpose. Engaging students who've lived a bit is generally easier than talking to adolescents

when the subject is serious literature. So, I was happy and surprised to have many students who were more mature than those I'd taught before. I was also happy to settle back into friendships with people I'd been close to in graduate school, who were teaching around the Bay Area, as well as friendships that I'd made on the faculty in the English and History Departments. The point I'm making is that I was lucky because my first years here did not feel strange. They felt like a lot of very hard work, but in a familiar life.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah. That's really interesting. It reminds me that when I interviewed for my first job, my first job, one of them was at Harvard where I had been an undergrad. And it was the weirdest, strangest interview because I didn't feel I was being taken seriously. They were still seeing me as this undergrad student.

Catherine Gallagher:

Well, I think that's true. There was a certain amount of wondering if I was really a grown-up serious scholar, too. But I was an older student, so my case was different. I'd been out of school for six years and was older than some of the people in the faculty. I was older than Frances Ferguson and Carolyn Porter, to name two women on the faculty. So it's just a different thing altogether. And there had been social interaction at that level with the faculty because my husband was on the History faculty.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah.

Catherine Gallagher:

So, I think the question was, is this faculty wife up to the job? That was more the implied issue. Also, is this person an appendage of the History Department? Because my work was heavily historical at a time when that was not so popular. But then, when we started the journal *Representations*, and the movement called New Historicism became fashionable and important in literary studies in the mid-eighties, then the history connection might have seemed more acceptable or even advantageous. So, it became a good time to be thought of as an interdisciplinary scholar.

Christina Maslach:

Okay, because that's not always come along at the same time in different disciplines.

Catherine Gallagher:

That's right.

Christina Maslach:

How did *Representations* get started?

Catherine Gallagher:

Well, there were a couple of different discussion groups centered on literary, social, and cultural theory that had been going on while I was in graduate school, which had mainly young faculty, but also a few graduate students. The one I mainly attended was started by History Department

people, like Lynn Hunt and Tom Laqueur. Stephen Greenblatt from English was also in that group, and he belonged to another one—with Svetlana Alpers, Michael Rogin, Paul Alpers, Randy Starn, and several younger people from English—which read more philosophically oriented theory. Steve Greenblatt received an offer from another university and used his retention case to get funding for an interdisciplinary journal, and that's how *Representations* started. Greenblatt and Svetlana Alpers were the leaders and they invited the rest of us to become members of a group. At first we just read each other's work-in-progress—mainly drafts of book chapters—and then we became an editorial board for a new UC Press journal. We spent a great deal of time at it, meeting twice a month and reading tons of submissions in between.

Christina Maslach:

Wow, okay.

Catherine Gallagher:

And that was just after I arrived, say '81, '82, '83. The Reps Board was another kind of testing ground, and a very tough one. Of the twelve members of the Board, five of us were English Department assistant professors: me, David Miller, Walter Ben Michaels, Joel Fineman, and Steven Knapp. And it would be difficult to imagine a more competitive group of people, with more of an appetite for constant debate.

Christina Maslach:

Oh wow. Okay. That group.

Catherine Gallagher:

No assistant professors from History; all three History people (Laqueur, Lynn Hunt, and Randy Starn) were all tenured, as were Frances Ferguson and Paul Alpers from English. But the five assistant professors were probably the most aggressively competitive lot that the English Department had seen in a long time.

Christina Maslach:

Wow.

Catherine Gallagher:

But it was also a fascinating, energizing time. There was plenty of theoretical disagreement, we weren't shy about expressing our ideas, and all of us had a tendency to debate things, you know, to the end. It did create a kind of cliquishness, though, that I wasn't comfortable with, and I think it set me apart from some people in the department I would have liked to be friendlier with—among them several women—but at least I wasn't ever seen as a faculty wife in that group.

Christina Maslach:

Right, right.

Catherine Gallagher:

So I wasn't in that particular shadow. So that was a very important part, I think, of my life at Berkeley. But another important part was the growth of women's studies especially among the faculty in many different departments. It was an extraordinary time that way as well. The subject

wasn't as new as it had been in the '70s, but it was becoming a more important part of the regular curriculum, and it was becoming more subtle and intellectually substantial. It was also beginning to morph into gender studies in ways that were controversial. The Beatrice Bain Center was formed, and men on the faculty were also taking a more open interest in gender issues.

Christina Maslach:

So, were you getting involved in different ways?

Catherine Gallagher:

Just after I got tenure, I was on the search committee for that extraordinary group of senior women scholars that Berkeley hired in the new department of Women's Studies, with shared appointments in Anthropology, Education, History, Rhetoric, and Film Studies. Mary Ryan came in that group, as did Evelyn Fox Keller, and Carol Stack.

Christina Maslach:

Oh God, I remember that.

Catherine Gallagher:

The campus hired, I think, five or six people that year who just put Berkeley on the map as the place to do gender and women's studies in many different fields: anthropology, history, science studies. And it was very exciting to get to know all those women. And it was another way to think about interdisciplinary work.

Christina Maslach:

I was going to say, yeah.

Catherine Gallagher:

Yes, gender studies gave one that ability to cross over fields in a very natural way. You weren't forcing it. You were just following the topic where it naturally seemed to go?

Christina Maslach:

Exciting times.

Catherine Gallagher:

So I wasn't worried about fitting in. I felt that I was helping to create places that we fit, instead of trying to squeeze myself into any particular disciplinary mold.

Christina Maslach:

So did that mean in terms of your own scholarly work that you felt good about pursuing the things that were interesting to you, as opposed to this is not so much or we don't really recognize that kind of thing?

Catherine Gallagher:

Yes, definitely. It was during those years that I started working on the relationship between the coming to consciousness of the idea of fictionality and the importance of women writers in creating that consciousness. And so my second book was on that topic.

Christina Maslach:
Yeah.

Catherine Gallagher:

The first book I had written had been extremely even-handed in terms of the genders of the authors I treated: I gave the same amount of space to Victorian women who wrote about the industrial revolution as to the men who treated the topic. I didn't realize that at the time, and it was actually in the report on my work during my tenure case, written by Carol Christ, that the balance was mentioned. And I was surprised to hear that my book treated exactly the same number of male and female writers. But then beginning a book that was only about women writers felt a bit strange. In the second book, I was trying to trace not even necessarily a tradition, but something more like a genealogy of professional women writers from the late seventeenth through the end of the eighteenth century. I wanted to know how women learned they could live by their writing; how it started and how the category of female authorship was entwined with the history of the form of the novel. The rise of the novel, and the rise of women writers was concurrent. They didn't just enter a profession; they were making one for themselves; they were making the idea of the woman writer. And they made it very differently at different times. I wanted to show how those changes—changes in the idea of the very nature of women—went along with various formal changes in narrative writing.

Christina Maslach:
Right.

Catherine Gallagher:

And there was pushback at that point. At least, there was some pushback, not so much from people in the department, but from people outside of the department. It became harder to get outside fellowship grants for a book that was focused entirely on early women writers. I finally did get a Guggenheim for that book and that was a big break, but it was close to the end.

Christina Maslach:
Yeah.

Catherine Gallagher:

When it was finished, the book did well. But my favorite part of it—an argument about the rise of "fiction" into an explicit literary category—that argument tended to get lost in the reviews. And it wasn't until I later took that argument out of that book and published it separately—just as an argument about the historical rise of fictionality—that people noticed it. The connection to the women writers got lost.

Christina Maslach:
Okay.

Catherine Gallagher:

Separately, the fictionality argument became important and lots of theorists started responding to it. But nobody did while it was still embedded in the context of women writers.

Christina Maslach:

Interesting. So you kind of took it out, repurposed...

Catherine Gallagher:

Yep. I didn't change it at all. I just pulled it out of the book to make it more visible, and without the "feminine" connection it seemed more worthy of a serious theoretical response.

Christina Maslach:

That's interesting. Yeah.

Catherine Gallagher:

And I wonder how many other women have that problem: anything theoretically that they might do in the context of some work that's explicitly on women gets lost because it was thought just to apply to women.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah. That's a good question you should ask, and I haven't really. That's intriguing. Is there anything else in terms of your scholarly work that you wanted to talk about or in your teaching, or the work that you were sponsoring among your grad students or things like that?

Catherine Gallagher:

I had a lot of really great graduate students, I have to say. And they were always a big help in creating the context for my own research. Victorian literature especially is a field that women flock to because there are so many great Victorian women novelists. Obviously, it's not one of those fields where you have to elbow your way in.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah.

Catherine Gallagher:

So my second book, though, was actually on generations before, going back to the 17th century. And those writers didn't get the same kind of respect and attention. and I didn't have that many students actually in the 18th century. But even when I was working in those earlier centuries, graduate students came to work with me as a Victorianist. I think the need to work across periods made me more of a theorist of the novel, and the graduate students were all interested in that topic, no matter what their historical field.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah. Oh, wonderful.

Catherine Gallagher:

Of course, I was interested in undergraduate education, too. And I did expand the teaching of women writers' courses in the department as well as courses on "literature and gender identity," as it was first called. Later the course was retitled "literature and gender difference." The course was retitled when we were becoming critical of the idea of fixed gender identities that were

determined by the physical body. We wanted to stay away from gender essentialism. In the eighties, the other change that teaching brought was that I did a lot of work in British and American empire literature. So that you could talk more about different concatenations of literature and gender in different cultural contexts. And that was very exciting.

Christina Maslach:
Yeah.

Catherine Gallagher:
So again, all of those things came from the teaching. I think that the relationship between having really superb graduate students and one's own intellectual vitality can't be overstated. The graduate students I worked with were also very supportive of one another. I usually met with them in a regular dissertation-reading group that met every month over dinner to discuss one of their chapters. So they all read each other's dissertations and gave their feedback along with mine. We carried on that routine all year, summers included.

Christina Maslach:
Yeah.

Catherine Gallagher:
And it led to a lot of lifelong friendships and well-thought-out work. It also cut down on the mystery of the writing process and worries about some students getting more attention than others. For professional mentoring as well as teaching, it was a really important thing.

Christina Maslach:
Yeah. Yeah. That's a theme I'm hearing a lot about. And for different people, it comes in different forms or what they've experienced or what they've practiced, and where that came from. That's a critical, critical one.

Catherine Gallagher:
Yeah, I think so too.

Christina Maslach:
Because I think there's also that wider circle of mutual support and insight. You're both giving and getting in a way that really sustains and nourishes everybody.

Catherine Gallagher:
I agree. It cuts down on the competitiveness, or at least negative competitiveness. Of course, they still might feel envious about someone who works more easily or faster, but that might also increase their aspirations. That's a good thing to have, it seems to me. But I've always felt that seeing dissertation students and giving feedback one-on-one isn't enough because it doesn't let them see how wide an audience they need to communicate with. And our graduate students don't have the advantage of collaborative work in labs. In the humanities, the more people you learn to discuss your work with, the better, and the more tolerant they learn to be.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah. I agree. I worry a little bit that in some other places, and not just academia, but other places in the work world, we're seeing more of this. A throw them under the bus mentality.

Catherine Gallagher:

Yes.

Christina Maslach:

Very true. So in terms of promotions, tenure, full, et cetera, I mean, how did things go?

Catherine Gallagher:

Everything was fairly smooth. Maybe because I was older and my husband was an extremely productive scholar, I was used to a rigorous work schedule. My husband's dissertation had become quite an important book, and so when I started my dissertation, I assumed I was working on something that would be published as a book without much revision.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah, yeah.

Catherine Gallagher:

Nobody was telling me that it was just preliminary to book writing; it had to be the real thing from the beginning. I always felt I was always holding myself to a book-writing standard. And in my first two years of teaching, I added two more chapters. I basically just put those two chapters on the end of the dissertation and sent it to Chicago University Press, which accepted it.

Christina Maslach:

Wow, okay.

Catherine Gallagher:

And they accepted it right away. So, the book was complete and they were had gone through the review process by the time I came up for my mid-career review.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah. Okay.

Catherine Gallagher:

And so I got tenure at my mid-career.

Christina Maslach:

Oh great!

Catherine Gallagher:

The Department told me the tenured faculty hadn't seen any reason to wait since there were several articles and the book was finished. That was a surprise because no one told me I might get tenure at that point. When I turned in my materials for the mid-career review, that was not said.

Christina Maslach:
I've not heard that.

Catherine Gallagher:
So that was '83 -'84. That was a huge surprise. And I felt very welcomed.

Christina Maslach:
Yeah. And then full professor -- was that another book?

Catherine Gallagher:
That was the second book, which was not completely finished at the time. I did, however, have a lot of new essays published. I had written a lot on the way to the second book. Those were independent essays, not chapters. So, I had four completed chapters in that book.

Christina Maslach:
Okay.

Catherine Gallagher:
And was working on the fifth; the sixth was yet to come. I was in good shape in terms of publication; it had been six years since tenure; and I had a job offer from Yale.

Christina Maslach:
That always helps too.

Catherine Gallagher:
Yeah. And we were thinking of perhaps making a move, although we didn't ultimately do it. We were thinking that if we were ever going to move to the east coast, that would have been the time to do it.

Christina Maslach:
Some people who are in dual academic couples have talked about how it was harder for the woman to get job offers because you'd get discouraged by your department chair or somebody saying, "Oh, come on, you know John is not going to move." So the woman's job offer was not taken as seriously.

Catherine Gallagher:
That's interesting. That certainly happened later, to me. My husband, Martin Jay, is one of the country's leading intellectual historians, and so there was always a sense that...

Christina Maslach:
He could go wherever he wanted...

Catherine Gallagher:
That he could pretty much go where he wanted to go, he could make a choice. So, the only times we took any of these things seriously was when people were asking me to consider taking other jobs. They usually made it clear that they'd love to have Marty too. The last time another

university asked if I might be interested in moving, though, Marty just put his foot down and said, no, he didn't want to go through that process again. It was after my colleague ,Steve Greenblatt, went to Harvard. And then Harvard wanted to know if I'd be considered for their senior Victorianist position a couple of years later. And I thought Marty would be interested because he did his doctoral degree at Harvard. But he didn't think that Harvard's History Department at that time was at all equal to Berkeley's.

Christina Maslach:
Yeah.

Catherine Gallagher:

I realized then that if he didn't want to go there was no reason to go through the motions of looking into a job for myself, which I ultimately wouldn't have taken. It would have diverted the Harvard department from filling the position. But the person who was disappointed that I didn't pursue the Harvard possibility was actually the Dean. A few days after talking to Harvard, we were having lunch at the faculty club. Ralph Hexter was the Dean at the time and I said, "Oh, I got a job offer from Harvard." And Ralph got out his pen, ready to make a list, and asked, "Okay, what do we want?" He was crestfallen when I told him I'd already I turned it down. He said, you turned it down without getting anything at all? In those days, retention cases were means of getting money for programs and all sorts of new initiatives as well as salary raises, so he was disappointed that I hadn't played the game out. I actually felt like I'd let the team down.

Christina Maslach:

Oh my God, that's interesting.

Okay. So, I guess we also wanted to know if affirmative action played any role in any of the things for you or other women in your department?

Catherine Gallagher:

It's an interesting question and depends on what you mean by affirmative action. Hiring more women was certainly a goal in the English department in the seventies and eighties. Over half of our own PhD students were women, and over half of the applicants for our jobs were women, so if we hadn't been hiring women, we would have needed to explain why. A majority of people coming out of the top graduate schools were women in the 1980s. Affirmative action was really only the extension of the meritocracy: departments needed to track the genders and races of their applicants, to explain their deselections, and to report those statistics. All the bureaucratic procedures we now take for granted to ensure unbiased hiring were then called "affirmative action". Now, though, people think it means giving preference to women and racial minority candidates even when they aren't as qualified as white men. When I was hired, there were no men on the short list that I know of, so if preferential treatment is what "affirmative action" means, then it didn't come into play. However, affirmative action was a much larger transformation than that. It was responsible for the fact that there was a national academic job market in which women candidates had to be judged by the same criteria as men. So did anyone say, "Let's hire her because she's a woman?" No. But both when I was hired and when I was promoted to full professor, I had offers from Ivy League universities, which made me more attractive to Berkeley. And that would not have been the case before the late 70s. Affirmative

action had made it impossible for people at Yale to say, "She's a married woman; let's not offer her the job," which is what they would have said ten years earlier.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah. So it was more a question of whether we're actually bringing women into the pool to look at for hiring. So you weren't experiencing some of the kinds of things that other departments that had never hired or had rarely hired?

Catherine Gallagher:

No. I didn't experience those things personally, but I'm sure the women who were hired in the 1970s by English might have. The number of women in the job pool in the modern languages started growing fast in the late 1960s. Women had always made up at least 50% of the students; they were ready to go into the field, so it was easy for them to take advantage of the new rules about hiring. Moreover, by centralizing the national job market, the Modern Language Association really helped the effort. There wasn't an old-boys network in hiring. All departments were required to post their job descriptions by certain deadlines and make sure the jobs were advertised nationally.

Christina Maslach:

Right, okay.

Catherine Gallagher:

You know, the MLA saw itself as a clearinghouse for the job market and wanted to make sure it was.

Christina Maslach:

It really much more part of the experience and the culture and everything then.

Catherine Gallagher:

That's right. So, it wasn't a great worry.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah.

Catherine Gallagher:

I must say, though, some of the women I was on the job market with did feel sexually harassed. I remember a friend of mine coming up to me in tears at an MLA convention where we were both doing interviews and telling me she'd just been propositioned by a member of a search committee interviewing her. That kind of thing didn't happen to me, and I think that's because I was married. Again, being married actually has some benefits.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah.

Catherine Gallagher:

It does mean that there's a certain de-sexualization of you. It's easier for you to be just friends

with the men in the department. It's easier for you because you know, there's just isn't that same buzz going on all the time. It's easier for you to have interviews. So, where the entire hiring committee of the other department is male. So you're the only female in the room and it's a bedroom. That was, I think, very scary for some women in the seventies and even in the eighties. And I know people—graduate students—who were so upset by it that in fact they didn't stay in the profession.

Christina Maslach:

Right. But that was not your experience?

Catherine Gallagher:

It's not my direct experience, I certainly witnessed its effect on others.

Christina Maslach:

Interesting. Okay. Any other leadership roles or anything that you played either within your department or...?

Catherine Gallagher:

In those years?

Christina Maslach:

Well, or later. I mean, if there's anything you wanted to mention as well. I mean, some people have come in and said later on, here's something that happened that I was involved that I'm very proud of, which is not when I first was coming, but later on. It's up to you.

Catherine Gallagher:

I was certainly glad to have my Budget Committee experience. Very glad to have that. And, I was at a time when there were other women on the Budget Committee, but you always had the feeling that there hadn't been many in the past.

Christina Maslach:

They weren't actually...

Catherine Gallagher:

Yeah.

Christina Maslach:

I mean, prior to that, I was chair of SWEM [Committee on the Status of Women and Ethnic Minorities] at one point when Sally Fairfax was the Status of Women Faculty Assistant Doris Calloway was the Provost for the Professional Schools. And, they were interested in the extent to which women were being tapped for various Senate committees and therefore on a path where they might have a leadership role, and we gathered all these statistics. And I remember the Budget Committee had not had many...

Catherine Gallagher:

Not many.

Christina Maslach:

But the interesting thing actually, that came out that was unexpected, was that there was a practice of people picking who was their successor.

Catherine Gallagher:

Oh really?

Christina Maslach:

It wasn't going to Committee on Committees and it was that there were certain departments that always had a seat, like there was always a law school seat for example, and it was kind of like where did that come from?

Catherine Gallagher:

That's interesting. By the time I was there in the nineties, it went through the Committee on Committees. But in the years that I served, there were, I think at most, three women on the nine-person committee with me. And there were lots of issues that came up where you really needed women's point of view. You could also see why it would be hard, I think, for some women with young families to do the work. In those days you couldn't do it from home. You had to be in the room itself to access the files and write the numerous memos, which meant a lot. One ended up working on campus at odd hours. So you can see why some women who had younger kids would be reluctant to do it.

Christina Maslach:

Or maybe say "call me back later."

Catherine Gallagher:

I chaired the Department, and in my last years in that job, I had something to do with the inception of the Berkeley Connect program, which is now campus wide. I had had the experience of coming back as a student later in life and having no living connection with the place, no dormitory experience or natural student community. So I always identified with the students who felt isolated or disconnected. And we were thinking about how to create community in the department for students who are coming in from junior colleges, transfers. So, Berkeley Connect grew out of those concerns. Kevis Goodman in the English Department was the brains behind it; she was our alumni outreach person, and she raised the money from the producer, Peter Chernin, who'd been an English major here. I was Chair at the time.

Christina Maslach:

That's great.

Catherine Gallagher:

The other thing that I did for English was to push it to stay connected with our departmental alumni, of whom there are many thousands. So we actually designed it because Chernin was worried about this kind of low-level loneliness that students have when they come in. And so we thought we'd try something just to create more undergraduate community inside departments. I had previously tried out a few interdisciplinary teaching programs, which didn't really take off,

so I thought it would be better to try something at the departmental level that other departments might want to imitate. Then in the years just before my retirement, Tom Laqueur (a friend in the History Department) and I also finally had success with an interdisciplinary undergraduate program. We started the Human Rights Minor in UGIS, which attracted students from all over campus. So, those are two things I had a hand in that actually have been a real boon to undergraduate education.

Christina Maslach:

Yes, that's so important. Well particularly when you think of a lot of the transfer students, or people who can't afford to stay in the dorms, when they come on campus, where can they put their stuff? Where can they hang out?

Catherine Gallagher:

Exactly. So making it more homelike and providing occasions for all of these students to meet each other and the faculty outside the classroom seemed like a good idea.

Christina Maslach:

Right. Oh, that's good.

What about the intersection of work life and personal family life? I remember in the panel, people talked about the husband-wife problem of going to department functions. But yours is a different kind of situation because in a sense you're a two department family.

Catherine Gallagher:

That's right. Exactly.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah. So did, did you have any of those kinds of issues about, well, is this comfortable.

Catherine Gallagher:

I think we both made it comfortable. Marty was well liked in the English Department long before I joined the department. There were, of course, at first lots of jokes about Marty being the faculty spouse in the English department.

Christina Maslach:

The trailing spouse.

Catherine Gallagher:

The trailing spouse, yeah that kind of thing. One of my colleagues joked to Marty at a dinner party, "Now that you're the faculty spouse, you're supposed to say two clever things and then shut up." It gave me some insights into how I'd probably been seen for years in the History Department. When you violate the norm, you learn what it was supposed to be.

Christina Maslach:

I know. It's when you turn it around and it sounds not the same.

Catherine Gallagher:

Yes indeed. But I was already friendly with a lot of women in these two departments. You know, some of them who were the spouses of historians, some of them who, you know, were not. And I was already friendly with spouses in English.

Christina Maslach:

So it's, you weren't facing the same kind of things like Janet was mentioning or something like that.

Catherine Gallagher:

No, her situation is unusual because philosophy is the one place in the humanities that is still very male-dominated.

Christina Maslach:

Even today?

Catherine Gallagher:

Even today: that's a really hard nut to crack.

Christina Maslach:

Oh, interesting. After the panel, she and Judith got together for lunch or something, I think because they had discovered that they each had nonacademic spouses. Which is a different kind of thing.

Catherine Gallagher:

That's a different kind of thing. I do have one funny story, if you want to hear it, about being in an academic couple. The state-wide Academic Senate tried to make new policy outlawing dating (or "romantic relations") between faculty members where one party to the relation might in the future be in a position to review or judge the academic work of the other. The proponents of the policy were, they said, trying to eliminate sexual harassment, but if forbidding consensual relations between adults on the grounds that one at some future time might have a conflict of interest in assessing the work of the other seemed ridiculous to many of us. Why shouldn't such matters be handled like any other conflict-of-interest issues? Why make a special rule against "romantic relations"? I was chairing the English Department at the time, I thought it was a terrible idea, and I signed a petition saying so. The next day I got a call in my office from the *New York Times* wanting to know what my objections were to the policy, and while explaining all the things I had against it (like the massive violation of privacy), I said academics in adjacent fields can hardly ever be certain that the people they meet will never be in a position to judge their work, or vice versa. Using that as the criterion would mean you'd never be able to date anybody you'd be likely to meet on the job. I jokingly said we're all so nerdy that we seldom meet anybody anywhere else, so we'd have trouble reproducing. When asked for an example, I said my own marriage would never have taken place if there'd been such a rule. My husband had served on ad hoc promotion committees for people in the English Department. Once we were married, of course, the whole issue was moot; but suppose we hadn't married? People are expected to recuse themselves and not serve on committees if they think their opinion might be personally motivated. Well the next morning, on the front page of the *New York Times*, there's a

story about the proposed policy that begins with my opinion that our romance would have been outlawed by it! Very embarrassing!

Christina Maslach:

Oh my gosh. Above or below the fold though?

Catherine Gallagher:

Below the fold. You know, the sort of feature that promises to amuse you with the odd ways of Californians. So later that morning, Marty and I were walking up from the parking lot to Dwinelle Hall, and Chancellor Berdahl, (a friend) was coming down in the opposite direction from California Hall, and he just looked at us and said, "Well, we're going to have to annul that marriage of yours." And we all laughed.

Christina Maslach: Touché. Oh my God.

Catherine Gallagher:

I think it is important to emphasize that the university needs to keep its foot on the pedal in hiring and promoting of women. It's still really necessary to remain active in that effort. Although procedures to prevent overt bias are in place, they aren't always enough to keep the momentum going. I remember from my time on the Budget Committee (I did one stint in the late nineties and another short one in the early 2000s) that there wasn't a continuous incline. There were some patches when things had not gone well at all. It was necessary to renew the effort. People had become complacent, thinking, "Oh, we don't have to worry about that anymore. We have enough women in the department now." The university has to continue to remind and encourage departments.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah.

Catherine Gallagher:

Sometimes I hear it said that from now on progress should happen naturally because there has been liftoff and it will be self-sustaining. I really don't think that's the case. Women's share in academic life has declined in the past for all sorts of social and economic reasons and it might do so again in the future if the university's vigilance is relaxed. I think the university has to stay watchful constantly.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah. One of the things, I'll just ask you because it's something I did for a while, the Faculty Assistant on the Status of Women...

Catherine Gallagher:

Women and minorities, I think, or was it two?

Christina Maslach:

It was two positions, both halftime. And both of us would deal with potential issues of discrimination, and brief the EVCP about them, and one of the things that just became clear to

me was that the process of being able to look at comparable cases was critical for the evaluation of any one individual's situation. It was also the spin, if you will, or the context that was set up by how the chair wrote about that person, about how the Dean wrote about that person, that if you didn't have comparable cases, you didn't know how to see that something was being done unfairly. So that was the great advantage of those positions, which we then lost because of Prop. 209, so it became harder for the university to keep track of these things, and stay vigilant and keep their foot on the pedal, as you said, regarding women's progress in academia.

Catherine Gallagher:

I worry a lot, for example, in the Humanities about women falling behind by not being promoted to full professor in a timely manner. In the Humanities, most departments have a two-book criterion, and it keeps people from the promotion. The university doesn't actually impose that criterion; it's generally maintained by the departments themselves. The departments could change it if they really wanted to. And I think it really does hit women very hard. I consider myself lucky to have had my children before I started my professorial tenure.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah. Right, right.

Catherine Gallagher:

A lot of women wait until after they get tenure, and that's a much busier time for most people.

Christina Maslach:

Yeah.

Catherine Gallagher:

So if you're having children and trying to write a second book, you're at a real disadvantage. And even if new associate professors don't have children, they have increased departmental and university service, which gets in the way. Under those circumstances, it's much easier to produce articles, frankly. You don't have long periods of time for cogitating on a continuous line of thought; you can only work in small bursts; so it's much better to produce seven or eight articles than book chapters.

Christina Maslach:

But that's interesting you raised that point. I mean, because where does that criterion come from?

Catherine Gallagher:

It isn't imposed from above. It's an issue that the Modern Language Association has wrestled with.

Christina Maslach:

Really?

Catherine Gallagher:

Yes. I remember one year in the early 2000s, at the MLA's meeting for department chairs, when Steve Greenblatt was the chair of the Harvard department and also the President of the

Association, he suggested that the assumption of a second book to proceed to full professor be rethought. And one of the other chairs got up and said, "Ok, you go first. If Harvard does it, the rest of us will do it." In other words, departments are afraid that their standings in the field will slip if they put such a reform in independently. Books are still the coin of the realm, even though so few are now getting published. Or perhaps because of that kind of thing.

Christina Maslach:

Interesting. Yeah. Because I do recall serving in the Senate later on in my career, as Chair, and there was something about if you were not a full professor, you weren't going to become a candidate for Chair.

Catherine Gallagher:

Yes.

Christina Maslach:

And we were seeing in the Humanities, lot of people were active and were great candidates to be Chair, but they were still in the associate professor ranks. And that's where I was learning about, "Oh, there's supposed to be a second book."

Catherine Gallagher:

There's supposed to be a second book, but why? It's a self-inflicted wound. Social Sciences departments that used to require books have dispensed with them. Political Science no longer assumes books are a superior publishing form. I don't think Sociology does it anymore, whereas it used to. So, I think it's now just the Humanities and, Jan de Vries, when he was Vice Provost once did a study showing how much the two-book requirement cost departments. It was clearly holding people back from full professorships in those departments that had it. And the difference was considerable. To my recollection it was on the average of five years.

Christina Maslach:

Wow.

Catherine Gallagher:

It was really huge.

Christina Maslach:

Which has a whole impact on your salary and retirement and...

Catherine Gallagher:

And on the department's standing. So it's not good for anyone, I don't understand why we do it. I also think it hits the women harder because of the family pressures and the service loads. They do an awful lot of department service and university service in those years as well

Christina Maslach:

Yeah.

Catherine Gallagher:

It's something we really need to do is watch the progress of women's careers in between tenure and full professor.

Christina Maslach:
Right.

Catherine Gallagher:
Because if I were asked where faculty women on campus need help, I'd say that's precisely where they often falter, at least in the Humanities.

Christina Maslach:
It's in that area, yeah, that's a good point. Wow. Okay. Anything else?

Catherine Gallagher:
No, I think...

Christina Maslach:
We're done? Okay. Cathy, this is great.

END.