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R.47. Speaking of Feminism: Today's Activists on the Past, Present, and Future of Feminism

Interview R-0875
Soraya Chemaly
December 15, 2015

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ABSTRACT – Soraya Chemaly

Interviewee: Soraya Chemaly

Interviewer: Rachel F. Seidman

Interview Date: December 15, 2015

Location: Interviewee's home in Georgetown neighborhood of Washington, D.C.

Length 2 hours 34 minutes

Soraya Chemaly, raised in the Bahamas, combined experience in journalism and business to create a role for herself as a transnational feminist media activist and writer. In this interview she discusses her family's history in Haiti and the Bahamas, and how gender dynamics shaped her outlook growing up. During her time at Georgetown University she founded a feminist magazine, and then went to work in a variety of journalism settings before moving into the business side of media. An artist without formal training, Chemaly licensed her paintings in the years after 9/11. She discusses the impact of the rise of the internet on advertising, her attempts to combine working with raising young children, and how having daughters shaped her passion for feminist activism. She discusses in depth the origins of the Facebook Rape Campaign, in which she and other activists worked to convince Facebook to prevent traumatizing misogynist content from being uploaded to their platform. She also spearheaded the Safety and Free Speech Coalition, and the Women's Media Center's Speech Project, and the International Feminist Project, all of which focus on and utilize social media. Chemaly discusses why schools need to do more to teach students' women's history and theories of power; and why we need to confront pornography as a political issue rather than simply a matter of choice. She discusses gun violence, domestic violence, and the impact of the Obama presidency and Hillary Clinton's candidacy. Chemaly reflects on the ways in which the feminist movement has made progress, and the ways in which backlash and resistance has stalled it. This interview was collected as part of Rachel F. Seidman's research for her book *Speaking of Feminism: Today's Activists on the Past, Present and Future of the U.S. Women's Movement*.

FIELD NOTES – Soraya Chemaly

(compiled December 15, 2015)

Interviewee: Soraya Chemaly

Interviewer: Rachel F. Seidman

Interview Date: December 15, 2015

Location: Interviewee's townhouse in Georgetown neighborhood of Washington, D.C.

THE INTERVIEWEE. Soraya Chemaly is writer, journalist, business woman, artist, and feminist media activist.

THE INTERVIEWER. Rachel F. Seidman is an historian and associate director of the Southern Oral History Program.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERVIEW. The interview took place in Chemaly's small, sunny kitchen in her elegant Georgetown townhouse, at a table under a large painting of hers—a bright orange flower on a turquoise background. She was friendly and open, and despite not feeling well, managed to continue for nearly two hours. There was one interruption for a business call at one point.

NOTE ON RECORDING. Recorded on a digital zoom recorder.

TRANSCRIPT—Soraya Chemaly

Interviewee: SORAYA CHEMALY

Interviewer: Rachel Seidman

Interview Date: December 15, 2015

Location: Washington, D.C.

Length: 2 hours, 34 minutes

START OF RECORDING.

Rachel Seidman: Okay. This is Rachel Seidman, and I am here with Soraya Chemaly, on December 15th in Washington, D.C. and we are doing an oral history for a project called “#feminism, Speaking Up and Speaking Out in the Digital Age”.

So, Soraya, let’s start by having you kind of just get me situated with your family. What do you know about your grandparents, what do you remember about them?

Soraya Chemaly: So I just wrote a eulogy for my grandmother who died, she was 94, and I had actually spent 40 years doing a genealogy. So I know a lot about my family.

Rachel Seidman: That’s great.

Soraya Chemaly: My grandparents on my mother’s side had a very long and difficult marriage punctuated, I would say, by serious periods of happiness. But they met and married in Haiti.

Rachel Seidman: Wow.

Soraya Chemaly: And when they married, they didn't actually speak the same language, which should give you some insights as to the basis for their marriage. My grandmother was born in what was then the Ottoman Empire. It wasn't even split up into

protectorates yet, so she was born in a Christian-Arab town in Jordan--what is now Jordan--and her family left when she was three. What really sticks in my mind with my grandmother, which I have talked about before, is that her mother was fourteen when her father rode into a town and picked her up and kidnapped her. So when I was growing up, I really do remember this story that was a fairytale--it was a family fairytale--that she was a beautiful young woman, and he was a handsome young man who rode into town, and picked her up, and off they went into the sunset. So I was maybe five the first time I heard that. I was eleven the next time I remember actually responding to it, and by the time I was eleven, I was much more acutely aware of physical vulnerability. I lived in a place that had a lot of street harassment and was a tumultuous political environment. So when they told the story that time, I said, "Well, you know, actually, I think she was kidnapped and serially raped, and he should really go to jail."

RS: You said that at eleven?

SC: I did say that at eleven, and I didn't get much of a response. People just kind of ignored it, and then I said it again, and then I got what I think of in my own mind as my first feminist pat on the head. But my grandmother grew up with a mother who was thought to be mad. She didn't really interact much with people. She had seven children. She had been forcibly taken and then carried across the planet, really. I just remember as I grew older and I really thought about what that meant that she probably wasn't mad, she probably had no way of interpreting her life experience. And she somehow managed to keep one thing for herself and that was probably her brain. She really lost her speech though. She was, the way I think of it, left speechless by trauma.

Today, I think we would say she suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder and had all of the symptoms of that.

But my grandmother--to get back to that--was an incredibly resilient person. She was always upbeat, she was vivacious, she was charming, she was a very determined person. And when we were growing up, she wasn't the touchy-feely, warm grandma of anyone's imagination, but she managed to make each grandchild feel like they were her special person. And the way she did that with me was actually to let me read in my grandfather's study, which was a special thing because everyone else was locked outside in the heat.

RS: Oh, wow.

SC: And that went very well until the day she walked in and realized that I was reading through his porn collection. [Laughter] It was kind of ironic because I wasn't reading porn that day. I was looking at a book that was about Greek urns, and the Greek urn on the cover had naked people, and she thought that was the pornography. And so she took me and the book out to the family dinner, and whacked him over the head with it, and scolded him for [Laughter] perverting me, and then that was the end of the library. But what do I remember about her? She was unorthodox. She cursed and she smoked. She taught my younger sister how to smoke. She loved to play cards with the men. She worked and insisted on working.

RS: Doing?

SC: We had a family business that was run by my father, and grandfather, and eventually brothers. And she just asserted herself and said, "No, I'm going to do this." And it was interesting, too, because I think people expected her at that time to take care

of her grandchildren, and she was in her forties, and she didn't want to take care of her grandchildren. So the interpretation was she's an unnatural, not nurturing woman. I'm looking at her and I'm thinking, "Hey, she should do what she wants. She should work, right?" She would never have--. She wasn't educated, so she wouldn't have ever thought of herself as a feminist, but she was incredibly honest.

And my grandfather, on the other hand, was this kind of incredibly pious, upstanding man. He had businesses all over the world, and he always talked to people about honesty and integrity, and he knelt down and said prayers with his children, which my grandmother didn't. But he was a bigamist and had, I think, at least two families that I'm aware of in other countries, and I knew all of this growing up. I had very sharp ears, as they said. So the juxtaposition of their way of approaching the world was quite startling to me.

RS: Where was this home?

SC: This was in the Bahamas.

RS: Okay.

SC: My grandmother's family was from Jordan and went to Haiti in the early 1920s. As the Ottoman Empire collapsed, Christians and Jews really left in droves. A lot of Arab-Christians left and went all over the world, but a lot to the Caribbean. And then my grandfather's family was of English descent. They'd gotten to the Bahamas in the 1640s. And he ended up in Haiti; he was doing rationing for the British government in World War II. That's how they met. And they got married and they stayed there until the 1960s.

Interestingly, one of the events that precipitated their leaving was that my grandmother had taken him to the airport and a Tonton Macoute, one of the henchmen of the Duvalier presidency, harassed her, like street harassment. He did something like caressed her hair and said something, and she fought back, loudly, told him not to touch her, and so she was thrown into jail. The next day, they got her out of jail and then three days after, they left the country. I never asked her what happened in jail. I just--. She never talked about it. But I do know they left right after, and they went to the Bahamas. So yes, my grandfather was a glittery, charming, terrific grandfather. Awful husband, great grandfather. He taught me to swim, he taught me to fish. We had an incredibly kind of open relationship in terms of what we talked about. He read a lot. That was great in my life to have people who were reading, which sounds kind of ridiculous, except not a lot of people were reading. But I do remember very clearly, he said to me one day. He sat down next to me and he said, "You know, you're a pretty girl. Not as pretty as your mother, but you're a pretty girl, and so you'll find a nice young man who will take care of you."

And I burst out laughing and I said, "No, I'm going to school, thanks, and I'm going to take care of myself." And he goes, "Why? That's so much harder." And I said, "Well, so that if I have to, if I married, and he's like you, I can divorce him." [Laughter] And we were both laughing and he said, "Oh really?" And I said, "Yes." And it was fine. I knew I could say that to him. It was that kind of a relationship. And then honestly, I think we just went fishing. I mean, that was it, you know? I said, "There's no way in hell I'm getting stuck like my grandmother. You two are miserable." So that's what I remember about my grandparents.

RS: And so your father was running a family business?

SC: Right.

RS: And this was his parents?

SC: No, these were my mother's parents.

RS: These are your mother's parents.

SC: My father's parents were Lebanese and left Lebanon, again, around the same time. A few years earlier. And my father's father left as a child, really. He was fourteen, and he left with his two brothers. And they ended up, after lots of traveling--. You know, I think they were poor Arab immigrants. They ended up in Haiti with a business they started. Lebanese people are mercantile adventurers, I suppose you would say. But my grandmother, she was--. When did she get there? In 1903, she was born. I'm not exactly--. I can't remember what year they left, but they also ended up in Haiti. But her mother had eleven children, and almost all of them were born in different countries, as they traveled around the Caribbean Basin looking for somewhere to live. And they ended up in Haiti.

My grandmother, I'm named after her. She was called "the general" because she was so bossy, right? And she was a very strong woman. I mean, I remember her. She lived--by the time I was old enough to remember, she lived in New York. She would fiercely, firmly grab your arm to cross the street and it was like you were about to drown. She wasn't going to let go of you. It hurt to have her grab your arm. But her husband was twenty years older than she was and they lived in Haiti in 1929, I'm sure as a ripple effect of everything else. His two brothers sold off the business without telling them and

left them completely penniless. And he, my grandfather, was older at that point. He went into a deep depression, and she supported the family by sewing.

They were Catholic, very strictly Catholic, which I think was ultimately deeply scarring for my father. He was left-handed and he was beaten in school for being left-handed. I mean, he grew up in Haiti in the twentieth century. So I'd say to anybody half-alert, that would be traumatizing. The levels of brutality, racism, sexism. I mean, I think people think of colonialism as something in musty history books, but it's alive and well. There's no doubt that it's a traumatic life for children who are trying to navigate that kind of village and I think probably that affected my dad a lot. But he was also super smart and a risk-taker. So when he and my mother married, they moved to the Bahamas and he started a business that was extremely successful.

RS: What kind of business?

SC: My God, over the years it morphed. So, initially, it was retail. Then it was import export, which it's been sixty years now, but a family-run business. He and my grandfather started it, and he ran it. Eventually, there were many different types of business. And my brothers run it now. Very typically with family-owned businesses, my sister and I don't--. I remember clearly thinking as a nineteen-year-old, "This is never going to work for me. I would much rather retain the ability to have a happy relationship with my siblings than this." So I just left.

RS: And so you grew up in the Bahamas?

SC: I did. I grew up in the Bahamas. I was born in the United States because, well, pregnancies are always a little high risk. But out of the four of us, two of us had to be airlifted to the United States for emergency, immediately, afterbirth emergencies. The

hospitals were not necessarily the best, the safest. I was actually born in the United States. My mother had been in boarding school.

RS: She was in boarding school when she had you?

SC: No, no, she had been in boarding school. So I think for her, she had gone to a convent school in Florida, and so it just seemed safer to have her child in a hospital. And she actually turned out to be right because the two children that came later that weren't born in a safer hospital had to be put on planes and flown to this country. But I did, I grew up in the Bahamas until I came here, and I finished boarding school here.

RS: So tell me about your mom.

SC: My mom is an incredibly sweet person. She, I think, she married very young.

RS: How old?

SC: She was eighteen. My father was twenty-seven. I think she was a child when she got married, and I think she gave me the ability and the language to do things she, herself, really couldn't do. She really conformed to all the expectations that that society had for her. She was a great mom, a great wife. She erased herself in the equation, that's how I would categorize it, like many women did. That was just the thing they did. And so, she's incredibly fit and healthy, she's a curious person. I think she's probably pretty frustrated at this stage in life, only because she's gotten to this stage in life, and is like, "Wait a minute? Now what?"

RS: And she's not very old.

SC: No, she's not at all. And as a matter of fact, mentally and physically she's very young. So we live in different countries; I don't see her that often. But I remember

as a very young child that she was always finding ways for us to have fun. But I also felt pretty early on that it was my job to take care of her.

RS: Meaning?

SC: Meaning she just had this certain innocence and naiveté that seemed very ill-equipped to deal with much and I had a kind of acute sense of what there was to deal with, is the way I would put it. And so, I don't necessarily think those inversions are healthy. I would say that those inversions are distinctly not healthy.

Yes, I think--. I mean, I was so young when I left. I was sixteen and I've never gone back and lived at home, so my relationship has been that kind of long-distance back and forth, where you see people at high holy holidays. But yes, I think, when I think of my mom and the way she managed at least my childhood, I'd say she did everything she could to do what she was supposed to do and believed to be the right thing.

But also, when I protested, she let me. I was eight years old, and my dad one night said, "Get up and help your mom clear the table." And I said, "I'm only going to get up if he gets up, too," my brother. He's two years younger. And my father was stunned by this, of course, because that was the rule. Those were the rules. He went out and worked, and she took care of everything else in the house. And I just said, "No, I'm not going to unless he gets up, too." And I remember clearly, she didn't say get up. She just didn't. To me that's a sign. So it was kind of passive support for small rebellions.

RS: And where do you think the language and the sense of fairness and justness in that young person was coming from?

SC: So this is so interesting. I think a couple of things. One is we were Catholic. My mother had converted to Catholicism from Anglicanism and married my

father. And their Catholicism, which I think is often the case, was a kind of unthinking one. Yes, we go to church. Yes, these are the truths. And mine was not an unthinking one. So the thing about Catholicism is that it has such a strong social justice element. But if you're a girl, you have to come to the point where the social justice of the church seems to fail you as a human being, and for me that happened super early.

And I think like lots of feminists I know, I wanted to be a priest. And I was happily thinking I'd grow up and be a priest and then the first time I mentioned it, my dad just laughed outright at the idea, and I asked why, and nobody could say why, really. Not really, in a coherent way. Nobody could--. And then I had spoke to the priest, who happened to be drunk most of the time, so that was not much help. Then I started studying first Catholicism, then theology, then history, and then I got to Georgetown, which is a Jesuit school, and by the time I left Georgetown, I was just an atheist feminist activist.

I did try for years to figure out what, other than sexism, this was. My conclusion after years was no, that's what it is. And so I would say that actually there was just that element of social justice. But also, my mother was incredibly devoted to being fair to her children. She was the kind of mom who really was aware, I think, probably from her own experiences. She had two sisters and a brother. When her brother was born, the youngest one, there was a three-day party because it was a boy. They closed the family businesses; they opened up their house. It was a boy, right? Like that, for a nine-year-old girl, you remember that, even if she, herself, couldn't articulate it that way. So with her own children, she was always, "No, everyone's going to be treated the same way."

And so when I saw that we weren't being treated the same way, I'm like, "Nope." I mean I think they know--. Children have an exquisite sense of fairness and unfairness, and for some reason sexism isn't thought of as unfairness, it's just traditional. And if you're a child who thinks, "No, actually it's a traditional unfairness." But I was in a safe environment. I knew I could say things. It caused anxiety, but I knew I wasn't physically at harm. There are so many children, of course, who are physically at harm and that wasn't the situation I was in.

The anxiety that I felt was just the anxiety of knowing that there would be disapproval. There might be anger. There might be the fact that I was ignored, which has its own harms, but it's not obviously the same as a child who is beaten by a parent.

RS: Right.

SC: That was not the situation I was in.

RS: Right. So then you went to boarding school--

SC: I did, I finished--.

RS: --At sixteen?

SC: I finished here in Massachusetts. I went to Phillips Academy.

RS: Oh, I grew up in Amherst.

SC: Did you? Okay. Which was funny, too, because I remember in the Bahamas when I went to see the counselor--in the Bahamas, at that point, you started a year early, and you also finished a year early. So I was young, and I didn't want to go to college, and I didn't want to go abroad to the UK or Europe. I wanted to be in the United States. So it made sense to my twelfth grade year, which was sort of a post-graduate year. Yes and no, sort of, because I had finished in eleventh. So when I started looking, I

looked for the best schools, and I was using a book. I mean, I just picked up a book and the counselor said, "That school is just for boys." And I said, "No, it's not just for boys. It used to be just for boys, but it's listed here as one of the best schools and it's now co-ed." So I just applied, and I got in, so I went. [Laughter]

And I loved it. I had one really great year and made fantastic friends, and then I ended up at Georgetown, which was interesting because it was a Catholic school. I don't think necessarily I would have picked a Catholic school right off the bat, but it was a good school, and I was in the city, and I really wanted to be in the city. And when I was there, I founded a feminist magazine.

RS: Yes, I read about that. So tell me how that happened.

SC: Well, right from the start, the school--. It's a school that's sort of old, it's steeped in traditions. And the year I got there, Leona Fisher and Caren Kaplan, who were two professors, had started the women's studies program, and I really took note of that. And what was striking to me was that, of course, A, there was no heritage, or legacy, or tradition of women at the school that was notable. So you couldn't look back and see yourself if you were a girl in the school. And all of the major student offices in the school were held by male students, which is actually still the case, except for the service institutions, where women were much more involved and today still are involved. So what I saw was a very male-dominated, sex-segregated environment where women continued to do nurturing work and men were doing the public work. The school paper, there were just lots of different institutions. And when I was there still, the presidency of the school had to be held by a Jesuit, which meant that no woman could ever become president of the school.

RS: What years were you there?

SC: I was there 1984 to 1988. So I started this magazine as a way to say we need a woman's voice on campus. And it struck me that trying to do that working through existing institutions was simply never going to work. And I'm still torn about that approach, you know, the self-segregation, which we see every day in media anyway. Women are constantly starting platforms for women, by women, about women, and I love all of them. But the institutions are what the institutions are and they're always bigger, better funded, more prestigious, and that just remains a problem.

So that's what I did at Georgetown and it was great. There was a great group of women and we published. And I didn't find out until twenty years later and I tried for years after to support it. Any money that I'd send to Georgetown, I routed to the magazine, which was called *The New Press*. But it was twenty years later that I went to the anniversary of the women's studies department and the head of the women's center there pulled out years of magazines, years of magazines. It evolved into basically a magazine about intersectionality on campus, which I was so thrilled about, and then it eventually died. But I would say it probably died in tandem with the internet taking off and then students were doing all kinds of interesting, different things.

RS: What were you studying in college?

SC: I studied history. I did a thesis in feminist thought in heresies. That's what my thesis was about. And so to do that, it was great, because I could study theology, history, and women's studies. I had minored in-- I was the first class of women's studies program graduates. The women's studies department there is still not a full department, which I really think of as being held hostage. You kind of got to keep

people--. People get kept in line when they need money and when they are subject to the whims of an administration that is walking a very fine line between women's rights and Catholic doctrine.

RS: So did you--. I mean, if you were able to write that thesis, you were getting intellectual support from?

SC: Fantastic teachers. Fantastic teachers. Great intellectual support. I had a thesis adviser who said to me, "When you're looking for women's history, you're not going to find it written down. You have to look at the negative space. And a lot of the times, you have to look at what women were being told not to do because you only tell people not to do something when they're doing it." And that was a real lesson very early on for me. I thought, "Oh, that's right." If you see that repeatedly church fathers are saying women shouldn't be publicly speaking, it's because women were publicly speaking. They wanted them to stop, right? I had huge support.

But I spent two years going into then-Dean DeGioia; now, he's the president of the school, the first non-Jesuit president of the school. I went into his office every week, every month, and was like, "No, we're starting this magazine, but we want it to be sponsored by the school, paid for the by school. We want institutional support." It took a long time, but we got it eventually, and so it became another school club that was paid for as a school club. But that was not easy, it wasn't a given. It wasn't like--. There wasn't that type of support. And students really didn't understand what we were doing. I mean, they would make jokes like, "Oh, are you going to have centerfolds?" You know, they really--. The idea that this might exist was just kind of a curiosity.

RS: And did you see that it had a real impact? What is the role of that kind of--?

SC: So it caused a lot of debate. At the same time, during the period I was there, there was a new all-male secret society that had been started and that was exposed and--.

RS: You exposed it in the magazine?

SC: No, I didn't expose it in the magazine. It gets better. My boyfriend at the time, who's my husband now, was the editor of *The Hoya* and had been recruited by this secret society. So when it was revealed, I think it was, I'm not sure if it was *The Georgetown Voice* that revealed it. But people created--. They automatically said, "Oh, well, what's the difference between that and this women's magazine?" And there was this incredibly false equivalence between the two that became the basis for debate, which is still often the case now, right? That you see this happening.

So the conversation about why it would be different that an all-male secret society had set out to cultivate leadership on campus in that manner, at that time, why that was so qualitatively different from what we were trying to do didn't strike people. All they saw was men and women--he said, she said--in direct opposition and that was super frustrating. Like trying to explain to people what the accumulated advantage of male dominance in an institution is remains a huge challenge. It just does. And that was a very small, little micro-cause of the world, right? We see that all the time.

RS: Okay, so then you graduated, and what was next?

SC: Well, I had to make money. I had to earn a living. But I decided I really was going to write and be an editor. And it was funny, because I thought, "Well, I'm a

feminist and an actively involved feminist, I'm just going to take my active, involved feminism into work. That's what I'll do as an individual, right?" And I went to Paris; I worked in Paris for a magazine, which was great fun. It was fantastic. And then I actually went to China, where my husband was, and traveled for a few months, and then came back, and looked for a job in the U.S. And I started working for a news service called State News and I was writing.

And then an old friend--a friend from high school--approached me and said, "Let's start a magazine together." Which we did, it was here in Washington; it was a city listings magazine, like a *Time Out*, for college students. We did that for three years and almost sold it and didn't. But, let's see. We did it for three years. I was the editor; he was the publisher. We had eighty thousand copies a month. I mean, it was really a great experience.

RS: What was that called?

SC: It was called *Key D.C.*, and at the time, *Time Out Magazine* was gobbling up properties. The magazine I had worked for in Paris was bought by *Time Out* and became *Time Out Paris*. So we tried to sell this and it didn't work, and my business partner went to business school, and I went and worked for Gannett.

But at that point, I felt pretty strongly that I needed to be earning more than I could earn as a writer. And so at Gannett, I moved to the business side, which was fascinating because I was in their corporate offices and launched-- I was responsible for two things. One was the launch of what was then unheard of, actually. It was an ad serving network. So we bought Mac computers, which was unheard of in the corporate environment, and

created a network for eighty-five papers all be able to share information and graphics for advertising.

RS: So how did you--?

SC: Make that transition?

RS: Yes.

SC: Well, I think because I had been one of the founders of this magazine, I had a lot of experience and technical experience. I mean we used, at that point, new technology, which was just network Macs, to be honest. That, nobody had done that because it didn't exist before. So I had some pretty on-the-ground experience doing that work, and I could write, and so I got this job. But it was interesting because I was also the person responsible--. There was a new media division set up and it really--. The purpose of that, and I did that work, was to look at new kinds of technologies. So I remember one day, after a lot of research, making a presentation to all the publishers. I think there were eighty-five or eighty-eight publishers who had come in for a meeting. So I was trying to explain that this thing called the internet was really going to affect their business, both in terms of content, like, "Please don't give your content away," which they were all doing. Everyone was giving content away. I know people got pissed off at Arianna Huffington later, but all these newspapers thought that the internet was kind of a joke, something kids played with. So they would sell their advertising in their hard copies and give away the online ads, setting up a model for devaluing all kinds of content, right?

But mainly, I remember saying, "You have about nine-hundred million dollars in classified advertising. That will go away if you don't pay attention to this because online

classifieds have a natural home in that environment.” And I was young. I was twenty-six. I was in this meeting. I was very nervous. I had made this presentation, and I remember thinking, “They just don't believe me. They don't believe me. This is not the place for me. I can't, I can't stay here.”

And I had a great mentor there, a man who did believe me and let me do this work, but it was insufficient. I thought, “I need to be somewhere that is not this environment; this is not a great, great environment for what I'm talking about.” So I went and actually worked for a company that we had worked with called Claritas. And Claritas was interesting because it was the first company to use data to segment consumer audiences. It pioneered the use of data, which today, of course, has all kinds of different ramifications. But I went there with a man from Gannett named Larry Sackett, who had been instrumental in the launch of *USA Today*, and we started the media news division of that company that did very well. And then we expanded until we did all media and then financial services reading. I was there for many years.

So I eventually became the senior corporate vice president for that company, which was also a fantastic working experience.

RS: Why?

SC: Because I used everything I learned there to fuel the work I've been doing in feminism for the last five years. So the experience I had there had to do with marketing strategy, market development, marketing communications, understanding in-depth the business world, understanding data. We didn't call it big data then, but that's what we were talking about. So we had all kinds of third-party relationships with data vendors, data analysts, geographic information systems people in the advertising and

media retail financial services worlds. And so fast-forward fifteen years. When I decided I really had to go back into feminist activism, I did it very deliberately in a way that utilized those skills.

When I started having children--. I knew that, before I had children, I had to work as hard and as fast as I could. Because my belief, which I think is shared by lots of women, is that since I have to step out of the workplace--and I had no doubts that I was going to have to do that as a mother with no support--that when I went back in, at least even if I went in at a lower level, if I could get to the highest possible level, then the lower level would be better. That didn't work, any of that, because it's incredibly difficult to go back into the workplace, as we all know. But first I went to four days in the office, one day at home. This is with one child. So I had--.

RS: This is still at Claritas?

SC: Yes. I had one child and then I got pregnant with twins before she was two. So eventually--. And Claritas was fantastic, actually, because at every point that I said, "I need to try something new," they said, "Yes," and I think that's because they had a female CEO, a woman who understood that, which was not very common then, especially. It's still not common; it was really not common then. But I went four days in the office, one day at home; three days in the office, two days at home; three days in the office, no days at home. And then I said, "You know what? I'm going to quit and start a consultancy. You pay me on a project basis to do things. Pay me what I was making, plus the forty percent that you're paying for my benefits, and I will get this work done in my own time. We'll have deadlines." And they said yes.

And that was fantastic because I worked; I had my own consultancy for almost eleven years. And I had them as a client and then some other companies as clients. But I had three children under the age of three, and it was very challenging, and I was working a lot, and it took a physical toll. I couldn't feel my hands at one point, and I was having all kinds of neurological, stress-related problems. And my doctor said to me--I love this-- he said to me, "Well, what hobbies do you have?" And I said, "Are you kidding?" It's like a hobby if I can brush my teeth and wash my hair on the same day. That's like my definition of a hobby right now. And he said, "Okay, well, you're not the kind of person who is going to take drugs or sleeping pills or anything. I want you to take half an hour a day and just do one thing that you like."

So I started painting at night. I would paint for half an hour at night. My kids weren't sleepers. They didn't sleep through the night until they were three. So it was three solid years of three or four hours of sleep. And the painting took on a life of its own. I was very lucky. A publisher saw one of my paintings and asked to license it. So that just became its own thing. I started licensing images and then I started a company to use those images on products. And--.

RS: Had you been painting before?

SC: I painted in high school. He said, "Wasn't there ever a time when you had a hobby?" And I was like, "Well, I liked painting in high school." And of course, I'm like a type A, firstborn Catholic girl, so it became a thing. I'm going to paint, really. I'm going to try my hardest to paint. But--

RS: Did you get any training or you just painted?

SC: I just painted. And honestly, this isn't great art. It's decorative, happy paintings, and people really needed happy things. It was after 9/11, and I think that any kind of bright, happy, joyous thing kind of made people feel good. And so at one point, I had three hundred and fifty retailers around the country buying products. And then the crash happened in 2008 and within six months fifty percent of them were out of business. And so I continued that until about 2011.

But it was interesting because, one day, my daughter, my oldest daughter, who was thirteen--she probably looked like she was eighteen. She's very tall, very pretty. She was wearing her soccer uniform and she said, "Hey, can I just go out and get some ice cream?" She wanted to go by herself. And I think, ultimately, when I look back, her asking me that was like a triggering event. Because when she asked me, I wasn't really ready for thinking about her being out by herself in a city, which she had been before. She'd been, like, out in parks and with friends. But this was for some reason different. I looked at her and I was like, "Oh, wait a minute. I have to teach her all kinds of stuff I haven't taught her about navigating public space." And I remember locking myself in the bathroom and feeling just this blind rage because I didn't want to teach my daughters about rape. I didn't want to be the person that transferred that information without objection, as it had been transferred to me silently. No one ever talked to me about street harassment or rape.

The first time I was harassed, it was not just on the street, but in my schoolyard. I was nine and an older boy--. I was waiting; my aunt had forgotten to pick us up. My mother and father were away with my sister, who had been hospitalized. So she forgot to pick us up and this boy, he was older than I was, he said, "I could rape you here and

nobody could help you.” And I don't think I knew what rape was. I just remember thinking I don't know if I can help my brother, who was behind me, he's seven. I knew it was bad and it was a threat, but I looked at my daughter, and I was like, “No, I'm not going to be this person. I'm actually--I'm not going to do this.”

So my poor husband, he came home, and I said, “I'm doing something really financially irrational. I'm stopping all business-related work, and I'm going to write about feminism. Because writing I can do and I can do it while still managing life.” And he said, “Go for it.” So then, I actually segmented the writing marketplace, the way I would have segmented any market. And I thought, “Okay, well, there are all these brilliant people writing, but they're kind of writing a bubble to themselves,” and then we had this massive mainstream audience, and maybe I could be useful as a bridge. And so I set out to do that.

I thought that if I can interpret some of these ideas for an audience that doesn't think of myself as feminists, doesn't, you know, they're just not thinking. And I also think that it's possible to see a zeitgeist and propel a zeitgeist, which many of us did in 2009, 2010, 2011. And if you had any real sense of the transformations happening in technology and you had a feminist bent, you could see that come up on the horizon. And so that's what I did. I gave myself a column. I wrote twice a week for two or three years in *The Huffington Post* just relentlessly. And then, probably once I had gotten into the practice and habit again, that's when I also started writing for other places.

But almost immediately, like really almost immediately, the harassment online started.

And at first, I was just sort of stunned, because I thought I hadn't said anything really.

[Laughter]

RS: So what year was it that you started writing?

SC: 2011.

RS: Okay.

SC: So four years only. It feels like a lot longer. But I wrote one piece about-

It was a satire, actually. It was like a spoof. I wrote something, I think it was called, "National Let Your Boy Be A Girl Day," in which I just pointed that girls were constantly allowed to be and expected to be like boys. They're just allowed to be, whereas boys are much more subject to the norms of hegemonic masculinity. "So why don't we just have a day that we let them be," I said. And then I gave maybe twenty examples of things they could do. And the response from a lot of people was, oh, that I've pathologized boys. "Boys aren't sick. Don't try to fix them." But I got a hanging threat. And I'm sort of ethnically ambiguous to look at. I could be Mediterranean, I could be South American, I could maybe be a little Native American--if you really wanted to stretch--and I am kind of poly-ethnic in my history.

But this hanging threat to me came along with a lot of other things, like content that said, "Go back to Africa or Arabia or wherever you're from," which was fascinating to me. I'm like, "Wow, okay, so there's the racism and the ethnocentrism and the sexism, and they're all in the same pot, right?" You get one, you get the others. But what was striking was that I hadn't even said anything much that was--. I'm like, "Really?" I'm talking about--really? The really catalyzing kind of rage stuff often didn't provoke people the way the simplest, smallest things do. And that's been true.

But I started then writing about harassment and what it means historically for women to speak in the public space because clearly the harassment that women are

experiencing--and I immediately started talking to other women to say what are your experiences--it's meant to just stop women from speaking. It doesn't--. I mean, we could be talking about shoelaces, you know?

But what was disturbing to me, and this was probably in early 2012, I remember sitting with a lot of other feminist writers somewhere and we were exchanging jokes, not jokes. But we were exchanging the fact that we get rape threats or death threats. And I thought, this shouldn't be funny, like it's our way of dealing with it because many women don't deal with it, right? They stop writing, or they don't write about certain topics, or they stop writing in certain places, and those among us that were still talking refused to do that, right? We just keep going. And everyone has to make their own judgment about that. But I thought, "It's really not funny."

But in point of fact, at the same time there was a huge conversation going on about rape jokes in culture. And once I started writing about it, readers started sending me things. But not just to say look at what happened, but please can you help me? And that was overwhelming. I had one woman send me all of her police reports and files because she thought her rapist would kill her. He had been illustrating her rape in Facebook, and Facebook wasn't removing it because, to a Facebook moderator, it just looked like drawings of a woman in a bed, and there was no way for her to get through to them to explain the context for what was going on.

Another woman had set up a page in Facebook where people could report child pornography and rape jokes. That page was attacked, and she was one of six administrators, who were anonymous, so she was doxed. Her private information was shared, her workplace, her children's names, her face was used on a rape meme. It was

multi-dimensional harassment. It then spilled over to where people were calling her in her home. Facebook was not responsive to her, but the FBI was. So this kept going. I mean, I got video of a rape in progress in Malaysia that had been up in Facebook for a month. It had been reported, but no one had taken it down. And these people were--. I mean, it's non-consensual pornography at this point, right?

So then I started to write, and I realized I was speaking to Facebook representatives and they were saying all the right words because they had guidelines. But for some reason, it wasn't applying to what women were experiencing. And so Jaclyn Friedman, who is head of Women Action in the Media, and I were friends. And Laura Bates is another friend. She's in England, she founded Everyday Sexism. One day, Laura called me and she was very upset because there was a beheading video of a woman being beheaded in a Mexican drug war, and it was going viral. It was horrible; it was really dreadful. So when I contacted Facebook to say, "Why is this here, like can you explain your reasoning?" Because if you were at a traditional media outlet, you would have seasoned editors with training, and training in journalistic ethics, talk about newsworthiness and why this video might be allowed.

But that was not the situation here. The boy who uploaded it had uploaded it for salacious reasons. People were commenting on the woman's underwear, and it flew in the face of so much that was being said about what constituted newsworthiness. The Arab Spring was going on, and there were lots of different examples going on at once. There was a woman in Tunisia who had taken off her--. She was topless and she had written 'fuck your morals' on her chest, and that had come down. I was arguing that that was political speech, not pornography, and that they were suppressing her political

speech. So that came down, but the video stayed up and there were just lots of inconsistencies in the approaches.

RS: Can I just ask the question, is newsworthiness an issue that Facebook cares about?

SC: Yes, newsworthiness is an issue that Facebook cares about. The people at Facebook are dealing with massive, complex problems. I totally understand that. But it's the role of people like me, annoying as it may be, to raise these inconsistencies and make these arguments. I didn't think of it that way. I was just kind of outraged by the inconsistencies that I saw very much tied to gender and free expression. So Laura Bates had called me with this beheading video, and I wrote a letter to Sheryl Sandberg that morning saying, "I understand Facebook has stated quite openly that they are interested in free expression and women's rights. These are four things--." I don't know what possessed me, I was just angry. "These are four things Facebook should be doing if you're serious about it. And I have to look at this content. I don't even work for Facebook. So if I have to look at this content, you have to look at this content. Can you please look at this content and tell me why this is happening?"

Honestly, I was a random woman. I just sent it via email through an intermediary, who knew her because she was on the board of a women's rights organization, and she responded right away. She put me in touch with her head of global policy, who was very nice, very responsive, but sent me a lot of boilerplate answers. And I kept saying, "You're not addressing what I said. Thanks so much for your nice note, but maybe we could meet." And by that time, it was very clear that my writing work was advocacy work because they were one in the same. Even as a person targeted for the abuse, I was

experiencing these things while I was writing them. Those meetings, we didn't have those meetings. They kept dropping off.

So Jaclyn Friedman said, "Hey, I know how frustrated you are. Why don't we do a public action?" And I said yes, but let's get Laura, because she, too, is experiencing these things. And Laura had done something quite brilliant. She had just that day, I think, tweeted to an advertiser on Facebook, "Do you really want your ad next to this content?" And we used that as the model for our campaign. We were very deliberate in our campaign. I think people think that these hash tags, sometimes they do take off, but I personally feel very strongly that a hash tag has to be linked to action on the ground. It can't just stand alone in virtual space. And we had a website that automated tweets and emails from consumers that linked advertisers directly to this content. And every morning, we would discuss what we would share and what we wouldn't.

We spoke to people at the Dart School of Journalism because we didn't--. This was extremely traumatizing, extremely graphic violence against women that was being proliferated on the platform and not removed and very often was actually slapped with the parenthetical, controversial humor tag because that was meant to somehow--. It literally turned the violence into a joke. So day one of our campaign was a Tuesday. And we launched it, and Facebook called right away, and we started to negotiate because we had publicly written a letter saying--. And the letter was a lot of the letter that I'd send to Sheryl Sandberg. It was shorter; the demands were a little bit different. But we had in that week sixty thousand tweets, five thousand emails, and sixteen advertisers drop out. And that was in 2013 and I think that there were a couple of things that were notable about that.

One was that it was the first time that Facebook responded to any consumer public action. They responded and they said, “Yes, we've dropped the ball on misogyny.” And a lot of people thought that we didn't understand free speech and that we were censoring, and that totally missed the point. We weren't censoring; we didn't ask them to create new rules. Companies like Facebook and Twitter and YouTube are moderating content day-in and day-out. They had rules written down. We just said, “Apply the rules fairly. If you're applying it in X instance, you have to apply it in Y instance. You have on the basis of gender here, and yet look at this content.”

And the second thing, which always made all of us chuckle, was the idea that somehow we were clueless about advertising. We didn't understand the way it worked. I remember on the Thursday of that week, we had over a hundred media interviews. The thing just exploded. We didn't even know whom we were talking to at some points. And NPR interviewed me, and right after they took my clips, they had a professor who seriously explained that we didn't understand advertising. That was his clip. And I thought, there it is. It's the virtual equivalent of a “Local mom makes good by accident” story. That's what happened, right? And I don't--. Most stories weren't that way, but that one really struck me because it encapsulated a lot of the responses we were getting. And the point in fact is, the campaign, I think, worked because it happened at the right time, at the right moment, and because we were very organized.

We worked well together as a team. We each had respective skills. We just had a really positive campaign. Every aspect of it worked. But the thing about that campaign is that once it was over, I was like a dog with a bone. I just wouldn't let go. I'm like, “All

right, so you've agreed to work with these women's groups. So what does that mean?"

And so--.

RS: Facebook has agreed to work--?

SC: Facebook agreed to work. And so it's two years later, and we continue to work weekly on these issues and that's been a very productive--. And there's been huge change. Huge change in the culture. Not because of this, I just mean in those two years. But I think that that campaign helped put online misogyny on the map in a way that gave people the ability to talk about it differently. And the hash tag was The Facebook Rape Campaign. And after that, I worked constantly with the designated--. They designated a person who had worked at a rape crisis center at Facebook who was extremely responsive. She knew what we were doing and what we were trying to do. And so we continue to work with them and now our emphasis is getting women in the global South front and center. Eighty percent of Facebook's audience is not in the US.

And people often think, well, why are you focusing on Facebook? A, I wasn't being paid to do this work, and you have to focus somewhere. Facebook is the whale in the room. It has the biggest audience. It has the most money. And people leave Facebook, and they go to other companies. So that was sort of the way that campaign worked. And the purpose of the campaign was not just to say, "Look at this violent content." It was to say, "Think about the way this violent content suppresses women's free speech and civic participation and ability to equally access everything that the internet has to offer." And so that's really the emphasis of the work now.

RS: So after--I mean, that was right around the same time that our Who Needs Feminism? Campaign was going and my students experienced a lot of that stuff.

SC: Yes, I'm sure.

RS: So what is beyond--? What are the next steps beyond working with Facebook? Now, how are you broadening that out?

SC: So a couple of things. In nineteen--. In the early part of 2014, I started this loose organization with no formal structure because there was no money, but called The Safety and Free Speech Coalition. And initially, it was eight organizations, and I picked each organization because it had an area of functional expertise. So one was the law, for example, the Cyber Civil Rights Initiative. One was media activism, Women Action in the Media. One was domestic and intimate partner violence, the National Network to End Domestic Violence. One was gender IT, Take Back the Tech. And there were a couple of academics involved.

And basically, I got everyone together and said, "Okay, let's pool our efforts. We're all talking to all of these companies. So Twitter, YouTube, Facebook, all the major platforms. We're all talking about violence against women, IT, gender issues, free expression, and it's inefficient. So what are we--? How can we work together to support each other?" And so, at that point, we identified a number-one priority, which was getting companies to change their policies around non-consensual photography and pornography. No company at that point had clear guidelines or rules. You could take any picture from anywhere and post it in any way you wanted. So that became our priority and that was, as we started talking probably in the spring--maybe the early summer--and at that point, I contacted Facebook and Twitter and said, "Can we have a meeting? This is our coalition."

So by the fall, we had meetings with Facebook and Twitter separately to talk about this, you know, these issues, broaden this network. My goal was to get people in the room who were doing this amazing work that hadn't ever talked to Facebook, or Twitter, or any of these companies. There are organizations all over the world, civic society organizations, that are doing this work, but it's like they're in parallel worlds. Because you have these huge companies, or even not-so huge companies, but companies that have this incredible footprint around the world and they're making all these decisions, but there wasn't a lot of communication between them. So I thought, "Okay, since I have my foot in the door, who can I bring in the door with me, which was the main purpose of this coalition?"

But by February of this year, we had a major change, which was that Reddit, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube all announced policies regarding non-consensual photography. That's a big deal. And that came in the wake of tremendous pressure and controversy about things like what was called 'The Fappening,' which was the hundred celebrity women whose accounts had been hacked. That made it very clear that not only was it bad, but, "Oh, by the way, when a major celebrity threatens to sue you for a hundred million dollars, maybe now we can talk about that, right?" That was a big deal.

But the difference actually between Facebook and Twitter was very interesting. Facebook really opened their doors, had lots of people talk to us, and everyone in the room has subsequently then worked with Facebook in different capacities. We've done things like translate safety guides into multiple languages. Those are small but important steps, because one of the major issues on these global platforms is language. Moderators who can't speak a dialect of, you know, some dialect in Pakistan, can't tell if a woman's

getting threatened. They just don't know, right? So we have a lot of different initiatives that are going on and each of these organizations work separately. But we touch base; we prioritize.

Twitter's response was not positive. There was one person at Twitter that came and met with us, and within a month of meeting with us she was fired or left the company. That's open to interpretation. Twitter has been making a lot of headway and changes. Almost everybody in the coalition that was at the early meeting has been working with them. I think they're deeply suspicious of me, which is fine. But those people are now in the room and they're talking, which is great. Some of them were talking before, but some of them really weren't. So the more people that can do that, the better.

In July, I agreed to work on directing a project for the Women's Media Center called The Speech Project, and our two areas of interest are curbing abuse and expanding expression. And what we will be doing is trying to raise public awareness about freedom of expression issues related to gender, intersectionality, how the abuse--what it looks like, what it means, why it's tied to power and control in intimate partner violence. A lot of people think that online abuse is about people getting their feelings hurt or about bullying the way children experience it, which is awful, but that's not what we're talking about. We're talking about such a broad spectrum of harassment, criminal activity, extortion, trafficking, that we hope to put it in context and give it a place in the broader media conversation about these things.

RS: Let me just check my--. So, I mean, you'd said earlier in the interview that you were using all of the stuff that you learned at Claritas--.

SC: Yes.

RS: Here, and I can see that in this narrative. Are there other pieces that you want to talk about that have been applied in this new realm?

SC: So, I think, and I've talked to a couple of other feminist activists about this, I'm forty-nine. I, on good days, look thirty-nine. On bad days, I look fifty-nine. That's the way that works, right? But I think that a lot of people don't--first of all, they make judgments on how people look right away, right? And then they make some assumptions, and then, often, if you're a woman, they will underestimate you by default, right? And my professional work experience has been a tremendous asset because in order to engage institutions, you really have to understand how they work. And I was in the corporate world for a long time, and that has been a huge advantage to me. I remember in the first meeting I had with Facebook during our negotiations, they asked me to sign a non-disclosure and I said, "No. I'm not signing a non-disclosure. Why on earth would I do that?" And I think that they were taken aback, and they actually had to change the location of the meeting. I'm not sure why, but we moved rooms. And the first the thing that their lead person said to me, she--I really like this person--but she didn't know me, and she goes, "Who are you?" [Laughter] And I said, "Well, I can save you a lot of time by saying that this was my professional background. I really do understand your business. I understand advertising, I understand data, and I happen to do all of that while simultaneously being a feminist activist." Okay, like, please don't. Let's not waste time here. We don't have a lot of time.

And in point of fact, I remember saying, "Okay, you--. These are your secrets, I understand that, but please tell me that you're analyzing customer churn on the backend

of your moderation. So when someone comes in, reports content, says, 'I got a rape threat,' or 'I'm being bullied,' 'I'm a sixteen-year-old girl, and they're slut-shaming me,' you can track that through your system and see what percentage of them are churning out. How many are leaving based on your resolution?" And no, there was no answer to that. And not only do I think there was no answer to me, I don't think people were looking. And I still find it starting that in this period where we're drowning in data, there's some pretty simple analysis tools and questions that, even if they are being looked at, aren't being shared for sure, and I don't think they're being used. I just find it curious. So yes. I think things like strategic planning are valuable. Social justice movements have phases, and you can look at those phases, and understand those phases, and tactics and strategies will change depending on what phase you're in. And we need more people to do that.

Conservatives are extremely good at that. I mean, one of the things that literally keeps me up at night is trying to come up with a model for having feminists take over school boards. We need feminists to take over school boards. We need people who understand social justice movements to go into school boards all around the country because that's what conservatives do. That's what they did in the 1980s and the 1990s during the height of backlash, and we understand more and more, and you can see it in the--. Look at the Title IX movement. It exploded on college campuses, but the only logical place for that to go is into high schools, and the only logical place for that to go is into elementary schools, and the only logical place for that to go is in early childhood education, which we have just failed.

We don't talk about women's history. We don't talk about feminism. Kids find out about it because they are personally curious later in their education. And so things

like gender, gender norms, gender stereotypes, that's at the heart of all of it, and we're just not there yet. So school boards are an interesting thing because they're local, they are in an area that women traditionally have been thought of being involved in: teachers, parents, moms, schools. They're a natural entry point, and they're feeders for every other stage of the electoral politics. And so rather than getting people to unlearn things as twenty-seven-year-olds--“Would you please run for office? We have to ask you seven times before you will.” Why not start in the school boards? I just think it's interesting. I think it's interesting to break those problems up into more granular bits and pieces. So I'm not--. I always say that I don't particularly like serving on boards. I'm more, I think, entrepreneurial and--. But I have served on several boards. But again, I had thought very carefully. So I was on the national board of Emerge, which trains women to run for politics; was invited to be on the board for an organization called Secular Women, which is about women and secularism; Women Action in the Media, which is media; and the Women's Media Center then asked me to join their board. And the usefulness in that, to me, is that those three types, the politics, the religion, and the media, are all vertically siloed, but they really need to have horizontal bridges between them. They should be effectively cross-pollinating and using each other in kind of a more networked fashion.

RS: So you see serving on the board as you can--.

SC: I can at least bridge those. Like it's--. All I can come down to--I mean, I don't have goo gobs of money, so what can I do? I can try and be an effective connector of people and ideas. That's also true internationally, actually. Six other feminists--. Caroline De Haas in France was the other real lead person. After the--actually, immediately during and after the Facebook rape thing, when we did that, I wanted very,

very clearly to create a model for what I think of as a flip-the-switch campaign that could be global. So during the campaign, for example, I stayed up all night so I could manually roll the tweeting over from being focused in the US, to being focused in Europe, to being focused in Southeast Asia, to be focused back in the US. There was no automated way to do that then. There was not like a Thunderclap that would roll it out that way. So I literally was just tweeting to people in Australia, “Hey, everyone here is asleep. Can you pick this up for the next five hours?” And they would, and that worked. We had, like, over a hundred organizations sign on in twenty-four hours.

So we started something called the International Feminist Project, which we invited feminists around the world to put themselves on a map, and join a database, and now there are over four thousand on that. And we haven't been able to do anything with it. We still have the database and the map, but we hope very much to--. And we're all, of course, doing this as second or third jobs; this is the problem, right? But the idea behind that is here we have four thousand women in organizations who have said, “Yes, we want to be part of this global activism.” We had eighty people right away say we can translate any material you want. Everybody identified skills that they had. So I just think we really have a moment, a moment in time where there's awareness, eagerness, and the transformative power of this technology.

RS: I know it's time for your call.

SC: Yes.

RS: Do you want to pause?

SC: Yes. We can go to the bitter end if you want to keep talking for four minutes.

RS: Well, I'm really--. So you raised this issue of people taking on second and third jobs.

SC: Yes.

RS: And, I mean, you were able to make the choice to stop doing--.

SC: Yes, I was lucky.

RS: Yes.

SC: That's a huge privilege. But I have also, I'm also very attuned to not giving labor away and I don't know how freelance writers can earn a living. Most of the money I earn is from speaking engagements. I'm paid for all of my writing now. A lot of people are very disdainful and actually critical of writing for *The Huffington Post*. But it's so interesting to me because it never occurred to me that anyone would pay me for my words. When I started writing again, I was very clearly thinking that what people would pay me for is an audience. And so fine, *Huffington Post* might be exploiting me as a writer, but what I needed from *Huffington Post* was not money at that point. I needed an audience, which I understand is a luxury, right? The money that I was earning at that point came from other sources because I was still running my business at that point. But what I needed was an audience, which I got, like--. Whatever I was saying caught people's attention, I think because of the tone that I was using. I was very forthright, very angry, very clear, and that seemed to resonate. But I needed an audience so that I could go to *The Atlantic* or *The Guardian*, or *The Nation*, because I knew I couldn't make up for twenty-five years of not writing. I just couldn't do it. So I said, "Okay, I'm writing. And oh, by the way, here are fifty-thousand people that have been listening to me." And that's what I thought I could do because the content--. Content has been so devalued; it's been

so--. And I saw when it was being devalued. That was inevitable, right? And so, yes, I just--. That was what happened.

RS: Do you--. This new international organization. What are your hopes in terms of what you might take on or--?

SC: First of all, there is no organization.

RS: Or--.

SC: There's this thing--.

RS: Thing.

SC: That Caroline and I, that we're--.

RS: The map.

SC: The map, right? Ideally, A, we could find--. If she and I could stop everything else and do this, we would. But we can't. She started a political party, so that's not happening. She started a feminist socialist political party, so she has a long-term plan to do that. We have this, I think of it as a feminist asset and ideally if we could find a home for it that--. Because we know what we want it to be, and we know what the people who joined it would like it to be, but we need find--. We can't build an organization. We need to find an organization that has this ethos and say all right, let's put these two things together. You want to do this, we have this asset. And when I did the Facebook Rape Campaign, I had actually outlined ten other campaigns that could generate global support because a lot of the problems we have in feminism, all the clashes and the friction, come from an inability to work across difference. We're never all going to agree, so what is the single-focus issue that we can agree on ten times over, for example, right? How do we find that?

So in the case of the Facebook Rape Campaign, even though our off-the-record goal was much broader, we did one thing. We said graphic depictions of rape and domestic violence are unacceptable as humor on your platform. That was easy for everyone to see and understand the wrongness of. And I believe there are other issue that are that laser-focused that would enable us to do the sorts of things that we can do and that's where I'd like to get it to.

RS: Can you name one of them?

SC: One of those issues? My God, let me think hard. Can I--.

RS: Sorry.

SC: It's eleven. Let me do that and then I'll be back. Can you sit there for a minute?

RS: Yes, that's fine.

SC: Okay. [Recorder is turned off and then back on] What to do with the fact that I'm a writer and an advocate. It makes them extremely leery. She wasn't, this woman wasn't leery, but very often it does.

RS: This is a company that you're trying to work with? This--?

SC: Well, I just--. Yes. I just talked to someone at Google.

RS: Oh, okay.

SC: But yes. I think that the idea that there would be a journalist who isn't claiming to be objective, you know?

RS: Right. Yes. Or something.

SC: My point being that no one's objective.

RS: All right, I'll restart.

SC: Okay.

RS: Okay. So thinking back on what we've talked about, there were a couple of things I just wanted to do some follow-up questions on. You were about to try and think of specific--.

CS: Oh, other examples.

RS: Yes, examples.

CS: Comprehensive sex ed. That's a big one. We know that there's a global backlash. It's been measured against providing comprehensive sex ed, and we know how important it is. So if you can create a template where people around the world who are advocates for comprehensive sex ed. can support a global movement but act locally, that would be very effective. That was one of the modules. So, all right, we know that that's true, whether you are in Delhi or Johannesburg or Rio or Nassau. It doesn't matter. Everyone is looking at the same issue in terms of providing safe and accurate information. The interesting thing about the internet is that it reveals so many norms we don't think about.

So, if you, for example, consider women's naked bodies obscene under all circumstances, you shut down women's health information. I have a friend who's a doctor at Georgetown. She works on militarized sexual violence. She travels all over the world, refugee camps, war zones. She can't write, research, or search for documents that have the word rape in them because the filter thinks rape is a bad word because someone has obviously set parameters in the filter, right?

RS: The filter from where?

SC: From the university. Right? So that seems absurd. It happens all the

time. It happens all the time. We had a performance here for *Slut: The Play*, which is written and produced and acted by teenage girls. And it showed off-Broadway and was very successful in New York. And I helped the producers put on a production here in D.C. and there were a thousand people that came, filled the Warner Theatre. But in the process of contacting schools, and getting students to sign up, and counselors to bring them, there was one D.C. public school I was working very closely with, and any time I sent them an email, they wouldn't get it because of the word slut.

So because I was feeling irritated and snarky, I started sending emails with other words in the title like penis, vasectomy, Viagra, and they all went through. So you shut down all kinds of information if you can't show, for example, breasts; you can't show breast cancer health diagrams. Sorry. You need more nuanced approaches to moderating breasts. So those are the types of things that--.

RS: That's great. Earlier, in talking about those things, that was part of your way of framing it, was the feminist movement has a lot of friction over working through difference, and we need these kind of laser-focused issues. And a lot of people have argued that the internet, and Twitter, and those kinds of things have heightened or intensified that friction. Do you agree with that or--?

SC: I don't. I think that friction has always existed and frankly, the friction exists for good reason. There's a teleology to all of this, and I think what the internet has done is revealed it in a scope, in a scale, in an amplification level that didn't exist before. But a lot of these frictions are old. They're not new. I'm grateful for their revelations. I'm not--. When I say that we need to have single-focus working across different projects, that isn't to say we shouldn't have the friction, or we should ignore the friction,

or we should overlook the problems. It is just to say that we can do all things simultaneously. There's this kind of odd expectation that I bump into all the time that somehow feminists should be doing one thing at a time, like we're incapable of doing multiple things at a time. And I say we should be doing everything at all times simultaneously, you know? And people are going to do what they think is right, in the way they think is right, and that's what they should do. And they just have to be prepared for, and this is hard because it feels uncomfortable, for criticism, for mockery, and sometimes things work, and sometimes they don't. And we just never know when they're going to.

But I grew up academically as a transnational feminist. That's really the way I think of my feminism, so my personal perspective is that. I'm not looking for the universal woman--that's not what I'm saying--but there is a difference between multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism. There's a difference in how you look at things or you respect things, and I'd say that transnational feminism is the ability to look for similarities, but being respectful of all of the difference. And that's not the same as a more imperial imposition of international feminist history.

RS: Some of the other women that I've talked to have talked about the sort of high cost of that mockery or the friction or whatever you want to call it. How do you--? And fears about-- Well, there has been sort of two threats. One was that sometimes this internal kind of attack mode has really bad consequences that people--.

SC: Yes.

RS: Drop out. Have you seen that--?

SC: I have seen that.

RS: Much?

SC: I think the costs are very high. I think the costs are very high. And I get frustrated because the feminist world is a small one, and, frankly, it's marginal. It's really--. We are on the margins. There's more than enough hatred, antifeminist sentiment, hostility, anger, rage, cruelty coming at us, that to generate it internally at vitriolic levels is always disappointing to me. But, by the same token, I really do understand--and this is why I say there is this teleology to it--I really do understand that the critiques are necessary. So again, I would say it's two things at once. But the costs are very high. I mean, there are--.

When I write articles, I know that for certain articles I need to be emotionally prepared to deal with the blowback, and I can deal with backlash from conservatives. What I hate is intra-feminist backlash. It smarts more than anything else. And I think part of it is that I'd like to think that there's some kind of global sisterhood, which sounds really naïve because it would be nice to think, "Okay, these people have my back at all times," but I don't think that's realistic. I just don't. So I probably am super careful without even realizing it about what I'm saying. I mean, I try my hardest to make sure that my feminism is intersectional and inclusive.

I mean, I remember the first time that I read about intersectionality. I was probably nineteen. It's not as though it's something that came to me late in life. It was the way I learned feminism and so--. But everybody's human. So I think Roxane Gay's *Bad Feminist* rings really true to me, and it's funny because I think we're roughly the same age. She, too, grew up with parents who were Haitian. Sexual violence features prominently in our work. Her sensibility really resonates with me, but our experiences

are very different. She's a black woman, I'm not, and those experience differences are relevant. But yes, I think there is a high cost. And I think--.

I've spoken to women who have simply stopped writing as feminists because they can't do it. And there are things I don't feel equipped to write about. I am not an expert in trans issues, so that's not something that I'm ever going to claim to be an expert in. I try and be supportive of people whose voices need amplification, but that's pretty much as much as I can do.

RS: That seems to be a huge shift. The new sort of, the new movement, really, and that feminists are grappling with that.

SC: Yes, I think the same issues. To me, it's trans issues, sex work/prostitution, pornography. We haven't come around to talking about pornography again. We're going to have to. That's inevitable. And--.

RS: Why do you say that?

SC: Because I think that pornography is political, and a lot of feminists are pretending it's not. Pornography is hugely political and--.

RS: What do you mean by that?

SC: Well, I'm not a choice feminist, so I really don't buy the wholesale, the "it's my choice" argument. If it's any choice by a woman is feminist, it's not my--. I'm like, no, sorry, it's not. Maybe, like, I'm not of that school. There are schools that are that, but it's not mine. And I think we see that in pornography because the fact is that pornography has public harms, even if people are making individual choices that are good for them. We're just not dealing with the impact of pornography on equality, and I think we're going to have to. So I'm actually editing a book about porn literacy for

children right now, and the point of book is not to say, "Porn good, porn bad." It is, "Porn's here, and we've abrogated our responsibility in terms of media literacy in general with children, but let's look at porn in particular because it's shaping and informing children's--not just their sexual imaginations, but their social and political imaginations--and what do we do about that? How do we give them the language to understand what they're looking at?" I mean, this is amazing.

I had a conversation the day before yesterday with teenagers and some parents, and one of the parents is a special ed teacher. Another one is a counselor at a public school, and they were saying that the thing now is for boys to be drawing penises everywhere. They draw them on their notebooks, they draw them on lockers, and the teenagers are like, "Well, yeah, everybody does that." And I'm like, "No, actually." Everybody doesn't do that, and they didn't do it, so what do you think it means that boys are drawing penises everywhere? What does that mean? And if you were to think from the political perspective, what does it mean when they're drawing in schools, and they're articulated pornographic ideas that we know have an affect on girls' academic performance?

We know based on lots of studies about stereotype and stereotype threat, that when faced with sexualized images of women, because boys are also doing things like wearing pictures of naked girls in cages to school--that happened in Southern California couple of months ago and became a big issue--we know that that degrades academic performance. So at what point do we cross that free speech versus Title IX sexual harassment issue? I mean, when boys are talking openly about violent pornography in

their advisories, which I've also heard, then we have to have a conversation about what the impact of that is on the girls in the room. No one's doing that. They're just not. So I think it's inevitable as we go down this path of Title IX in high schools and comprehensive--. We're just dancing around the issue, we just are.

RS: That's fascinating. I also wanted to ask you about--. Since we're in Washington, D.C., I'm interested in a couple of things. One is the sort of impact of being inside the Beltway as a feminist activist and how you think, if you think that shapes your--. I'm interested in the way feminists today are thinking about power and how their different contexts shape that. So--.

SC: I don't think enough feminists are thinking about power. That's a big blanket statement. I am in the Beltway, but I'm not of the political word. I am in so far as I served on the board of Emerge. Actually, right here in this house is where we created the Maryland Emerge Organization. So very committed, I'm very committed. And very committed to finding ways to get women more involved in the political process, which is why I'm so fixated on school boards. But there are a lot of very disturbing trends, particularly among high school girls: declines in girls running for office, declines in girls supporting other girls running for office.

I think that what we're dealing with right now is a backlash generation. The kids that are teenagers now had parents who grew up in the 1980s and 1990s during a height of backlash, and I don't think we understand what the impact of that on this next generation is yet. These are kids who grew up steeped at unprecedented levels in the mass marketing of gender stereotypes and through an era of political conservatism. And they're coming of age now and when you look at them, even the youngest millennials, for

example, they're supporting Bernie Sanders. They're not supporting Hillary Clinton. And part of that, I think, is just a function of age. We know that women become radicalized in their forties because they've now had twenty years of dealing with sexist shit, whereas young women are still drinking from the hose of equality that they're being watered in in school. And so I, for one, think we need to be talking about politicized contemporary feminism in schools, not as a historical artifact.

Kids are not learning about contemporary feminism in schools. They really are learning about suffragettes getting given the vote. That's still the case. It's staggering to the mind. So in my case, being in the Beltway doesn't really matter. The thing about D.C., though, is that there are these mainstream feminist organizations that have been doing incredible work for decades, but there's a disconnect between those organizations and this exploding, younger feminist's feminism, and I see it all the time. I'm in a trough. I think of myself not in one wave or another. I'm in my late forties and I take from every wave that I need to.

And I have connections in all of those spaces, but I definitely repeatedly bump into older feminist women--usually white--whom I know and respect who really think there's no young feminism, and it's because they're not steeped in the internet, and they're not part of this culture. But there's so much happening that you can't even wrap your brain around it, and that disconnect is really odd. I think, actually, that it would help if we had some mechanism for reverse mentoring, so that it wasn't just a matter of saying, "Hey, older women, teach these younger women," because that's not the situation we're in. We actually need armies of younger women to be talking to older women and telling them what's going on.

I mean, sometimes, in Washington I get very frustrated because there is no thriving feminist community here. That's really--. So much of it culturally is centered in New York in its cultural production. That isn't to say that fantastic things aren't happening elsewhere, they really are. And there are--. There's a community of people here in Washington and we all know each other, but there isn't enough critical mass, and I think that's generally true around the country.

RS: What about--. We've been in such an interesting political climate with a Democratic, and I think you could say feminist, president--

SC: Yes.

RS: And his incredible wife--.

SC: Incredible wife.

RS: And yet in the midst of this unbelievable conservative backlash and everything else. How do you see those two, that tension sort of shaping what people are thinking about, looking at, working on?

SC: So it's very interesting. People are focused with laser-focus on race and the presidency. But as you say, it's an incredibly feminist presidency by any measure. I mean, I know that there are problems, but everything. The healthcare, rape on campus, just all Michelle Obama has to do to be a feminist is get out of bed. Just the fact that the woman is there and doing what she's doing, certainly with the grace that she does it, is a statement of feminism, right? And they have these two teenage daughters, and they are a feminist family, but we have a serious problem in this country with--this sounds terrible but--with complex ideas. I mean, the idea that race constructs gender and gender construct race is not one that we're dealing with, and it's just the fact of those things.

So, you know, we're looking at police abuse and death of young black men and women. Of course, the rapes and deaths of young black women is given second fiddle to the murders of young black men, but they're happening. It's happening all the time. But what's striking to me about that is we expect these law enforcement organizations and criminal justice mechanisms to work, when if you look at them internally they're not even policing themselves. Forty percent of police families experience domestic violence. Forty percent. The second-highest form of police misdemeanor is sexual misconduct, which is a very anodyne word for rape and other things.

So we can't separate those abuses from the abuses that are then publicly perpetrated on black people in their own communities. These are police officers who are perpetrating crimes in their homes. So we can't separate those or put them in a hierarchy. I'm like, you know what, I know that women are not reporting rape. And they're not reporting rape because they're not idiots. That's why we don't go to the police. The police don't believe us because they are as steeped in rape mythologies and masculine forms of violence as the rest of the culture. So yes.

I did an article for *The Nation* last year on how the police miscategorize rapes and how that affects our national assessment. So over fifteen years, it is estimated on the low end that a million rapes are missing from our national counts. This isn't a million reported rapes, not even the fact that the vast majority aren't reported. Among those that are reported, the police miscode them or ignore them to the tune of a million missing rapes.

RS: Miscode them purposely?

SC: Yes. They'll downgrade them so they don't fall into one bucket, but in the other. And the reason they do that is because they need the crime statistics to look like they're improving. But you couple that with hundreds of thousands of untested rape kits, and the fact that you're looking at forty percent of police officers involved in domestic violence, and all of these misconduct incidents being tied to sexual abuse, and what are you supposed to do with that information? I mean, these are not safe places to go and report sexual violence and I just think most of the public doesn't know that or even think about that. But the connections between domestic violence as a bellwether for larger public violence are really clear.

Even our mass shootings, we know that something like fifty-eight percent of mass shootings start in incidents of domestic violence. But as long as we keep treating domestic violence like some private problem between troubled individuals instead of a public health issue, we'll go down this path.

RS: I am interested, you know, this moment that we're in, about gun control and feminists' relationship to that issue. I mean, there was an article I used to teach quite a few years ago now about the Million Mom March and the sort of complexity of, you know, they really did have hundreds of thousands, if not a million people--. But that the article's point was laying claim to that authority through motherhood. They never talked about violence against women, you know--.

SC: Yes, yes.

RS: It was really problematic and allowed people to--.

SC: To ignore them.

RS: To ignore them, dismiss their authority, and those kinds of things. And this just feels like this moment when gun control is a prime--.

SC: What can you even say?

RS: Right. Do you see feminists taking up gun control as a feminist issue?

SC: Well, Hillary Clinton just did. So to the degree that which people think of her as making a feminist statement, she was the only candidate that really came right out and did it. I don't think people think that's feminism taking control of that issue. I think that the most active place that I see that is in the reproductive justice movement because for women of color in particular, gun control is that issue, right? And so--. But again, the media hasn't taken up the language of reproductive justice or its intersectional mode of analysis for the most part. I mean, over and over again, sex and race are being separated and for black women, sex and race cannot be separated, right? But that's not the perspective at all. I mean, editorially in media, the people least represented are black women, and that's a problem for public understanding. So no, I don't see it very actively taken up.

I mean, a person in my position, for example. I write about gun violence, and I write about gun violence tied to masculinity norms over and over and over again, and white masculinity norms over and over and over again. Those are super uncomfortable conversations. I've had editors who really don't want the words white male put together in a sentence. They will focus on victims. They will question the validity of that statement. Like I've had to produce backup research to say, "Actually, that's just descriptive." It's not like I'm editorializing on a whim, right? Ninety-seven percent of mass shooters are white men, so I don't know what to say about that fact, but it feels

hostile. But no. I think that there's a lot more that we could be doing. But I will say this. Although I understand the critique of the Million Mom March--and this is the double bind for women, right--we know that when women convey their messages using traditionally understood gender norms and roles, they're more effective.

RS: I think the New Moms Rising is a really interesting--.

SC: Interesting.

RS: Organization.

SC: I agree. But again, as to your point, it's moms. The primary place for women remains that incredibly segregated and narrow field of dominance. It's just stunning to me.

RS: Although, I think their tagline is something like, "For everyone who is a mom, has a mom," you know, something.

SC: Yes, but you can't get away from the mom. The whole definition pivots around the uterus. I'm like, really?

RS: You brought up Hillary Clinton. Do you know Rebecca Tracer's book?

SC: Yes, *The Election*.

RS: *That Changed Everything*. What are you seeing in this next round? Do you think that the media treatment of her will be significantly, is or will be--?

SC: I think that the media treatment of her will be far more sensitive now, largely in part to Rebecca's book. I think it's fantastic. Jennifer Lawless at American University is about to release a book that basically says the media doesn't treat men and women differently. But I have talked to her about that, and I've also talked to people who have analyzed her prior research. And the thing that's problematic to me about that is that

she's looking at a very small window towards the end of election cycles, not the beginning when people get weeded out because of potentially sexist coverage. But what I asked her recently--this was within the month--she did a presentation at the New America Foundation, and she basically said there's not sexist treatment happening. And I said, "But we've just had a conversation about the fact that women can only express themselves in the most narrow way." So the baseline is already that they're constricting their form of expression, which is ultimately a sexist outcome, because--. Not just a sexist outcome, but the result of a sexist context.

If women have to walk this narrow line because they're anticipating being castigated, that's a problem. That doesn't mean there's no sexist coverage; it means they've already edited themselves. So I think that the media will be marginally better, but you're never, ever going to stop the people who do things like create, again, pornography using her face or her name with the explicit intent to denigrate and subjugate. That's what that pornography is, and it's always--. It's going to happen.

RS: And do you think that young feminists are going to--.

SC: Rally?

RS: Rally?

SC: I'm not sure. I mean, it's kind of disturbing that more young people support Marco Rubio than they support Hillary Clinton. I mean, think about that. But again, we are not educating anyone. I have spoken probably at twenty colleges and universities, among them the most elite--the most elite in the country--and what people are being taught is astounding. I even flat-out just say to people, "You're only really half-educated. You're really only half-educated." And unless you deliberately go out and

educate yourselves, no one else is going to. But they just don't know. It's really disturbing.

RS: I think that's all my questions. Is there anything you think I should've asked you that we haven't talked about?

SC: I was thinking your focus was hash tag feminism. Honestly, the only thing I can say is--. Because a lot of people say to me, "Oh, that Facebook Rape Campaign, it was so great and how can I do that?" And the only thing I say to students especially is that you have to plan. You can't just wake up one morning. There are some hash tags, like YesAllWomen, that took off because there was a catalyzing moment in time, and there was just this global outpouring of emotion. That's what it was; it was sheer emotion. But for a hash tag to really be effective, it has to have legs on the ground. You have to institutionalize change, and I think that that's hard, sloggy work, and honestly it can be very depressing because these institutions are so moribund. Yes. I don't want to end on a depressing note.

RS: Several people have talked about the sort of disconnect, well, I think it was Emily May said that she felt that academic feminism, women's studies classes, were teaching students to tear things apart and that we really needed to teach students how to build things. She also talked about the slog, the hard work, and that young feminists are not being prepared for that.

SC: For the slog?

RS: Mm-hmm.

SC: Well, I'll broaden that. What are kids being prepared for building? The kids being prepared to build things are primarily young white men being sent to Silicon

Valley. They are not feminists. If there's a retrograded place on the planet, it is the heart of Silicon Valley, and that's a huge social issue. It's a huge social issue that we're not just talking about either. I think she has a good point. It is one thing to learn deconstruction. It's very valuable; it's really useful. But even now, in retrospect, talking to you, I realize that when I talked about my corporate experience being valuable, it is because I learned about institutions. Girls are not taught about institutions because we're often on the outside of institutions.

It starts with sports. Even the best, most athletic girls hit the age of fourteen, and they look ahead, and they see there's no place for them. There's no money, there's no professional sports, there's no coverage. Less than two percent of sports coverage has anything to do with women's sports. And that's a path to leadership and it's a door that's firmly closed. Firmly closed. But again, this is where I come down to saying everything has to happen at once. There can be no one place. Saying that feminism needs to focus on X is like saying democracy has to focus on X. I don't get that, you know? I just don't understand what people are thinking.

But yes, teaching them to build things is important. But then again, I would go back to early childhood. People think it's sort of silly for Western feminists to talk about toys. Toys are how we learn to operate in the world, and they're worse now than they were forty years ago, thirty years ago, even twenty years ago. They're just--. I mean, I wrote an article a couple of months ago about how laughable it was that one of the world's major toy manufacturers got an award for the most ethical company because of the promulgation of stereotypes through its toys. I was saying you can't put ethical

together with what these people are doing. It is grossly unethical to be doing what they're doing and profiting from this exploitation of children.

RS: Do you--. So one last question. This passion for and skill at taking those kind of issues and--. You talked earlier about your goal to not really write just within feminist blogospheres or something like that, but in a more national, mainstream audience. Do you--. At the end of the day, are you feeling optimistic, pessimistic, satisfied, dissatisfied with the kind of impact that you're able to have?

SC: Honestly, today, I'm ambivalent because I'm old enough to see these cycles of boom and bust where this is this kind of momentum. But what I always go back to is the fact that we never pervasively shift the education culture and so every wave has to relearn everything from scratch basically. And they're learning through culture, they're seeing their mothers working, they're seeing their fathers taking care of children, they're seeing differences, but they're not actively being engaged to think about these things. They're not, for example, learning to build change into institutions. They're not given the words to confront sexism or racism.

And I think that we have still a major problem with what I would describe as living with a hermeneutical void. And by that I mean, you know--. To go back to my great-grandmother, right? Here was a woman who was kidnapped at fourteen, serially raped for years--I don't care what anybody tells me; that is what happened to her--ended up trembling and speechless and traumatized. But during the course of her lifetime, feminists created the legal framework and the language that enables us to talk about kidnapped brides, rape, post-partum depression. Those things, those words, they didn't

exist until the late 1960s, early 1970s. And now we are creating new language, as well, that we--.

There's all this controversy about things like safe spaces or trigger warnings or online harassment, but those are all words that are describing experiences that, before, nobody described. So they learn that way because those things permeate the culture, but it's so slow. And the fact of the matter is still today, the higher up any organization or sector you go, the fewer and fewer women there are. And in this country, that includes race, but in other countries it might be caste. Or in a place like China, it's gender, pure and simple. It's stubborn. [Laughter] It's very stubborn. So I'm not really feeling optimistic. I'm feeling frustrated is how I would put it. Not frustrated enough to stop.

RS: [Laughter] That's the painful part.

SC: And I always say you have to have a sense of humor, but a friend of mine says that's just a way to deflect my anger. [Laughter]

END OF INTERVIEW

Chris Kelley - April 26, 2016