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

Interview R-0878
Ivanna Gonzalez
February 28, 2014

**ABSTRACT – Ivanna Gonzalez**

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| Interviewee: | Ivanna Gonzalez |
| Interviewer: | Rachel Seidman |
| Interview Date: | February 28, 2014 |
| Length: | Two hours, six minutes |

Ivanna Gonzalez is a young activist in North Carolina who has been significantly involved in a variety of social justice causes. She was born in 1991 in Venezuela, and came to the United States as a young child. She begins the interview talking about family in Venezuela and her father's arrival in the United States to attend college. She discusses her father's entrepreneurial activities and the failure of his business due to a partner's illegal activities, and the impact this had on the economic and emotional lives of her parents and her family. She discusses the development of her activist identity through a campaign in high school aimed at supporting a teacher who had been fired. She describes her years as a student at UNC Chapel Hill, and her growing understanding of activism and her role in it. She discusses her work with Student Action with Workers, including a pivotal moment during which the organization disrupted a meeting of the Board of Governors. She also describes the Who Needs Feminism campaign, which was started as a final project in a course at Duke (taught by the interviewer, Rachel Seidman) and her understanding of the significance of the campaign. Gonzalez also discusses her decision to get arrested at one of the Moral Monday events, and describes the way she was treated in jail despite her status as a naturalized American citizen. She also discusses the Forward Together movement organized by the North Carolina NAACP and her role as a speaker at the large Moral March in February, 2014. Gonzalez touches briefly on her work as an Autry Fellow at MDC in Durham, North Carolina, and her thoughts on where she wants to focus her energies in the future.

# FIELD NOTES – IVANNA GONZALEZ

(compiled March 3, 2014)

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| Interviewee: | Ivanna Gonzalez |
| Interviewer: | Rachel Seidman |
| Interview Date: | February 28, 2014 |
| Location: | The Love House & Hutchins Forum, UNC Chapel Hill, NC |

THE INTERVIEWEE. Ivanna Gonzalez was born on March 9, 1991 in Venezuela. She moved to the United States as a young child and grew up in Miami, Florida. She graduated as a Robertson Scholar from UNC Chapel Hill, where she was a student activist in a variety of movements including Student Action with Workers. She was part of the class that launched the Who Needs Feminism social media campaign in 2012 and has been active in the Moral Monday and Forward Together movement organized by the NAACP NC.

THE INTERVIEWER. Rachel F. Seidman is the Associate Director of the Southern Oral History project and a historian of women's activism. She is currently working on a research project about feminist activists in the digital era.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERVIEW. The interview took place in my office at the Love House and Hutchins Forum on UNC's campus. There is some background noise from people in the hallways outside my office. There is a moment when I feared I had not started the recording correctly and interrupted the interview momentarily. Ivanna was my student in two classes at Duke (one of which was responsible for Who Needs Feminism) and worked at the SOHP as an intern.

NOTE ON RECORDING. I used the SOHP's Zoom recorder.

**TRANSCRIPT – Ivanna Gonzalez**

Interviewee: Ivanna Gonzalez

Interviewer: Rachel Seidman

Interview date: February 28, 2014

Location: Love House, UNC-Chapel Hill

Length: 2:05:57

RACHEL SEIDMAN: So I'm going to just do the forms that you're used to using first and then we'll get to talking about your life. Okay. So Gonzalez, Z-A-L-E-Z, right.

IVANNA GONZALEZ: Um hmm.

RS: Two Ns.

IG: Cristina with no H.

RS: C-R-I-S-T-I-N-A.

IG: Yeah.

RS: What should I put for race?

IG: White Hispanic.

RS: Current address.

IG: 1000 North Duke Street, number twenty-seven, Durham, North Carolina 27701.

RS: Home phone.

IG: It's my mobile, 786389—

RS: Oops. 786.

IG: 3893783.

RS: Date of birth.

IG: Three, nine, ninety-one.

RS: Birth place.

IG: Caracas, Venezuela.

RS: How do you spell Venezuela?

IG: V-E-N-E-Z-U-E-L-A.

RS: E-Z-U-E-L-A. Okay. Education, where did you go to high school?

IG: Coral Reef Senior High School in Miami, Florida.

RS: Okay and then UNC was your first, you came here as a freshman, right?

IG: Yeah.

RS: Graduated in 20—

IG: [20]13.

RS: [20]13 As a BA in—

RS: In?

IG: Political science and public policy.

RS: And you were, your title at MDC [Manpower Development Corporation] is Autry Fellow.

IG: Um hmm.

RS: Okay and I will (0:02:29.4). Okay so then you know the ropes. We'll do the interview first, and then we'll talk about the deposit slip forms afterwards.

IG: Okay.

RS: We have new ones that are based on, what's the name of that, I keep wanting to say Constant Contact but that's not right. Commons—

IG: Is it Creative?

RS: Creative Commons. Yeah. All right. So we will do those later. Okay. So you know that, I'm just going to tell you a little bit more about the background just so you have in your head what I'm doing. This interview, so I'm doing these interviews for my own research for this book project that I'm trying to write. I'm, I've talked to Melinda here at the SOHP [Southern Oral History Program], and she sort of thinks that the interviews that take place in the South are related to the South in some way, she would like to deposit as part of the Long Women's Movement in the South project.

IG: Okay.

RS: So I think maybe some of the other ones that I do may or may not get deposited here, but this one would go into the SOHP collection as part of that Long Women's Movement collection if you're comfortable with it at the end. And I mean it'll be a little bit funny just because we know each other and part of what I want to talk about is the class and stuff like that, but so we'll just feel our way through that. Don't worry about it. Don't, if there's, and just like with any interview, if there's anything ever where you want me to turn off the recorder or we can definitely do that. And you'll get a chance to edit the transcript afterwards and all of that. So do you have any questions before we get started about the purpose or the whatever?

IG: Yeah, I think that's good.

RS: ( 00:05:06.0 ) again I'm not going to worry about the whole time but I want to be sure we are actually getting a sound. Oh I can never remember, I remember I think you press ( 00:05:34:1 ).

IG: Trying to get it record.

RS: Yeah. I think there's something about how you press it once and then you press it again.

IG: Oh that's right. I forgot about that.

RS: Yeah.

IG: Oh man. It's been a while.

RS: Press the record button once. The red light should be flashing. You should see the audio levels going up and down. Headphones on, say something test. And when you're ready to start the recording press twice. Okay. [walking back over] Okay. Wow. It's really loud.

IG: It seems to be working.

RS: Yeah. It's working. Okay, so that's a good test. I don't think I need to do that anymore. I'm picking up—

IG: There's a clock.

RS: It's a clock. Yeah. Okay.

IG: ( 00:06:34.3 )

RS: Okay. Okay so I'll just do a little introduction, and then we will get started okay.

IG: Should I get, we're talking about say the class right. Should I give context just as if you didn't know it?

RS: I think I'll ask you to.

IG: Okay.

RS: So yeah, I think we should try to imagine that I, but I also think there's something, we can't pretend that we don't know each other so—

IG: Right.

RS: So I'll, I may just say, can you expand on that or something.

IG: Right.

RS: Okay. Hi, my, I'm Rachel Seidman. I'm the Associate Director of the Southern Oral History Program. And I'm here today February 28th, 2014 at the Love House on UNC's campus at the Center for the Study of the American South. I'm here with Ivanna Gonzalez who is currently an Autry Fellow at MDC and was formerly my student, and I am interviewing her as part of two projects. One is the Long Women's Movement in the American South project for the Southern Oral History Program, and one is a project called Speaking Up, Speaking Out, Talking Back, young feminists in the digital age, which is my own research project. So Ivanna, I'm very happy that you can be with me here today.

IG: Thanks for having me.

RS: I'm wondering if we can start back a ways before you were around, and if you can tell me what you know—I don't know are your grandparents still alive?

IG: Grandmothers.

RS: You have two—

IG: Both grandmothers.

RS: Grandmothers alive. So what can you tell me about your grandparents?

IG: Okay. Let's see. So on my mom's side, grandfather Wadith Eljuri. He's a, I'm not sure if he was a first generation Venezuelan immigrant from Lebanon or if his parents were the first generation. But that's where that, the last name Eljuri is Lebanese and we eat lots of Lebanese food. He owned a farm when he was growing up or he, yeah,

that's what I remember about him that he owned a farm. And I think that's where the money came from for my mom growing up. And then my grandmother I'm pretty sure that she was a, she was a civil servant and a secretary or maybe in finance, something like that. So is now living off the, so now has her pension because she did that her whole life and made it to retirement. They were probably a bit higher class just financially than my dad's side of the family.

So I had on the other side my grandmother Magda and Angel are my parents, or my dad's parents. And my, they separated when my dad and his siblings, my uncles and aunts, were really young. He was having an affair, had a whole other family on the other side of the city. And so my dad and my aunt and uncles were basically raised by my grandmother with very little support from my grandfather. I only recall meeting him one time. He passed away I think when I was in kindergarten. My grandma is still around. She worked a bunch of different jobs; I remember was working so much that she was barely around to raise my dad and his siblings. I don't think that they went to college. I don't think any of my grandparents went to college. Yeah.

RS: Do you remember your dad talking about his mom at all?

IG: Yeah, yeah. I mean, she's still around and they talk sometimes. I think my grandma wishes that they talked more. I think he respects her a lot for what he does, for what she did for the family and has a lot of negative feeling and resentment towards my grandfather. I remember, I don't know if I knew this at the time or if I was told this later, but when my grandfather died of a really sudden heart attack when I was in kindergarten, my dad had no intention of going to Venezuela for the funeral. I think he said that that wasn't his father. And my mom convinced him that he needed to go. So I remember

getting pulled out of class and being told that daddy's leaving, come say bye. So I like left class for a couple of minutes to say goodbye. It was right before my birthday. I think that's why I remember it. I remember thinking oh is he going to miss my birthday party. That was my first thought.

RS: And so your parents then grew up in Venezuela.

IG: Yeah. My dad grew up in Caracas in the capital and mom grew up in Barcelona, which is used to be a small beach town. Now it's not so small. It's a big city. They both, both finished high school. Dad did high school at a military, a military school in a really small beach town where my great grandmother lived, my mom's grandmother. So that's where they met in this really small beach town in Venezuela. He was there for military school, and my mom would go spend the summers with her great grandmother. I think he was like six years older, and my dad was trying to get my mom to date him for a really long time. And she kept saying no because my mother would be very upset that I was dating somebody. So it wasn't until way later that they got together.

RS: And then what did your dad do for work?

IG: So my dad got a scholarship to go to school in the United States through the Venezuelan government. He flew, I think flew from Caracas, and I think he told me he landed in New York, and that's where he first landed. First went to a school in Ohio for about a year and didn't really like it and then transferred to Lake Superior State University where he majored in computer engineering. It's got all these great stories about the big computers he used to work on and learned programming, and he then went on to found a company with some Venezuelan friends. I think there were five of them in

total. And they became like co-founders and co-owners of this company that ended up becoming a Fortune 500 company.

RS: Did I push that twice?

IG: Yeah. I think it's ticking.

RS: Yeah.

IG: Panic. They were, they distributed I think computer hardware, and he was in charge of traveling the world and starting new branches in different parts of the world. And they were just really big—

RS: The company was based in Venezuela?

IG: No, it was based in Miami. It was started in the U.S. It was technically an American company but run by five Venezuelan men. That was where, I mean, that was when I was really young. That's what, that's what his occupation was and the one of those five men turned out to, when the company was about to go public, it came out that he was doing all kinds of illegal things. Some sort of related, I don't know insider trading I'm not sure what the details are, but that made everything fall apart. They basically, they lost everything then. And so that, yeah that was a really big kind of thing for my family.

RS: How old were you then?

IG: I was probably, the company probably came down when I was in maybe kindergarten or first grade. Yeah, kindergarten or first grade. They all got some dividends. They received something when the company closed out, and I remember my dad saying to us, there were five of them, right. There was the one guy who was doing all the illegal things, my dad and then three others. And the three other guys went and bought themselves these amazing mansions in Miami, right, because they had all this

money that came into, came in suddenly even though the company had gone bust. And I guess my little sister and I were kind of confused why we weren't getting a big mansion. He said well because we're smarter. We're going to save money and put some money in a college fund for you all and well, they didn't keep their mansions for too long. So it turned out that my dad made the right decision. But that's when we moved from downtown Miami like in the heart of the city to this kind of more suburb type thing of Miami.

Yeah, and my mom's a doctor by training. She went to school. She finished medical school; she did her residency while Ori—my little sister's name is Oriana, goes by Ori, so Ori and I were toddlers we would stay with my grandmother, my uncle, nanny in Venezuela while she was doing her residency, and my dad was traveling all over the world for the company.

RS: So you spent quite a bit of time in Venezuela.

IG: Until I was three or four years old, I didn't, I went to pre-K there, and then when I got here I started kindergarten. And my, when we came to the U.S., my mom decided that she wasn't going to try to get certified here partially because she, at that time we had the money for her not to work, right. And she also didn't really like the way the health care system worked in the U.S., and she wanted to stay home and take care of us. So she decided not to go for it and to stay home with us.

RS: And then did she also not work after the company fell apart.

IG: Um hmm. Yeah. She didn't work for a while. She was, she was in the PTA and volunteering. She was a certified ( 00:18:05.9 ) at my elementary school and came on all the field trips, which was great like in the third grade, and then by the time I

was in fifth, I was like this is the worst. You need to go away. She started to work again I think when I was in seventh or eighth grade because that's when things between my parents started to get really rocky, and I think she was starting to realize or starting to think about what, what she needed to do for herself. She started to work first as a secretary at an art gallery of this like big famous Venezuelan woman and eventually decided to become a social worker. That's what she's doing now. She's been doing for almost ten years now.

RS: So she never went back to her medical training.

IG: No, she's been toying with the idea of getting a nursing degree. And she uses a lot of the medical knowledge in her, as a social worker. She says that sometimes she can pick up like duplications in doctor's ordering multiple exams that do the same thing, and so she says that that's really helpful to her because she can, she's able to save some of her clients' money when their benefits are really tight. My dad is now, he self, he's a self-taught photographer and graphic designer and web designer. After the company fell through he had this like short stint developing, trying to create smart houses, and like develop this whole system and it never really took off. He bought a cheese factory, a Venezuelan cheese factory, and they were as mailing cheese all over the country. That was him and my uncles, and that fell through. And then one time we came back, my mom and my little sister and I went back to Venezuela for the summer, we came back to the U.S., and my dad says we have a surprise for you. And we go straight from the airport to this little bakery slash restaurant, and he says, this is our restaurant. So we owned a restaurant for about I think like a year.

RS: So he was an entrepreneurial.

IG: Yeah, and now he like has, he's like a freelance photographer, graphic designer, web designer, mostly for luxury real estate companies. My dad's always says he cannot work for anybody, which is just very fitting of his personality.

RS: So but they ended up splitting up.

IG: Yeah, so they're really recently, like a couple months ago they officially separated.

RS: Oh.

IG: Lots of complications, a bankruptcy, home foreclosure, my mom just not having the financial resources to really be able to leave. But yeah, they finally, they're now finally living in separate places and just starting to navigate what it means to go through a divorce when things are still tied up in a bankruptcy and a foreclosure. So—

RS: That's rough all around.

IG: Yeah. Lots of things all at once. I think that's what made it hard for my mom to think about actually making that happen because there were just so many things tied up.

RS: That's tough. Well, so let's move to focusing on you a little bit. Do you, I mean I know you now as this really dedicated activist person at multiple levels and in multiple ways, and we'll talk more about all of that. But were there things in your upbringing either as a child that you look back on, events or something someone said or people in your past that you think started shaping you in those ways?

IG: Yeah. So one of the things I remember about growing up is so like I said my mother was a doctor, and people in our, in the community that I grew up in, this, ( 00:22:31.0 ) little suburby part of Miami it's called Doral. It's kind of this little enclave

of Venezuelan people, mostly like middle and upper class Venezuelans. So it's kind of a, it's grown now, but it was a pretty tight knit small community when I was really young. And my mom was like the town doctor. So she would get calls in the middle of the night and be like so and so's coughing we don't know what it is. So and so has a mysterious bump in their shoulder, on their shoulder. We don't know what it is. And my mom would just be, would go wherever she needed to go or if someone needs to talk; somebody's, we had some people with mental illness in our family. So and so is having a mental episode and we need to go figure that out. And my mom would just kind of herd all the kids in the car, my little sister and I, whatever time it was. Could've been midnight; could've been one in the morning. And off we were wherever we were needed, and my little sister and I would be asleep in the car. So I think that was just a part of like the culture in my house. My dad always really being out of the picture because he just, he was just not emotionally there, always financially supportive but not present in other ways. So I always kind of think that my mom raised me and my little sister, and that's what she was like. She was, she would be the, if she needed to be there until three in the morning, whatever time, whatever it took she was always there so I think that that impulse to help came from that, and I think that that's kind of, I think that's what put me on this path to where I am now. It starts with this kind of very naïve almost paternalistic, I need to help everybody type thing. And thankfully I got the opportunity to be challenged by people here at UNC and took a lot of really important classes that, that kind of took that energy and isn't just an impulse to help but part of like a bigger movement building and working with people as opposed to poor people. I think I trace that back to my mom.

RS: Before you came to UNC were you active in student clubs or government or anything in high school?

IG: Yeah, I so I was in debate. That's kind of, inevitably brought me to politics. Yeah, so I remember, this may be to your last question. In fifth grade, in fourth grade, Bush was running against Gore, and our, my social studies teacher this came the day after the election. Everything was contested. We didn't know who was going to win, and she says as you know there was a presidential election, and we don't know what's going to happen. She said if you're interesting you can do some research tonight and we'll have an in class debate about what should happen. She kind of said this off-handedly, and me and this one other kid were the only two that took this very seriously at all. I went home and I pulled every *Miami Herald* that I could find. I put it in a this little ( 00:25:51.4 ) binder and I taped it all in there and I came back. And we had a debate the next day, and this kid hadn't done any research but he said he wanted to be in a debate. I was like I don't know anything about politics, but it seems really obvious who should win and it's not Bush. Yeah, and then, I think it was a lot of presidential elections because then the next kind of big thing I remember being was Kerry versus Bush, and I remember staying up really late and following the election results and like shutting the computer every time my mom would come in the room and be like go to sleep. Then the next presidential election was Obama in [20]08, I did this whole organized a big fundraiser and voter registration drive for seniors at my high school. So I had organized a bunch of local bands to come and play. It was like this six hour thing, and you were supposed to call your friends and tell them to come because this was supposed to be a long time so you could call your friends and have them say your name at the door, and then the person who

would get the most people to the event would get a free homecoming ticket. So we registered a ton of people to vote, and then I got involved in the Obama campaign.

And there was this whole episode where this high school teacher of mine was fired who I really loved when I was first year. We did this whole thing with got a petition and went to the school board and flooded the school board meeting and all this stuff to try to get him reinstated. And it didn't work.

RS: How did that make you feel at the time?

IG: I was furious. I think that I saw it as they were trying to prove a point. There were lots of people who had done what he had done. He had falsified some recertification documents. Apparently you have to do some kind of training every couple of years to keep your license, and he had got, he had paid somebody to sign off and had been this like big scam that had been going on in Miami-Dade County Schools for a really long time. And he became the example. This was the first AP class that I had ever taken. And so I thought this was, my passing my AP exam was the most important thing in the world. And I saw it as the people on the school board trying to make an example out of a person when the people it was going to really hurt was the students, right, and they were going to take our teacher away like two months before the most important exam of my life. And they fired him and he came back and he taught, he held afternoon sessions three days a week for any of his old students who wanted to, who wanted to come. And we all came for two months straight after school for like two or three hours.

RS: Wow.

IG: Yeah, that was—

RS: How would you say that that experience shaped your view of sort of power or organizing or politics or do you think it was just sort of more personal at that time?

IG: I don't know there was an instinct in me to get lots of people involved. He was a world history teacher. So our slogan was 191 Ronin because we learned about the Japanese warriors who were fiercely loyal and there were 191 of us, was the total number of students that year. And I made these signs that everybody could wear that said like I'm one of the 191 Ronin, and we wore those at school for a week. I remember printing them out and putting paper clips and yarn so people could wear them. So I don't know if I was conscious of it.

RS: Was your mom supportive of all this at the time?

IG: Yeah, yeah. She was, she was supportive. She was always really worried that I was putting, I remember her being really concerned about the fundraising concert because we had to, we basically had to front a ton of money to buy food all this, and to secure the space and the equipment that we needed, all this stuff. And we ended up making it all back. But she was just always really wary that I was sacrificing myself. In that case it wasn't my money. It was their money. It was my parent's money, but she kind of saw how, I was running this whole thing the first semester of my senior year and applying to schools and all of that. And this was just taking up my whole life. So I think she's always been the person policing how much I take on. That's where her only resistance to it comes from.

RS: Even though it sounds like she sacrifices herself for the greater good.

IG: Yeah, yeah. It's definitely where I learned it from. Yeah.

RS: So then you came to UNC as a Robertson scholar. Can you talk a little bit about that, just that experience of arriving here and getting the scholarship, those early, that early time in your UNC career? What do you remember or recall about that?

IG: So my dad never filled out FAFSA [Federal Application for Student Aid] forms for me. He I mean I don't know what it is about my dad. He just runs away from things that are scary or complicated, and he doesn't know how to handle. And one of those things was taxes. So I don't know how he's doing with all that now, but one of the things that happened is that he just didn't fill out any financial aid forms. So I, I mean I had applied to a good like, to schools in Florida, but I really, my dream was to get out. But it was looking increasingly impossible because my dad had not done that. And he, so I mean the, I didn't apply for the Robertson. I had applied to UNC. Somebody in the admissions office saw my application and said, and sent it to the Robertson staff. So huge amount of luck with the admissions officer who got my application knew about the Robertson program and then decided to take initiative to pass it along. So I get this email saying congratulations you're a semi-finalist for the Robertson scholarship. It's like this plain HTML [Hypertext Markup Language] it's like you'll get a computer and four year college and summer experiences. I'm like this has got to be a scam. I looked it up, and my dad helped me look it up, looked it up and so I responded and I said yeah sure. So I did a phone interview and all this other stuff. I remember getting the letter. My dad was trying to hide it from me because we got it the Friday that would've been the beginning of my spring break of my senior year. And my dad didn't want it to ruin my spring break. So he, my mom tells me like she says she brings me the letter. I'm at work. She says, "Your dad didn't want me to give it to you. But I'm just going to give it to you anyway

because I have a good feeling." And so I opened the letter and I got it and I called my dad. And that was probably the first time I ever heard him cry. I was really happy but I think my dad was probably happier.

RS: Relieved that—

IG: Yeah.

RS: Because it pays full tuition and everything.

IG: Yeah. Full tuition, books, there's a travel stipend, it pays for summers, new computer. It's everything. It's pretty much everything. So it was the greatest thing in the entire world because I was going to end up at University of Florida, which is not a bad school, but I would've been at school with a bunch of people that I went to high school with and that's not what I wanted. Yeah, so I came to UNC. The Robertson basically does this retreat for the first years. You like go on this three day hike in Bryson City, North Carolina. And because of that when I got to UNC, I kind of had this like built in group of friends. So I think I had this really kind of really ideal experience getting to UNC that I was, I didn't really have to look for friends. We had bonded and we had gotten so close in that, those, in that trip that I didn't need to call anybody to go to the dining hall. I just knew that we were all going to go to the dining hall together, like all twelve of us. That's how we rolled just like in this big pack for the first half of my life in college. So they were really, I mean my class at UNC and the group at Duke and the staff at the Robertson program were just my main support group and anchor.

RS: Because the Robertson includes one year, it's a, it's a, they have Robertsons at UNC and at Duke, and you spend one year on the other campus. Is that right?

IG: One semester.

RS: One semester.

IG: Yeah, so the class is usually like thirty or maybe a little bit more. It's fifty, fifty percent Duke, fifty percent UNC, and the second semester sophomore year you get to, you get to go to the other campus and you live on the other campus. I mean and you can take classes at the other campus whenever you want. Yeah. And first year I did a bunch of stuff just jumped around to every imaginable social justice service organization ever. My little sister came to visit me that year. She spent her spring break with us. And she would complain that I like, that she basically never saw me. Like my friends were, my Robertson friends were taking her out to dinner because I was too busy at meetings. I was involved with a lot, a lot of things, none of them that really grabbed me. Like I wasn't actually involved with any of those things by the time I graduated.

The big thing that happened was I got involved in this relocation of the homeless shelter thing that was happening in Chapel Hill at the time. There was a really big contentious debate in Chapel Hill moving a shelter that was, that is still downtown to a piece of land that had been donated that was in a residential neighborhood. I got involved because I was part of, it was like a community engagement committee of the executive branch of student government. And it was this really horrible gut-wrenching thing. I think, it was like my first experience with, I don't know with what exactly, but I just remember agonizing over whether or not I was on the quote-unquote right side. That as a student I was involved with a homelessness advocacy organization that I was advocating for supporting the relocation. And I remember I was emailed by a couple of parents in the neighborhood who like sat me and this other friend of mine down who were working on this, we were working on this together and they said, they were like very patronizing like

you don't pay taxes. You don't know what this is about. They were like get out of our hair. Yeah, it was a really, it was a really tough, negative experience I think for me, kind of shifted. I used to have, I kind of had this really like idealized vision of what, of what Chapel Hill was, and it was like this clash of the folks who thought of themselves as progressive and wanting to support people and ( 00:37:53.3 ) homelessness and all this other stuff. I just wasn't as cut and dried as I thought it was going into it.

RS: They had a sort of not in my back yard.

IG: Yeah, that kind of standard thing, and I mean, lots of racially coded language. I just didn't know how to articulate that at the time. And I didn't know how to respond to those parents that called and invited me to Caribou Coffee and basically at screamed at me like I was their teenager or something.

RS: Were you being supported at all by faculty or administrators here or were you all just sort of on your own as students?

IG: Not adults.

RS: Um hmm.

IG: Yeah, it was student government and they were supposed to be backing us, but really it was this friend and I, and we started to get involved and we decided we just couldn't stop being involved because it was hard. So we kept going and basically by ourselves, and we were just two first years and it was terrifying.

RS: So you really ran into the complexities of social change and resistance and—

IG: Conflicting interests, right. It's like people's children and the realities of there is more crime directly around a homeless shelter right. It's just fact.

RS: Yeah, that's tough. Did you have, when you arrived did you have a major or a career path in mind?

IG: Yeah, I applied to UNC because I wanted to be a journalism major.

RS: Okay.

IG: I remember doing all these like, when the few times we got to do independent projects in high school, I used to write about how terribly biased the news was and I was going to be a not biased journalists, and that's why I applied to UNC.

RS: Because you thought you'd go into the school of journalism.

IG: Yeah, and I'm not exactly sure what happened. I always knew that I was, political science was kind of my guilty pleasure. I always knew I was going to do that, and journalism was going to be the career path. I think, I think I took a journalism class at Duke where the professor did a really great job of bringing in journalists who got to do the work that they do through all sorts of avenues, and most of them never went to journalism school. So I decided that I wasn't going to put myself through one of the most difficult kind of set of requirements for a major. It was just a huge major. It would've have allowed me probably to take the kinds of classes that I would've wanted to do.

RS: So it wasn't that you just decided you didn't want to do journalism. You just decided you didn't want to major in that.

IG: Um hmm. Yeah. And I was just, I was just getting I think really sucked away more with the being a part of the action type thing. I do remember having thoughts in my head about whether I could do both. You could be a part of the action and also write about it. It was something that I thought a lot about when I was at the Southern Oral

History Program about whether you could be a researcher doing oral histories and also be kind of an activist at the same time. It's kind of been a recurring theme.

RS: So when did you, at some point, well, maybe in your political science but I think you and I first met in the History of Poverty class. Can you, was that, did you take other courses in which you studied the history of activism or was that the first sort of one like that?

IG: No, that was the first. Like the exploration that I had done just in the realm of social change had been in like this social entrepreneurship class that I was really taken with when I was a first year and that class was ( 0:42:08.4 ). I think that was the class I think that really kind of, I mean it's really cheesy but I think it really just kind of turned my life upside down.

RS: So what happened? What do you remember about that?

IG: I remember a student, and I don't know what the discussion was, what the conversation was, or which one of the many books we were talking about, but I remember somebody saying something to the effect of anybody can go to Harvard. Right. Anybody can apply and you can just get a scholarship. Or you can just get financial aid and then you can go to Harvard. And I was like no that's not true. I had like, I had perfect grades in high school. I did all of the things and had a lot of really supportive parents, but I wouldn't have been able to go to Harvard. That was just one of those things that really stuck with me that both thinking about myself and the fact that I probably wouldn't have been able to go even if I had applied and gotten in and even within that, that I had a huge amount of, in my head it was luck at the time. I was lucky that I had supportive parents, that I had a mom who was able to stay home for much of my childhood and was dragging

me around to all kinds of things that I wanted to do and explore. And yeah, so I was and I think reading *To Right Things Wrong*, which was so local made it more real.

RS: Made what more real.

IG: I mean we read a bunch of other books, but I don't remember any of them kind of striking me as much as that one did. I can remember a lot of things, and I remember a lot about like the history of Durham because I think we, like I'm sitting in Durham, and then the experience of the lab and just having that small group within this bigger class. I mean we were doing lab work during our lab sessions, but it was just kind of typing away and finding data and things to put in our reports. And we would talk during those conversations. And one of the people in our little group was involved with the Community Empowerment Fund, and it was really interested in that. And then I, yeah, I was just, I remember thinking through a lot what it means to do this world of microfinance and how cool and innovative it was, but was it just helping people who were already in a bad place and not asking like why did people end up there in the first place. That just all happened sort of little by little. I can't, if there were any specific things.

RS: That was your sophomore or junior year?

IG: That was the fall of my sophomore year.

RS: And so that you think helped focus your interests in a particular way? I mean you say it was life changing. What do you mean by that?

IG: Yeah, I think that was just the first time that I learned about this, about like privilege essentially. Right and the fact that not everybody starts in the same place. I think something as basic and fundamental as that is what I got out of that class, and I had

taken other, I had taken political science classes a lot up to that point and I hadn't gotten that in those classes at all. There was no conversation about power and who has it and whether political science you talk about like how voting like which racial groups are voting for who and what kind of blocs exist in the U.S. But there wasn't any, I don't remember there ever being any conversation about whether people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds had the kind of political power that a big corporation does. That wasn't a part of the discussion, and the other thing that really struck me about that class was learning about the, about the whole 501(c)3 not being able to be involved in politics thing. I was really grappling with that and thinking about Howard Fuller and what he was doing and he was a 501(c)3 was a really big part of making so many things, of bringing to life so many things in Durham. And I just remember thinking well if nonprofits aren't allowed to do that work of empowering people who are typically disenfranchised and not part of the discourse then who's going to do it right. That didn't make any sense to me.

RS: Yeah, that legal change that happened as part of a pushback against that kind of work.

IG: Yeah.

RS: I remember a very powerful, you were saying that course taught you about privilege. And I remember a very powerful moment in that course when another student who had been quiet pretty much the first like three or four weeks or more finally raised her hand or you know sort of said you guys this was a course on poverty, you all keep talking about them, them, them, and you're talking about me and my family. And that was a really powerful moment in the class that people were assuming privilege in that

classroom in a way that wasn't actually true for everyone there. That was a, I remember that being a very powerful moment in the class. So you were very involved, I don't know if it grew out of that, but you got involved in student action with workers here on campus. How did, how did that happen? Where did that commitment come from?

IG: Let's see. So right before I took that class, that was the fall of my sophomore year I had spent the summer at a homeless shelter in the Mississippi Delta was part of the reason that I remember writing about that. We had to write an essay to get into the class, and I remember writing about the shelter. So I think that kind of, I was thinking back to my experiences at the shelter a lot while I was in that class, right. And I was still trying to figure out, I was still trying to figure out what was the way that I wanted to engage with those issue of poverty, right, like the issue that seems to underlie pretty much everything. And I had a, I had this really kind of, I had a, right after that class I did my campus switch. So I had to, I left UNC and I went to Duke, which meant that I ended up dropping a lot of the things I was involved. It was almost a good excuse because I wasn't, I wasn't loving all these random commitments that I had and so I just got to say like sorry. I've got to go on my switch. Got to go. And so I went to Duke and was pretty much a hermit, kind of, I was in a, I had this kind of complicated thing happen with somebody that I knew at UNC who was really mentally unstable and caused a lot of problems in my life. And that semester I was sent, I was recuperating from that. And it just so happened that I had to do that recuperating in a place that was totally foreign to me. So I really didn't do much that semester.

That summer I decided I was going to do something totally different. And I decided to go to Sierra Leone in West Africa with four people from the Robertson

program, four guys. I was the only girl. and went there for two months and had this just, I mean it was the, it was probably one of the hardest things I've ever done, spent two months in Sierra Leone in theory like doing this community development project in this village and in a way that I considered to be horribly unethical and—

RS: Why?

IG: Well, they were, the program was designed to help us learn about community development. It wasn't in any way designed with the people who we were working with in mind. And I realized that really early on. I was really frustrated by the people who were running the program who were continuously saying, "Well, you'll figure it out. We can't tell you the answers. You're just supposed to be learning." I'm like no. you need to tell me everything that you know that you think would possibly help me because this isn't about me. It's about these people's lives. So no you shouldn't be withholding information, and they thought it was the funniest thing. They're like oh these little sophomores. They just want to know everything. They're not willing to work hard and figure out the answers. I'm like no, this isn't an experiment. I just got close to a bunch of people that I then had to leave. I got really attached to this little boy who didn't have family and ended up just having all sorts of things. I had to like sneak him out of the village to take him to a hospital, and it was just a lot. We were by ourselves essentially. We had the person who typically ran the program had just gotten a new job, and so he came to Sierra Leone for like two weeks in the middle of the program to kind of check in. But other than that we kind of have some local guides. But yeah, so it was a really tough thing. And I was just still, it was one of those good intentions are sometimes linked to really bad places. And I met and saw a ton of different nonprofits who were putting a ton

of money into the country and just not asking the villagers anything about what they needed or what they wanted or how things worked. They were just building water pumps and community centers and just completely without regard for these people and what they thought and the experience that they had. And I was infuriated by it.

So then I jumped, I came back, and my little sister tells me that I was the most horrible to live with at the end of that summer. I was home for about like maybe a month or so. And she said you were the worst and the crankiest, and nobody could say anything to you because you were just lash out. And I think I just, I had a really hard time coming back and re-integrating and being in air conditioning and all that.

So I went to London right after that, and I studied abroad there. And while I was in London I, there was this really big, there was going to be the biggest public sector strike that there had been in the UK since like the [19]60s. And I was bored out of my mind because I wasn't on campus. So I was just trying to find random things to do. And I found that there was a, there was a women's committee of the, of the big labor union that was leading the stuff. And the meetings were open to the public. And I showed up, just sat there and listened and watched these women have a conversation about how these public nurses, health care workers that they wanted to stand in solidarity with all the other workers, but they weren't willing to leave their patients because if they didn't show up to work their patients would die. And it's not their fault that management wasn't giving them the raise that they needed. I forgot. It may have been a pension issue. I don't know. And I had also started dating somebody who was, whose family was really involved in the labor movement. And I just, that was like the first thing that like made sense and like captured my imagination and was at least theoretically rooted in like letting the people

who were affected be the ones calling the shots in making change for themselves and for their families and their communities. And so when I came back, I just jumped into it because of this friend, because of this, my boyfriend who I'm still dating. Like I knew that this group existed, and I came back and just started to get involved.

RS: And this being Student Action With Workers.

IG: Student Action with Workers. It's a long winded answer. Yeah. But that's how I got there.

RS: And then what was your role in the organization over time?

IG: So I started off doing, we were trying to do this housekeeper bill of rights thing. I remember that was the first project we were working on. And we were hosting small group discussions with housekeepers that we knew and trying to get more people involved in trying to collectively write this housekeeper bill of rights document, which is a, something that had been tried in the early [19]90s when there was a housekeeper association that was worker led at UNC.

But while we were kind of wrapped up in trying to write, collectively write this document somebody from the employee forum at UNC who had a relationship with an older student that was in Student Action with Workers who was a student at the time she, he came to us and told us that the legislature, that the General Assembly was considering a bill that would have eliminated the State Personnel Act, which is essentially the only labor protections for public workers at UNC. And that became our campaign to make sure that this bill did not get passed. And that just consumed my life the second semester of my junior year. Was that also the semester that I took your class? That was a busy semester. We were having like three or four meetings a week because we would have

internal meetings amongst ourselves. We would have the coalition meetings with community members and some members of the labor unions. And we were having separate meetings with campus workers to keep them informed and just planning actions that culminated in the disruption of a Board of Governors meeting where they were going to fake discuss this bill. A couple of days before we had tried to go to the personnel committee meeting and told them that we were explicitly there to listen to the discussion on this thing. And I had been the person that had been communicating with the Board of Governors. I had been sending them the emails asking them to meet with us and sit down and talk to the workers and talk to students. And they, I remember I showed up at the meeting and one of these guys just like pulled out this paper from a folder and said, "Is Miss Ivanna Gonzalez here?" Just like seriously mispronounced my name. I said, "Yeah, I'm right here." He said, "Well Miss Gonzalez wrote me the most polite email I've ever read." And she wants to know such and such, and he's like, "But we actually just had that conversation." So they had told us that they were in closed session, and they had us waiting outside. It turns out that they just never told us when the discussion was happening, and so we were, we essentially were locked out what should have been a public, a public session of the meeting. And we were furious.

So then we decided that we were going to interrupt this meeting. And I was coordinating everything on the outside. The action was to have, we had written a statement with a couple of workers that had become really involved. And everybody had the same statement and we had students and workers and community members planted inside the room. And everybody would stand up and start reading the statement aloud and disrupt the meeting until security came and took you out. And then the next person would

pick up where the last person left off. And we had people on deck waiting outside so that when those people got removed they would take their seats and be ready to pick it back up. And I remember that I was trying really hard to keep myself busy outside because I didn't want it to be my turn to have to go in there and be the one speaking. I remember talking to the folks who ended up, who did end up doing that and telling them that I was so impressed by how brave they had been because I was terrified and decided to stay outside and coordinate the in and out of everybody.

RS: Did you, how did you feel about that now?

IG: I think it's kind of funny. I mean it's very me.

RS: What do you mean?

IG: I mean it's not in my nature to, I it's not, I don't think, it's not my I just, I'm just one of those kids that just really liked getting As and being loved by the teachers and every member of, like a person of authority. So it's really terrifying to me to disappoint people who I think are in positions of authority. And upsetting the president of the UNC System and the Board of Governors was not something that I wanted to do.

RS: What was the result of the action?

IG: We got a meeting with Tom Ross. He had a, he hosted a public forum that wasn't going to happen. And he claimed that it was all his idea. The truth is that he was not, he hadn't responded to a single email of ours until we, until we disrupted the meeting. And that was one of those things where, I think I realized that, we did I think without even really getting formal training we ran a really by the books campaign. We started with a petition. We asked for a meeting. They weren't responding to our emails. We mailed every single member of the Board of Governors multiple times, got no

responses. We held actions in front of South Building and the campus Y and invited faculty members to talk about the history and we escalated. We delivered petitions to Tom Ross's house and just ignored every step of the way. And when we got shut out of this meeting, they essentially gave us the reason to do what we did. And that was when they reacted.

So I mean now that I've been kind of in this like organizing activism world for a while longer, that's the reason you escalate so that the public sees that you tried the inside means and that they didn't work. And that's what it did for me. That we escalated and I wanted to start with the petition. It was like maybe they just, maybe they'll want to help us. So we did that. But then they weren't responding to our emails and I think it was a really, I think it was a really radicalizing experience that Tom Ross and the Board of Governors weren't open to talk to us until we made it impossible for them to not talk to us.

RS: So meanwhile you're doing all of this and then you're also you took my class, which was called Women in the Public Sphere: History, Theory and Practice. What, why did you take that class? What inspired you to come all the way, first of all you had to come all the way over to Duke to take that class and you were back at UNC. So why, what were you looking for in that?

IG: I was looking for a U.S. diversity credit. I was, my roommate first year and second year called herself a feminist from day one. We weren't allowed to say the word bitch in our room. We had a really big sign that said bitch and it was crossed out. You'd get kicked out of our room by Elizabeth if you said it. She had taken a couple of classes and was always kind of like you should do it. You should do it. We, she convinced me

then to live in a women's living learning community at UNC, and that group was filled with a lot of self-identified feminists. And they were the first people that exposed me to that. I think before that I was always like, I'm a woman. I can do anything I want. I just I didn't see how my gender was relevant to my life and to my existence and to my experiences. And I remember, I even remember that that class, the poverty class kind of gave me this sort of racial consciousness but not a gendered one I think. So I kind of, so I just kind of, it had been on my to do list, take a women's studies class. And then I saw that you were teaching it, decided to go for it. I also really wanted to take another class at Duke because I wanted to do justice to the scholarship. I just thought that that was right. So I always made an effort to take classes on another campus if my scheduled allowed for it.

RS: So what do you remember about the conversations in that class or your reactions to them or--?

IG: I think it's always really interesting whenever I was on the Duke because I think without there really being any substance to it, I always did like this whole like them versus me. Right like those Duke students. And then there's, and then there's me. So I think I probably came into that and it took. I came in with that and it probably took me a little while to get comfortable and—

RS: Do you mean that Duke students intimidated you or—

IG: I think that was probably a part of it, but I think the way I articulated it to myself was more that those snobby Duke kids. But I think yeah, I'm sure that intimidation had a lot to do with it. I remember also thinking it was really weird to be in a class with all women. That had never happened before. And I don't know I mean just, I

can't remember a particular thing that triggered it, but I mean it gave me gender as a way to like analyze and see the world. I think it happened gradually. I think I was completely enamored with the stories of the women activists that we read about. I was in the middle of this campaign mostly working with housekeepers, women of color and that was, I mean I was drawing all kinds of connections especially once we started to read about the labor. We read a, I think we read one that was really, that was grounded in labor unions. I think that just heightened the experience that as we were, as I was doing all of these readings that campaign was going on.

RS: I remember you were really inspired by Ai-Jen Poo. We did a—

IG: Yeah.

RS: You read a magazine article about her.

IG: Right, yeah so, yeah that's kind of this whole other ( 1:07:12.0 ) we read, I mean it was an article like this long. It was one column in *Time Magazine* and just completely blew my mind. I had these plans to go to Washington, DC and do campaign finance reform work, and I had, I had that all lined up. It was really easy. The Robertson gave me money to do whatever I wanted. And that's what I was going to do. And I was real excited about it and then I saw that article and I called my boyfriend's parents and said, "Do you by any chance know Ai-Jen Poo?"

RS: Why would they have known her?

IG: So they are, they are just, they're big labor union leaders.

RS: Labor unions.

IG: For a really long time. They're not anymore. They're still in like the social justice and activism world, but they're not employed by unions anymore.

RS: And she was the founder and director—

IG: Of the National Domestic Workers Alliance. And so I had, I guess I was reading, we read that. I was in the middle of this campaign. And I just, the connections were immediate, right. I had been working with UNC housekeepers. They're women; they're cleaning after people. It's like what women do. It's what my mom did in our house. It's what my dad never valued. It's just everything kind of just came together. And yeah, so I called, I called Jake's parents and said, "What do you think?", and "Ai-Jen's great, just send people an email." So okay. So I sent I Jin this like ( 1:08:55.6 ) email, and I was like, I have the money. Just let me come hang out with you for a summer. And I didn't want to be in New York City. That was a rule that I set for myself at the beginning of this process of figuring out what I wanted to do with my last summer before I went into, got into my senior year. So they have two offices, one in New York City and one in Oakland. And so I told them I wanted to be in the Oakland office. And so that, I ended up interning with the Domestic Workers Alliance in Oakland and their office is inside--. So they're in an umbrella organization. They have affiliates that are, they are community-based organizations that are sometimes dedicated like domestic worker organizations, but often times they're either women's groups or Latino women's groups. And they were stationed, they had their, they had a little like area within the office of Mujeres, Unidas Activas. And this is one of the domestic worker affiliates, National Domestic Workers Alliance affiliates. So it was really cool because I was, I got to see kind of this high level national coordination stuff happening around me but was also physically in the space of the on the ground organization that was running the California Domestic Workers Bill of Rights campaign at the time. It was actually kind of

really boring that summer. I was doing lots of interny things like photocopying and scanning and that, but I was, I was around lots of really cool things that were happening. And I connect, there was another intern there who was with another organization that organizes the employers of domestic workers. And her and I became really good friends really quickly. And she was also, she went to Stanford and was thinking really deeply about the same things that I was thinking about to keep myself busy.

RS: Well, meanwhile before you went out there—

IG: Before that—

RS: For the final project in the class, you guys started this Who Needs Feminism social media campaign although it didn't really start out as a social media campaign particularly.

IG: Right. Yeah.

RS: So can you talk a little bit about the, that project and what you remember about where it came from and what the point was why the class arrived at that. I'm also thinking about the political context of that time. That was the spring of 2012.

IG: We were going into the mid-terms.

RS: Yeah, we were about to go into the mid-term elections. Trayvon Martin had been shot that spring.

IG: That's right, yeah.

RS: So can you talk a little bit about what you remember about the, the decision making process but also just looking back how you think what was happening on campus and what was happening in the wider world was sort of shaping that how you all arrived at that.

IG: So I remember pretty clearly the day that we came to class. We had just, I guess we had finished the first phase of the class where we read all of the history stuff, and you came in and said, "What did these women do and use to achieve what they wanted?" And I remember we like filled the entire white board with all of these things.

RS: Different strategies—

IG: Yeah, strategies, they used humor or they like picketed, they, they used their quote, their like maternal immunity, right, to demand like welfare reform. So yeah, we filled up that whole board. I was like furiously taking notes. It was like this is perfect. This is amazing. I was getting really excited, and we were supposed to then look at this toolbox of our foremothers essentially and decide what we were going to do for our project. And I think we, I remember we talked about the about the Women's Center and how part of the problem is that we don't want to talk about the, we spent this whole class talking about how it's so obvious that we still have such a long way to go to achieve gender equality, right. But we couldn't talk about these things, right, that we knew so many people in our lives and we were also deeply affected by these issues, but we weren't finding space to have those kinds of conversations that would in theory like turn the tide. So we had talked about I think about running a PR campaign for the Women's Center, and then I think then you pushed us a little bit and asked us why the Women's Center. Is the problem that people don't like the Women's Center or is there something else. And that's how we came out well, people think that the Women's Center is for sexual assault survivors and for raging feminists.

So the problem is that people have this horrible idea about what a feminist is. I remember sensing discomfort from people who even though they had taken the class and

were all kind of I think generally on board with the idea that we needed some, we still had a long way to go, were still I think kind of uncomfortable with I don't know if it was the political implications of the word. But I remember thinking that there was still some discomfort around it. And I also remember that I, when we started going down this path with this poster campaign that I was kind of, I was kind of a little bit upset about it because I was thinking I've lived on Duke's campus. I've spent a lot of time there and poster campaigns at Duke are a dime a dozen. They're so many of them. They're all beautiful and colorful and really amazing, but I had seen so many of them, and I had just, I didn't think that it was going to make a difference. And this is all with the background that I'm in the middle of running this like kind of direct action campaign, right. And I'm like this is so, I remember you specifying very specifically this doesn't have to be just about Duke's campus. It has to be about your community and that can be broadly defined. So I thought like there are, there are women on this campus who aren't students, who aren't privileged, don't have money, who aren't white, who I knew were fighting, battling with the administration over its handling of sexual assault situations, housekeepers. And I think I brought that up a couple of times. But nobody kind of like latched onto it. [whispering] I was like kind of like all right, fine. I'll do this poster campaign. It'll be fine. I can help with pictures. I can do the stuff. And I don't think I was really sold on the idea when we started to do it. And it wasn't until we got, I got out there and started taking pictures with Michelle and I forgot who else we did the pictures with us. We just had some really amazing conversations with people when they came to take their pictures.

RS: So can you talk a little bit about what, how it actually worked, what were the—

IG: So the, the campaign, it was just, it was going to be a poster campaign. There was, we were going to put the pictures on Facebook and put the Facebook link on the posters. It was going to say Who Needs Feminism and people were going to answer the question, I, finish the sentence "I need feminism because--." And they were going to, we were going to take, we were going to be really intentional about how we, who we sought out to be in these pictures. We wanted to get men and women of different races who were College Republicans and College Democrats, who were dancers and athletes and science majors and just, people who ran in really different social circles. That was part of our goal. And we were trying to be really intentional about that with the intent of saying you can't put feminists and feminism in a box.

So we, we had different teams. We had people on fundraising, on photography and design. That's the team that I spent most of my time on. We had people on outreach who were getting folks to actually sign up for time slots. And we had a group that was writing the op ed that eventually got published in the *Chronicle* the day that we put up the posters on campus. So all of these kinds of teams were doing their work simultaneously, and I and we started to, we started to take these pictures. We put our, we set up kind of, I guess, stations on different parts of campus and I would go over to Duke and spend the afternoon and people would just come--. Sometimes random people would just be like what are you doing? I would tell them and they'd be like oh I'll do it. And so we did, and I think we ended up with maybe sixty pictures, maybe more. What was really amazing

about it and made them really meaningful was that I was there when people sat down to think about what they wanted to write down.

There's this one situation where this guy had come and written something and he--. Something about how sexual assault is still acceptable on Duke's campus and ( 1:18:44.6 ) like that. And he had written something different at first that I remembered, that I remembered to be a little more hard hitting. He had been really thoughtful about it and he left, came back like fifteen minutes later and was like actually can I just rewrite it. And he changed it, I think kind of lessened the blow a little bit, which I respected. His face was going to be plastered all over campus.

Yeah, so we did that. We spent a lot of time putting them together on Photoshop. And got them printed like in the middle of the night the night before. And they got plastered all over campus at the crack of dawn the morning that the *Chronicle* op-ed was going to be run. And I wasn't living at Duke. So I wasn't a part of putting up the posters, which I was really sad about because I had this like vision of this feminist army just falling all over Duke. And I wanted to be a part of the feminist army. But yeah and I remember that the, that we put up the posters, and I think it was Ashley who took her picture. It was funny because we had been, we had spent so much time photographing other people we didn't think to take a picture of ourselves, of doing our own I need feminism because sign, and so she decided to take a picture in her dorm. And she posted it on the Facebook wall, and this is where it gets really fuzzy. I don't remember exactly what it was that triggered it. But pictures then just flooded into the Facebook page. And we, via our, we had created a Facebook group in the class to keep in touch because you had asked us how are you going to support each other. If you're going to be bringing up a

pretty contentious issue around campus, you're probably going to hear some stuff that are going to make you uncomfortable. So how will you support each other. How will you stay in touch? We decided to do that. We had a Facebook group, which I think went really well. We were using it a lot. So that's how we were communicating and we communicated and decided to launch the Tumblr. I can't remember if that was via Facebook or the next time we met. That first night when it blew up—

RS: What do you mean it blew up?

IG: The day, like that first night that the pictures were just flooding in and our Facebook wall was just being overtaken with both really positive things of people who are just inspired and amazed by how great it was. But also people saying you do horrible things. The posters on Duke's campus, some of them had been defaced and posters that said, "Make me a sandwich" had gone up. We decided to put, I think we decided to put the pictures up on the Facebook page to show like how bad it was, how bad the negative reaction was. And I was, I remember I had this huge paper due the day that that happened and I was in the basement of my boyfriend's dorm hitting refresh like every second. And I was, I think I cried because I was so panicked. I was like we're going to, something bad is going to happen like one of these nutcases is going to hurt somebody. It was really tough because we, our class was once a week. So we, all of this happened, we put up the posters I think at the beginning of the week, and we didn't see each other for a week, until a week later. So there was a lot of in between time, and we did our best to communicate on the Facebook group. We started to get our act together and have people monitoring the Facebook page as much as possible.

RS: Yeah, I think you guys made like shifts, two-hour shifts.

IG: Yeah.

RS: Each part of the day.

IG: Yeah, we had two-hour shifts, and we even had shifts like in the middle of the night. I remember when we actually walked into class there was a I think maybe Kate was on her computer as we were starting to talk about everything that was happening and what we were going to do. And she like, a picture of somebody's penis popped up on the Facebook page and she said, "Oh boy." And she hit delete and she told us what had just happened while we were sitting in class talking about all the trolls. It was just this kind of really weird, I mean we just thought that the whole world was just going to it was just really scary. I wasn't excited at that point. I was just really scared.

RS: You all had to, we talked a lot about the sort of policy statement on the page about what would be allowed to stay up and what wouldn't.

IG: Right because we wanted, we wanted to have dialogue. That was kind of the driving thing behind all of it. We talked about the political context at the time we were about to come into a really big election where gender was, gender and reproductive rights were a huge part of the national dialogue. I wasn't totally sold on it, but I was on board with the decision the class made to not be expressly partisan about those things.

RS: Why do you think they decided that?

IG: Honestly I think there were probably people in the class who wouldn't have been comfortable associating with what was essentially a Democratic position. I think we rationalized in a way that I was okay with. I think that was probably where it stemmed from.

RS: What was the rationalization?

IG: That it would be alienating to people. That Who Needs Feminism was supposed to be a gateway, and we would, if we started to do that in that way in such an overt way, we would just be another campaign that was preaching to the choir.

RS: Yeah, because there was some discussion about the elections are coming up. Some people were saying, and maybe even I was sort of saying you could be telling, you could be pointing out which party or which candidate supports these ideas or something. And that was when they were like no we don't want to.

IG: Right. And I think that my gut reaction at that point was yeah, we should definitely be telling people what to vote for. You're a feminist then, this is definitely what you should be doing. But there was push back. I don't think I was thrilled about it, but I think I was okay with the rationalization. So yeah, that's what we decided to do. And we, so we were really concerned with this idea of, or I was really concerned with this idea of democracy right. We want people to not be afraid to like bring out the little, the little things they think about women and everything, and to be okay saying that. so then somebody could refute it. Because if you're afraid to say it out of quote unquote political correctness then nobody's ever going to challenge you on it or to say something to you that might get you to change your mind. But then there were some really obvious cases where this is not productive dialogue. You saying go make me a sandwich is , is not the kind of dialogue. It's okay if, in my head it was okay for somebody to go on there and say women are just more emotional, right. I think that that's something that lots of people think. But then if I went home and talked to my mom that she would say that. And I think that that was just one of those core kinds of stereotypes that needed to be debunked and we needed to let that happen. We couldn't just delete things we didn't like. So that whole

process of coming up with the comment policy was I think really important because it helped us think about that.

While all that was happening I went to an event. It was like a weekend conference with Jaclyn Friedman who's like sex positive activist and speaker and writer came to Duke's campus. I went and I spent the weekend at this conference and I was able to get a hold of her, and I asked her this question like at what point do you just, do you just like let things happen on your Facebook wall or do you get rid of it. These are awful things. She said, "Well, people have a right—" how did she, yeah, this was really helpful to me. She said, "People have the right to say what they say and think what they think and freedom of speech and all of that. but your Facebook page is not the world. That's your Facebook page and you get to set the terms on that Facebook page. If they want to go say that stuff, it's not like you're limiting their ability to say that somewhere else. You're just telling them they can't do that on your page. So you're well within your right to delete stuff." And I think that kind of changed something for me. Then I just became that, was just deleting all the things that I thought were out of line, and there were lots of people in our class who were really, who were doing that. Yeah.

RS: So it was a, I mean in those early days, and it continued to be a mixture of kind of excitement and some level of horror at what was emerging in this public sphere of online debate. What have you, well, what have you seen happen since then and what do you take as the significance of this? Is this just a lot of talk online that really doesn't matter, or did you end up, I mean you said at the beginning you weren't really sold on this. It didn't seem like you were used to the more kind of direct action type stuff that would really make a difference in people's lives. Did you end up feeling like this was a

significant action of some sort or did you end up feeling like it was a lot of talk on the computer?

IG: I think that I just had to understand what was the role of Who needs Feminism and other campaigns like it and this bigger sphere of feminist activism that in isolation probably doesn't mean a whole lot, right, but the reality is that campaign didn't, or our campaign didn't exist in a vacuum, right. It existed at, in a time that was really kind of politically important for women in the United States. And there were so many other things happening around it. Like there were other people, other organizations and other campaigns that were doing the direct action, that were doing the policy advocacy. And Who Needs Feminism in my head is, is and is supposed to be a gateway, the kind of, this entry point that is then supposed to expose you and send you to all of these different organizations that are experts at doing that work. And the thing that made us, that I think made it, that I heard from other people and I believe made it successful is that, it kind, it felt like it was run by a bunch of college kids. Right. It wasn't like super glitzy and feel corporate or polished. It just was a social media campaign that was run by a bunch of college kids and started on a college campus and got really big and I think that was exciting to a lot of people that I think the story of how it happened really captured people's imagination and made them think like wow. Like I can make a difference as cheesy as that sounds.

What was really amazing is that then people naturally weren't just thinking like I'm just going to run a Who Needs Feminism campaign on my campus. People were then thinking about what am I going to do with it. Right. It wasn't, and that's definitely how I began to talk about it, that this was a way doing, running doing something like what we

did at Duke was way to start a conversation on your campus about other issues. To learn about what other people care about so that you know about what issues you need to be focusing on, which issues are important to people and then figuring out what to do about it.

RS: So you ended up talking to sort of feminist activists on other campuses around—

IG: The world. Yeah. It was pretty amazing. Lots of students, like really young students, middle schoolers, high schools, college students, at like community colleges and at Yale. Right. Everything in between and Oxford, just everywhere. It was, there were students in Kazakhstan that did a campaign, and yeah, I helped some folks walked them through the whole people are being really mean thing, this like horrible backlash that happened that got coverage in *The Guardian* in the case of Oxford. And you know it was kind of just these little snippets and we in our, the campaign guide that I think Ashley wrote originally, and then we kind of repackaged to mass distribute, there's a note about how like you just, you need to be ready for it. You need to have, and you need to be, you can't do this alone. You need to do it with people that you trust and are going to support you because it's not easy. Having people around you say these things that are horrible about you as a person and about all these things that you care so deeply about. And that to me was the most, kind of the most important part of this whole thing was the reason that it--. A year and a half, two years out I do my best to keep up with the inbox because I have this fear that I'm going to get an email from somebody in rural Kentucky who's trying to run a campaign by herself and doesn't know what to do with the backlash. That's the main thing for me because I just wasn't so much about keeping the

campaign and the brand alive. It's that people are doing this and they're living it and it's really scary and I know how scary it is and--

RS: Did it change your sense at all, I mean it was, it was pretty amazing how quickly it went international like all around the world. And none of us were expecting that. Did that change, I'm interested in the role of the internet in feminist organizing and it wasn't that you guys set out to reach people in Kazakhstan and the internet made that possible. It just, that happened.

IG: Right.

RS: Do you feel like your sense of your relationship to young women around the world changed as a result of this?

IG: Yeah. Yeah. I ended up having a lot of really great conversations with this woman in, was it Panama maybe. She was a Spanish speaker, and she had taken all of her pictures in Spanish and was really swamped and was really sad that she had taken all these pictures in Spanish and that nobody was going to understand them. I agreed to translate her, their album. So I translated their album into Spanish, into English from Spanish, and it was really funny because every country has its own kind of like lingo and stuff because we were always Facebook chatting while I was going through that process over the course of like two or three weeks, I did a little bit at a time. I would be like what in the world does this mean. The internet isn't telling me. She would be like it means this and so we'd be like, we kind of had this back and forth. We did a couple of Skype calls with some high school students in like I don't know where, maybe New York.

But I mean it was happening through a Gmail account. It wasn't happening through a fancy website. It was just so direct and I respond to them. They'd respond back

to me. It was just kind of, it was just so instant, and yeah, I mean I think about the fact that I have the email addresses of like hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of women who are interested who were interested in starting this campaign and how amazing that is. And I can reach out to them and that they'd probably respond if they saw an email from Who Needs Feminism at Gmail.com. And we wanted to do something at some point, and that's kind of been the really hard thing about this right, like recognizing like the enormous potential in all of this and just not having had the time to I feel like do it justice for a whole bunch of reasons. But—

RS: Right, it's been, it became this huge thing but it was something that you were doing as a final project in a class and wasn't part of my research agenda or anything. So it exists, but is hard, sustainability is a hard—

IG: Yeah, and it's, I mean think people oh it's a social media campaign. It's like tweeting for yourself. But nowadays running social media campaigns is like people's full-time jobs. People go to college to do this, and it's emotionally draining when it's this kind of work. It's not like running, not like a company's page. It's like sifting through hundreds of submissions of people. It's like gut-wrenching stories and connections to the feminist movement and responding to people's emails about why they want to start a campaign and sometimes it's just like somebody said this really horrible thing to you. What do I say to them? Right. So it's not just that there's time. There's just that kind of labor. There's an emotional labor involved, which makes it really hard to come home at the end of the day and kind of start this like second half of your life that could be a full-time job in and of itself.

RS: So there seems to be a lot of disagreement about the state of feminism today. There are people who point to the online blogs and say it's really alive and well, and there are other people who point fingers or point to everything that's going on online and the lack of much going on in the streets and sort of say we've really lost so much since the [19]70s. And there seems to be different narratives of where we are and how we got here. What, you've studied the past of the women's movement and you've been very involved in the present of it. What do you see as important about continuity or discontinuity and or what are your, what's your assessment of the current state of the feminist movement today?

IG: Hmm, that's a good question. [laughs] It's tough because my online life is so, I think is so political that it's hard for me to imagine a kind, to like understand and process this other side of the argument that, that this kind of online stuff is somehow erasing or less political. I've read some of the most like, just like hard hitting radical things I've ever read on the internet, on blogs that were little a year and a half ago and that are now read by thousands of people every day. And it's kind of like these, it's kind of like two sides to it, right there that I'm, was a part of this really big campaign and I saw how meaningful it was for me personally, for the individuals who participate. I always notice that there are some people who go to great lengths to make sure that everybody understands what they mean by their one sentence, and they'll write these really long back stories. Then there are folks who just submit this one sentence that I can't possibly imagine that they thought anybody else was going to get, that the act of writing it was their act of defiance. And they're kind of sticking it to the patriarchy. So I think about, I think about Who Needs Feminism a lot in that way. I think it's kind of how

I let myself off the hook that it's a gateway that it created a space for lots of people to maybe participate in their first act of defiance and that, that if we're conscious of saying that that can't be it, right, then it's not only okay but the fact that that space exists where not so much is at stake is important. We can have a whole conversation about how much is at stake because we learned that there is a lot at stake, right. And putting yourself out there especially when it's like attached to your online social media persona that then like connects to people you know and your family. That's just it for me that like you can't, it can't end with Who Needs Feminism? Right. It's got to turn into something else for it to be meaningful.

RS: Do you see that happening?

IG: I mean I think it's happened on some campuses and in some places. I mean for me it was, right. And I just don't think that it's the place of the campaign to figure all that out because we don't, Who Needs Feminism is not the feminist movement, right. There are just so many pieces of it. That's why it always, I think it's always funny this like is there a right way to be a feminist or to do feminist activism because it's, it's almost the diversity of tactics that makes it strong. I think that's true of so many other social movements, right. The labor movement isn't just, I mean we've got like the card checks and all of that. But unions also have really powerful lobbyists, right. They're doing this kind of high level policy work, right, but they also kind of take to the streets sometimes, maybe not so much anymore. But there's all of these different pieces and you can't, it's unfair to think about online feminism and say is it working, is it doing what it's supposed to be doing because you're placing all the burden on succeeding on one piece of it, right. And there's just so much more to it than that. ( 1:43:38.7 ) draw

connections to debates in the world of education, right, and it's like are teachers doing well. Well, it's not just are teachers doing well. It's a question about the whole like social service sector and the way that we fund our schools and our politicians, and there's a whole apparatus around it, right. It can't just, the burden can't just fall to the teachers, and the burden can't just fall on online feminists because that's not the only place that the feminist movement exists.

RS: Yeah, I think it's that sometimes that's all people see.

IG: Right.

RS: They don't see the other organizations or attorneys or—

IG: Right.

RS: Activists doing other kinds of work.

IG: Right. And I think that's why it's been really important for me to tell people about, I think there are lots of people who think that Who Needs Feminism is ( 1:44:32.8 ) a social media campaign. But the action guide is about like positioning yourself in a physical public space on your campus in your neighborhood with a sign that says Who Needs Feminism and asking people to like physically write something on a piece of paper and like hold it up. Right. That social media is the way that we disseminate that, but it is a way to share something that happened in a physical space. There are other people walking by who have no choice but to walk by if they're going that way and they're going to see it. They're going to be confronted about it and they may not engaged, but they've seen it and they've thought about it. They've had some sort of interaction. If Who Needs Feminism only existed online, then just because of the way that the internet works, the way that we are, that like Google and Facebook customize what we see based

on our past behavior, then we'd only be, we kind of got this built in preach to the choir effect. That's why it's been, it's been a really important part for me to think, to remember and to emphasize and talk about the campaign, the photo shoots that happened on campus.

RS: Yeah, I think sometimes people see mostly the individual taking the picture in front of her computer and sending that in to the Tumblr as opposed to the campus shoots.

IG: Right. Right.

RS: Yeah.

IG: Which thousands of those pictures and those campaigns happened in lots of places.

RS: Yeah. So you have continued to work behind the scenes on Who Needs Feminism for the last eighteen months, but you've also, you've graduated. You've moved on from college. You've now worked as the Autry Fellow at MDC, and you've continued to be an activist. Can you sort of describe well, for instance I saw you up on stage at the Moral March in Raleigh alongside Reverend Barber who's the head of the North Carolina NAACT [P] [National Association for the Advancement of Colored People] and there were lots of other dignitaries of movement politics in this state. How did you end up there and well, how did you end up there? How did that happen?

IG: So somebody who's just a year older, Laurel Lashton. She's the current field secretary for the NAACP. She was in a grade above me. We were in Student Action with Workers together. She's a mentor and somebody that I look up to. And she was, she's been involved with the NAACP since the bussing battle that happened in Wake County a

couple of years ago. She participated, and there was a yeah, so she's been involved with the NAACP since then and eventually got hired. Before she got hired she was involved with the set up and all this, like the planning of Moral Monday and envisioning of it when it started last summer. And so I just had lots of friends who were just involved in some, one way or another at the NAACP, and there's, I knew about the plan for the Moral Monday, how that was going to happen through the summer. And I was going to be gone for most of it.

So after I finished my finals and graduation happened and all that, I was like okay great. Now I can think about essentially getting arrested. I thought back a lot to the ( 1:48:16.8 ) campaign and how terrified I was to interrupt that meeting even though I knew there was pretty much zero chance of getting arrested at that point. I thought how funny that just a year and a half later I'm like actually be considering participating in an act of civil disobedience. And I, I wasn't sure, Laurel and a bunch of friends had been arrested in the weeks before, but I wasn't sure that I wanted to do it. My boyfriend had decided that he was going to, so I went down with him and I said, I'm not sure coming because I definitely want to be there to support you and be there, but yeah, so I went down there. I went to the church. They had, there was a training with lawyer and there were lawyers there. And Reverend Barber spoke. Learned about all the risks. We learned, we talked about how we were going in there to exercise our rights as citizens of North Carolina. And if they chose to arrest us for speaking up then, then we would fight back, right, because we were well, we believed that we were well within our right to be where we were. And I believe that we were. Just so happened that they thought that arrest was, the right way to handle that. But the goal wasn't to get arrested. The goal was to walk in

there and do something that we, that I believed was my right to do. So yeah, Reverend Barber started to speak, and I just, there was kind of like this no turning back. Things are so, things are really bad.

I'd been thinking a lot about comparisons to the civil rights movement, and they had, there's a lot of campus politics happening at the time around the role of the campus Y on UNC's campus and the campus Y is like the social justice hub as it's called of UNC. It was a really big central part of the civil rights movement in Chapel Hill and in North Carolina. And it was, the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Campus Y had just come about and there was all this conversation that kind of idealized what that was. And yet the social justice and community around the campus Y was so sterile and non-political and it was really frustrating to me that people somehow thought that it was okay to commit civil disobedience back in the day. But there's nothing that bad now, right. Reverend Barber just does a really good job at making sure you understand that and just looks really different. And I knew that; it's just that I kind of needed a nudge and I decided to do it.

And there's a kind of a funny story. So Jake and I and this one other young woman. I didn't know she was there at the time. There were only three of us who were probably under the age of like thirty at this particular Moral Monday. And Rob Stevens who was the field secretary at the time had said, "Well, we're going to need a young person to speak," he says to Jake and I. So I'm, you need to figure out who it's going to be. And so the night before we're sitting in our living room, and one of my friends Sarah says to me, I said, "Jake you're going to do it. I'm not speaking." And Sarah says, "Ivanna are you going to let a white man be the face of the movement." Darn. [laughing] So that's how it was decided that I would be the youth that would speak.

And I thought that I was going to have time to figure something out but Rob Stevens just pulled me aside and said, “Speakers over here. You’re on in like two seconds, go.” So I scribbled something down. I spoke at the church at a press conference that happens ahead of time at the march. I got arrested. We were about to, we were in kind of the dome. There’s usually like kind of a rally and people speak and Reverend Barber asked me to give the same speech again. And so I gave the same speech inside the dome right before I got arrested, which ended up being important because it meant that I was on tape front and center which made my decision to take the plea deal really easy because it would’ve been really hard to win my case after I had done that.

So I got arrested, went to jail, put us in zip ties, didn’t give us real handcuffs. It was, it was mostly a, I mean we were in jail so it was not super fun, but I think as far as jail experiences go, this was probably one of the funnest, some pretty cool people. I got processed really quickly. I was just about to go out. I was going to be one of the first people out. I was standing in front of the magistrate who reads you your charges and sets your fine, and when I got pulled out by immigration and--. So I had talked to a friend who had been arrested the week before. She is Ecuadorian, and she had told me about how immigration had also questioned her and her passport was in Goldsboro, North Carolina, and they were going to keep her until she figured out a way to get her passport to the jail. But eventually she got out. So she had warned me. So if you decide to do it, take your passport so you can prove that you’re a citizen.

So I had brought my passport with me. Immigration officer pulls me aside and he says he said, “Ma’am are you here legally or illegally.” I said, “I’m here legally. My passport’s with my stuff. This is my social security number.” The guy just like breathed a

sigh of relief. Oh great. I don't have to deport somebody today. He went. He got my stuff. He went on the computer; everything checked out. I'm an American citizen. It was pretty easy. And my finger prints had already been taken. Like it's just a part of the general booking process. He said, "All right, great. Now we just need to finger print you and put you in the immigration system." That's when I got really, I remember saying to myself, you're already in jail. You can't like say anything now. I remember thinking like oh I'm sorry. Is my American citizenship not good enough for you? Am I somehow different than all the other American citizens? That was, that was really upsetting to me.

When I talked to my parents about the arrest that was how, that was the really big thing. At the time that I spoke at the first Moral Monday and got arrested, I had a cousin who was in an immigrant detention center and had been since October. I had gone to see him I think once before then at that point, and so we were kind of, just really hard time for my family with my cousin in a detention center, and not knowing what was going to happen to him. And just how tough of a time he was having in there and he was like being transported back and forth between all kinds of different detention centers. It was really rough, and I remember saying to my mom that I am a young woman. I speak perfect English without an accent and can pass for white, and this is what happened to me, this question, and I was treated like somehow my citizenship was not as good as everybody else's. So just think about what that means for Carlos who is a guy. His English isn't so great. He is darker skinned than I am. That's why I decided to get arrested. It was just this, there were so many other things, but that's kind of what drove it home for my parents because I was really nervous about calling them. But that's how I

ended up speaking at the Moral March because Reverend Barber and Laurel had seen me speak, and so they asked me to speak at the Moral March.

RS: And how did it feel to be up on that stage and looking out over that crowd?

IG: It was really scary. It was dulled by the fact that I didn't know that they had cameras on us and that we were on the big screen. We did not know that at that time. I hadn't noticed it because I had come in. I had seen that they were like, they were displaying videos of the Moral Mondays. But I was backstage when people started to speak. I didn't know we were actually on the screens. I think I would've been way more panicked. I had this whole conversation with a coworker who was there at the beginning of the march. He said, "Did you memorize your speech?" I said, "No, because I decided that the crowd is going to be so big that nobody is going to appreciate my eye contact anyway. So I might as well just look down at my paper." And I thought, and when I stepped back from giving the speech and I looked up, I was like darn they would've appreciated my eye contact.

RS: Yeah. It was still great. I'm just making sure this isn't going to—my eyes are so bad I can't read that. It's still going. Well, where do you see yourself going from here?

IG: Well, I think the, kind of the dream, the ideal thing would be that I would figure out a way to bring domestic worker organizing to North Carolina. While I was an undergraduate, I did an internship with the Southern Oral History Program, and I think you were technically the official supervisor of, but with Joey Find and Elizabeth McCain who were amazing, and that internship gave me the space and the time to think about oral histories and the intersection of oral histories and organizing and activism. And I did, I kind of started to develop this ideas for using oral histories and participatory oral history

to be the foundation for domestic worker organizing in North Carolina. And that would be, that would be awesome even if it wasn't the immediate next thing that I did. I think that that is something that I want to work towards and figure out how to make happen.

RS: So you're seeking funding for that?

IG: Yeah. I'm not, I've applied for a fellowship and I haven't really looked for stuff outside of that but it's, it's kind of my dream. Hopefully in the short term that I would be able to secure the funding to get that off the ground. But I think it's, I enjoyed my time, but at MDC they, their work is mostly kind of at an institutional level working with CEOs and politicians and executive directors of nonprofits and heads of school systems and community colleges. And that's been, that's been really great, but I know that, I don't want to do work at that level. I don't like being in an office. I like working with people. I like being a part of projects that are about, that are driven by the folks who are feeling the effects of whatever it is that you're working on. That's not to say that the work at MDC is not important and needs to be happening. It's just not where my heart is, right. So I took that job so that I could learn some things and bring it back, and I really want to, I really want to go back into the community or labor organizing. There's a lot of kind of cool stuff happening in North Carolina right now. The fast food workers living wage campaign. There's been like some kind of, our Wal-Mart stuff is also starting, starting to happen. The NAACP is still doing a lot of cool work. I hope that at some point in the future I could see myself maybe being a liaison and helping connect with the Latino community more, which is something that the NAACP has, I think, struggled with and is making, being really intentional. They had live translate, interpretation at the Moral March but not many people listened.

RS: Oh that's interesting.

IG: So they're thinking about it, but some, they need to have somebody who speaks Spanish who can do the kind of outreach that they're doing everywhere else with the Latino community.

RS: That's a great idea.

IG: That would be awesome.

RS: Well, you are a, you are a powerhouse of ideas. Is there, is there anything that we haven't talked about that you wanted to be sure to touch on or reflect back on?

IG: No, I think we talked, we probably touched on most things. Maybe I glossed over the, like the impact of my parents relationship on how I've kind of developed in the last couple of years. Like it's a lot of what drives my passion for feminism and my belief in it that I, it's like all of these things that I have read about and just power and balances in relationships that always fall along gender lines and the devaluation of the work that women traditionally do in a marriage. I saw all of that in my parents' marriage, and my dad was always the one making the money and not, he held that over my mother's head and he still does. Right. That's, that is what justifies everything that he does. Well, I was always making all the money. Well, my mom raised us and she cooked for us and she maintained our house. And that's labor. She was working. The reason you were able to do what you did was because of her because you had kids and somebody needed to take care of them. Yeah. So that's been really important recently, something I think a lot about.

RS: Yeah, very powerful and happening right as you were getting engaged with this, all this stuff.

IG: Yeah, I think I remember driving, we were driving back from Duke, from Durham one day. You gave me a ride back to Chapel Hill. I think that was one of the times I was like starting to realize, I was starting to draw the connections. You were like bringing up my dad. And I was just starting to think about as we were, as I was in your class.

RS: Yeah, but you were still very much processing at that time.

IG: Yeah.

RS: Yeah.

IG: Yeah, definitely.

RS: Well, thank you for sharing all of that with me.

IG: Yeah, I really appreciate the opportunity.

RS: It's great. Okay. Hmm. Why are you not—oh I'm supposed to push pause. Okay.

IG: I'm going to run to the restroom before we—[leaves the room]

RS: Yeah, do. I did that right. [Background noises—walking, papers shuffling, et cetera]

END OF INTERVIEW

Transcribed by LM Altizer, March 18, 2014