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"Women in Science Career Workshop: Panel Discussion"

Portland State University

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Lolita Carter

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Speakers

Portland State University, Nona Glazer, Tony Oliver, Dell Rhodes, Lolita Carter, and Frances Storrs

“Women in Science Career Workshop, Panel Discussion.”

Nona Glazer (NG), Tony Oliver (TO), Dell Rhodes (DR), Lolita Carter (LC), Frances Storrs (FS)

Portland State University

November 4, 1977

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[recording begins in midsentence]

NG: ...here at Portland State, and I'm the "leader" of this lifestyle panel. Frances, are you going to join us? Or have you had it?

[FS' response inaudible]

NG: Sorry?

FS: *[off microphone]* I just found a babysitter.

NG: You just found a babysitter.

[FS' reply inaudible. Audience laughs]

NG: You will join us eventually, then.

TO: Listen, that's a prized commodity. *[laughter]* I can tell you.

DR: It's even better than a housekeeper.

TO: You bet! Get a good babysitter, you're all set. Life can continue.

NG: *[mumbling off to the side]* ...questions. Did I give you one of these things?

PANELIST [unidentified]: No.

NG: You can really talk about— you can talk about anything you want to talk about, but I thought there were some questions. [*pauses before addressing the audience*] I'm a sociologist who's particularly interested in what's been happening to women over the last... oh, seven or eight years. I've been teaching in the Women's Studies program, teaching sociology of women and doing research on a variety of kinds of things that have to do with women, and with the Women's Movement. So I have a slight bias, if you want to call it. I'd like to start out this lifestyle panel with a very brief tribute to the Women's Movement, because I think that we have to recognize that a number of women Frances mentioned [*making reference to prior panel discussion*] are now in medical school, and the fact that there are women in science workshops here at Portland State University, and that there have been women in science workshops around the country for the last, at least year, perhaps year and a half, is a tribute to the energy that women have put into what's called the Women's Movement. And so, I think that we really need to begin with that kind of recognition. If I remember correctly, Frances, and you may correct me on this, in the 1960s, women were between two and eight percent of the University of Oregon medical school. Sometimes there were, in my memory, two or three women in a class of 114, rather than 28, 29, etc. women in the medical school.

[*inaudible speaker, probably FS*]

NG: Well, we... that was the '30s and we lost ground between 1920... 1920 census and not to regain it until the 1960 census in terms of women being active in the professions and women being active in science. So, the moral of all this, to me, is a kind of answer at the start of this to a question about, "What can we do?" and I would say that what we have to do is to remember that the changes that have taken place have taken place on the backs of feminists. And so, my latest pitch is that we all have to come out of the closet and into the Women's Movement, and to stop saying, "I'm not a libber, but I like equal pay," "I'm not a libber, but I, too, would like to have my husband help with the kids," et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. If you're not a libber [*women's liberation supporter*], then you're likely to be a loser! So... I really think that that's an important kind of thing to think about.

I also, I think I want to make a disclaimer because you sat and listened to Frances and I thought, "What a wonderful [*inaudible*] she has. What wonderful life she has," because I cook all my own meals, I clean my own house. I have to admit that when I was married to a physician, which I no longer am, I didn't clean my own house, but I'm not a physician, and I'm not married to a physician so I really have to face... and I don't know whether how many of the other women here have to face the issue of living on the salary of a University professor, and... trying in some way to be a superwoman, because I think that's one of the issues that faces women. Not the opportunity to always give up on cooking meals, or to give up the responsibilities of

housework, much as I would love to do so, but to figure out how to juggle those, and to come to grip with some of those.

So having said that say, I would now like to introduce the panel members to you, and I think since you all know Frances, I'm gonna start at the other end, *[laughs]* and introduce Tony Oliver, who is an industrial engineer, who's 36 years old and has wonderful chutzpah *[Yiddish for audacity/boldness]* *[laughs]* I love it! Do you know what chutzpah is?... Real strength and nerve *[laughs]*. Tony Oliver.

TO: *[quietly]* In other words, I can bullshit—

NG: No! No *[laughs]* on the contrary...

TO: Oh, you want to go into talking? There's all sorts of things. This is absolutely exciting to be here tonight!

NG: *[quietly]* Five minutes.

TO: "Five minutes," she says. Wow, and I'm the talker. For one thing, you have so many opportunities ahead of you, and you have your whole lifestyle to create, and it's just starting for you. I could go to a quick synopsis of my life. Most of the things that happened that we would say, were not of the very best... were things I created against myself for whatever reasons I wanted to, but I'm also into creating good things, too. If you want to go to school, and you want to be married, and you want to have children, you can do all of that, it's all up to you. You can play the superwoman game or you can play... "I don't want to do anything" type game, that's up to you, too. I had the thing where I had to be a superwoman, and I had to do everything in the house, and I had to be the Girl Scout den leader, or the Boy Scout den leader, that type thing. I had to do all those things, and I had to go to school, and I had to play that game. And I also learned I didn't have to play that game. Now I don't do much of anything, but I have a real good time. *[pause for audience laughter]* And that's what I'm into right now, is enjoying my life a heck a lot more. You'll see a lot o' dust on the bed stand, and you'll see dishes in the sink, but that's not my game. My game is doing more things in life, and you can do those things in life too.

I'm an industrial engineer. I started out with Western Electric Phoenix Cable Plant a long time ago. In fact, I just did a seminar in Cookeville, Tennessee, and first classic question is, *[mocking voice]* "Tell me what it was like when you first started engineering," and back in the dinosaur age, it was just like your starting into engineering. It's the same classic things. It's the same things men face, just like Dr. Storrs was talking about. You'll face the 'good old boy' syndrome. You'll face the 'being excluded out of the clubs' syndrome. But you can overcome that; you can do anything you want to do, and it's all your choice. Anything that happened in my life that was

adverse was because of my attitude. I was married. I came to Oregon. I took a cut in pay. I took a cut in level where I was. I went from second line manager to a first line manager. I hated every minute of it. And because I hated every minute of it, I didn't adjust very well, and as a result, I didn't do very well in that job. So as soon as I got myself out of my bad attitude, I sure did a lot better.

NG: Can you tell us some of the things you did, in particular that helped you be such a success?

TO: [*deep breath*] Accept me. That's probably the biggest thing that anybody could ever do is to accept oneself, and I accepted me, and as soon as I accepted me, life became a lot better. I learned I wasn't perfect. Lots of times I was "selfish"... how should I say... really, just accepting me, has made my life a lot better.

NG: Are you open to questions from the audience?

TO: [*holding a smile*] I'm always open to questions from the audience.

AUDIENCE 1¹: You talk about overcoming the 'old boy' syndrome, but when that's a real integral part of the promotional ladder, how do you overcome it? I've been in that situation and I... you know, it's very nice to say, "overcome it," but what do you mean?

TO: Oh sure! It's not easy. Nobody promised you a rose garden type thing, and nobody says that was the most fantastic thing, it's how you want to politic, and what you're willing to buy. If you're buying the 'good old' syndrome, you can go out and play golf with 'em, and you can go to lunch with them, it's just because you have to be. And it does take a lot o' guts sometimes, and sometimes there aren't always the possibilities of doing it, but if you want to get promoted, you can still get around it. And that sounds like the easy way out, but it doesn't. It's... come to my talk tomorrow, and I'll tell you all the good details, 'cause that's what I'm gonna talk on tomorrow, and we'll talk about it some more. That doesn't answer your questions right now, because it takes a long time. It's planning your strategy, politically, and planning the things that you can do. If you give me a specific example, we can work on it.

[*response off mic*]

TO: Oh, okay, 'cause that's one thing that we're gonna work on tomorrow in the workshop.

OFF MIC: Is there another question?

TO: Yes.

¹ Audience members identified by number are those who came to the microphone to ask questions. Audience members that comment in the background are not identified by number.

AUDIENCE 2: Evidently, when you came to Oregon, your career took kind of a... step backwards?

TO: You bet it did!

AUDIENCE 2: Would you do that again?

TO: If I were in the same circumstances, probably I would, but this time, one of the things I've learned is if I make a choice, I live with it. I am a hundred percent committed to it. And [back] then it was, "Well, my husband is coming here," so I made the choice to come here, but I didn't make it with a hundred percent commitment, and that would be the difference.

AUDIENCE 2: You didn't take responsibility—

TO: I didn't take responsibility; I was a victim. Huh, poor me, right? And as a result, it really... it really backfired on me.

AUDIENCE 2: Okay, so the important thing is not necessarily choosing for a person or choosing for a career, it's... going a hundred percent for whatever you do.

TO: You bet it is! It's a hundred percent, and whenever you're committed that, on anything, it's like being at work, or being at school, or whatever you do, be a hundred percent committed to it. When I'm at work, if I'm worrying about what's happening at home, I don't do a good job at work. On anything, be a hundred percent committed to it, and you'll find out that you can do so much more.

NG: Okay, let's go on to Dell Rhodes who's sitting here, who's a physiological psychologist, and a professor of physiological psychology at Reed College.

DR: This is very threatening to me. I think it has something to do with [*laughter*] [*sigh*] Freud. [*laughter*] Okay.

OFF MIC: Hang on to it...

[*laughter*]

DR: Well, I'll tell you a little bit about myself, first. I've never been out of an academic environment. So I'm a person who got into school, and chugged along in school, and liked school, and kept going to school, and ended out taking my first job teaching in a school! So I've never been out of an academic environment. It's what I know most about, and I think my opinions are formed somewhat by the experiences I've had within the academic environment thus far. Frankly, I don't feel that the academic environment is... as aggressively sexist as some of the other professional environments. There are definitely problems in the academic

environment, as evidenced by the low number of tenured faculty, as evidenced by the turnover of junior faculty who are women. I'm beginning to believe, however, looking at the statistics right now, that that's not necessarily a selective problem. The turnover of junior faculty [*emphasis*] for men is very high right now, too. It's unfortunate that the turnover everywhere is high, and that and that the high turnover correlated with the period of time in which more women began to be hired, so that indeed what's happening now, is that no one's getting tenured, and as a consequence of the fact that there were so few tenured women before, there remain few tenured women, and that is a serious problem because, as you all probably have encountered, that means the academic environment tends to be skewed towards the male point of view. So it remains a serious problem, but I have to admit that as a junior faculty member at the moment, I do not feel, at least in the institution that I'm currently in, as discriminated against, selectively, as a woman, as I think, perhaps, the women I've talked to, who started half a dozen years ago have. The academic environment tends to be the most hip-liberal, if you will, and at least [*chuckle*] at least voice a lot of the more liberal attitudes earlier, and... as any of you who have bought into cognitive distance theory in social psychology, when you voice it enough [*laughs*] you actually begin to believe it. The beginnings of belief, I think, within the academic environment are there.

The second, I think, most important thing about me is that I'm single. And that... that again shapes my career, and my career has shaped that fact. I do believe indeed that I'm single because I have chosen a career. There have been twice, two times in my life when moving cause me to break up a relationship that I'm quite certain if I had stayed where I was, would not necessarily have been broken up. So that I think my career has somewhat determined the fact that I'm single. Obviously my career has been of great import to me. I don't regret that fact. In fact, I'm finding now that the number of people my age, early thirties, who are single or who have been single at... for extensive periods of time and are very open and accepting to singles, is fairly high and I'm not finding that at all threatening. I have friends that are couples. I have other friends that are singles and I don't feel that the couples environment, again largely in academia, is quite as... demanding that you be a couple now as it used to be. Now, I'm not saying there aren't problems still with being single, but it's the choice I've made.

I think one of the things that I've ended up feeling is that there are a lot of pitfalls, many of which I've fallen into in the period of time in which I've been a professional. One of them, most importantly, has been a lack of information to me about the possibilities all the way along, and this is one of the reasons that I think this seminar is most important, that this workshop is most important. I know when I graduated from high school, I was actively discouraged from entering a science field, and I had very little information about what 'science fields' meant, what kind of courses I should take, what the options were, simply even procedurally how to go about doing things to get where I needed to go. And I think the information is not always that much easier

to get now than it was before. You have to be aggressive about getting information. Don't be afraid to walk in and say, "Now look, I think I want to be pre-med," or "I think I want to major in chemistry. What courses should I take to do this?" and be very aggressive with your... with your interest in science because the information won't come to you. You have to go get it and pursue it actively.

One of the things that I've run into several times in long debates with my women friends, is a lot of... what should I call it? "Feedback" that some of us get about one bad attitude that some women have developed, and that is of hostility against men. I know of it, of a case of a woman faculty member who wasn't tenured, and when I started talking about this case, I was very surprised on the basis of her record. What I heard over and over again was that this woman was hostile. I started thinking about it. Well, she wasn't hostile to me; I didn't view her as hostile at all. But when I got universally was "feedback" from men that she was hostile. Now, is their perception accurate? Not necessarily. Perhaps, she was just an aggressive woman, and they were thinking "She is hostile. She was hostile," but I have seen instances in which women I believe, too, and I've caught myself doing it many times... of being, there's a side of it that's defensiveness... and there's a side of it that's hostile, that says, "We've been down. We've been put down. We deserve to be treated better." It's the 'we deserve to be treated better' attitude that leads to a certain degree of hostility, and while I'm not at all meaning—obviously, I hope you're not taking me on the polar position, that I'm not at all meaning to say that you don't need to be aggressive and you don't need to assert yourself. On the other hand, on the far extreme of that, there is the antagonism which can [*emphasis*] subvert the goals you're trying to achieve.

The 'failure' syndrome, Tony has already mentioned some, and I think you may have read about it. I think it's the worst pitfall. So many of us think that we're just not going to make it and we almost set it up for ourselves that we don't, and I think really, more than anything else, that's the most dangerous syndrome, and Tony's already mentioned it, so I won't go into any more details. The only other major pitfall, again trying to stress both sides, is either overusing or underusing your sex. I think you can think of examples of what I mean of this fairly easily. Overusing your sex comes to mind easily. Playing up to men. Using your sex flirtatiously, and what-have-you, often backfires, as you're probably aware. On the other hand, underusing it, becoming overly dominant, aggressive, can have the same effect. It's a very delicate balance to achieve thinking of yourself as a woman, being proud of it, not feeling like you have to use it overly or underly. Whatever, that's it. I'm stopping. [*laughter*] I'm stopping now. Before I say anything else heretical.

[*laughter*]

NG: Heretical? [*amused*] I haven't heard you say anything heretical. I think that what I'd like to do is give other people a chance to go on and then open it up generally for questions, rather than doing what I did with Tony. So the next person is Lolita Carter, who is in environmental sciences.

LC: I'm a woman in a very non-traditional field. There are more engineers than there are women who are aquatic ecologists or aquatic biologists. As far as I know, on my level, which is the doctorate level, I am the only woman in the state of Oregon. There are a few [*loud applause from the audience, so she laughs*]... There are a few women who are technical staff type people who do... I have to tell you that one of the women who was very... who, unknowingly... very instrumental in making me finish my degree, is the woman who is sitting on my left. I heard her give a very interesting lecture one time on dermatology, and the other woman that I have to look to besides my own mother, like Frances told you about, is Dr. Jean Mater, who was the first woman to graduate with a doctorate degree from Oregon State in a non-traditional thing and that was in forest research. Now, these are important because I looked at Dr. Mater one day, standing on her front porch in her old house dress, with her children around her skirts, and decided, "If she can do that, so can I." And so here I am, 26 years of marriage later, with three teenagers, or three 20-year-olds at Oregon State, and a 13-year-old at home. I was raised at a time when women were told you had to have a career or you could have a marriage, but they didn't go together. Now, I think all of us have been able to find out that, yes indeed, you can have a career, and you can have a marriage, and you can have children, but you must set your priorities for different things at different times in your life. I happen to be so egotistical that I felt that no one could raise my children the way I wanted them raised, and so I did not 'farm out' my preschool children to a babysitter. I took care of my own, and to this day I am pleased I did.

Then, when I got my children in school, I came back to the University and got my doctorate degree in a subject entirely different from the one I had started school with. But I have really enjoyed being what's known as a 'retread.' It... [*laughter*] I, in a non-traditional field, I work with men, and I like men, and I have to tell you that men have been a lot of help to me. I have one man, my mentor or my major prof., who has seen that I have had a lot of opportunities, and I have had the support of a very strong husband. Now, it's true, I had to say to him one day, "Listen, I'm going to do this with you or without you, but I am going to do this," and guess who has been my best support ever since? [*laughter from audience*] It has been good for my children for me to have come to work. I had a bunch of children who are [*saying*], "Bring me a glass of water while I drink TV," I mean, "while I watch TV, Mother," and I decided, "Oh no, I'm not. You're going to get on your own two feet and you're going to establish your own lives, and you're going to do something worthwhile for yourselves. You are not going to make a slave or a servant out of me," and because of it I have children who are very independent. It took though,

not being ashamed of a very filthy house; of having dishes in the sink; of having children who I told, "You can change your own beds. When you slide off the sheets, you'll know it's time." [laughter] And you [laughter]... I have a little... my son went to bed at any time from 6 'til 11, whenever he got ready, and he is the best-regulated, self-disciplined child I have, and he was the youngest, who would have probably been the baby if I had not been out busy with my own life.

I also believe that it's been very important for me as a wife, and as a mother, to be a very strong person in my community, so therefore I am on many citizens' committees having to do with education in our local school system. And I firmly believe that women need a chance from high school on. You do not need your high school math teacher making fun of you because you didn't get the problem you need him to realize that he needs to go back, just like he would for the boys, and repeat it again, because girls are every bit as good at math as the boys are. But if you really want to be a scientist, you're going to have to do your math, and that's one place where we women get shortchanged because they think we can't, but you can! And I was glad to see and hear a packet that says that your math is important. Maybe not your social scientist. [LC chuckles]

PANELIST: Oh no! It is!

LC: Okay! See? The other thing is I have always dressed like a woman. A man wants to see a woman as he feels she should be. Now, that doesn't mean you can't wear pants. It doesn't mean like when I was in college, you were expelled if you were caught on campus in pants. [shocked chuckles from audience] And I... climbing fences in skirts when you're on an ecological expedition is very difficult, let me tell you.

PANELIST: But going to the bathroom is very easy.

[laughter]

LC: Yes, right [laughter]... I really think that it is good for you to branch out. To be able to have your children if you want to. To not have them if you don't want you. To stay single if you want to. To be married as you want to. But it's your choice. The thing is, you know that you have to set priorities at each stage of your life, and that's the thing, that you can't do it all at once. As I was in a little town, that really is just a way stop for their train, the other day, I heard this very uneducated, rather decrepit-looking woman say to some young woman, "Well," she said, "you get smarter as you get older. It just takes time."

[laughter]

NG: Okay. [indicating for LC to introduce FS]

LC: Okay, and next, Frances Storrs.

FS: I get to say something else?

[laughter]

NG: If you want to add anything to what you said, by all means.

FS: I think that the most exciting people, the most exciting women doing things, that I know are people like Dr. Carter, really. The ones that really amaze me are not young women who do things, but women who've grown up in a time where this was just not what you did. *[FS laughs at situation, maybe sardonic laughter or reminiscent as it's not too bitter of a laugh]* and then went back in and did something. And we've had four or five women in medicine come back at the age of 45, and one 48, and finish medical school, and do internships and residencies, and now they're in practice in the community. *[inaudible contribution from panelist]* *[FS agrees with the comment]* And I think that's... those are the people I *[emphasis]* really admire. To me, those are the real superwomen, and people, I just honestly don't see how they manage it.

I wanted to make just two comments, I guess, in the basis of things that have come up. I think there really are still some barriers that you can't just kinda do it in spite of. And they make you mad, they just make you really mad. They're so unfair. They're things that people tell you you can't do, or they accuse you of not being able to do, like this math thing. That was such a wonderful comment that Dr. Carter just made about the level you can get involved to change a bad attitude, but those attitudes do still exist and it's very difficult to learn a method to try and correct them without being viewed as a hostile woman. And it does require... I tell the people that I deal with just to smile a lot, and you smile while you're biting inside of your mouth. You talk through your teeth so the blood won't run out. But it's terribly important to do whatever you can to alter... and I've had to stand up in front of some groups and say some things that were terribly hard for me to say, but I smiled the whole time I was doing it, so that hopefully it came across more easily.

And the other thing is, quite aside from the fear of failure in doing something, for many women, is a fear of success. And there may still be those of you who are afraid to succeed, because it's not the thing to do. You know, you just *[emphasis]* aren't better than a man. And, again, from my own experience, we've had a number of instances in which husbands and wives have applied to our residency program, and the woman was the more qualified of the two and we took the woman, not the man, and that was tough. Now, those happened to be sorts of marriages that could handle that, but I know of many instances where that sort of stress has not allowed relationships to persist. There are men who cannot handle that sort of a relationship with a superior woman, so that's something that has to be overcome as well.

NG: The wonderful thing about a panel is that you hear really different kinds of perspectives. I'd like to open it up for questions, but I'd like to make a comment from, I think a somewhat different perspective than people been talking about, or been talking from. If I'm hearing people—other women on the panel—correctly, with a good deal of optimism. Perhaps I'm basically a pessimist, but I think also, I learned at some point, some kind of a little saying that said something about, "Better to know the truth than to struggle on not knowing it." So my pessimism, or maybe my cynicism, is tinged not with advise that you don't go into science—I think by all means do go into science—but my own more cynical view is that it's better to know what you're going to have to face. And I think that what you're going to have to face is a good long struggle... but I think that it doesn't have to do with the capabilities of women for science, and I think that's the critical thing to remember. I think that what you have to do, if I could give any one piece of advice, would be to not take seriously the downgrading that you may experience from your male colleagues and your male professors. Though, my own personal experience is that my male colleagues, when I was a graduate student, were extremely supportive. It was... and so were some of my male professors. It was after graduate school ended, that the big blow came in which I was shuffled off to the traditional occupation in sociology for women, which is to be 'research associate.' I don't know if it applies to the other women here. As distinct from going into a high-class university, I went to... I was supposed to go to a high-class university as a research associate because that's a woman's place.

So I think what you have to do is to not take other people's judgments of you that are negatives seriously, but to see them through the filter of sexism. And when someone in math, for example, I think the typical thing that happens to women in math is that male professors simply don't try very hard to explain math problems to women, because they assume that women really don't need that math because they're not going to use it anyway. And what you have to overcome there, is the perception, on the part of the professor, that you really can't get it anyway, and struggle against that. Recognize it for what it is, which is their perception of you, and not what you are.

One other comment and then I'm going to open it up for questions, and that is: I'm not sure I agree with the whole notion of 'smile' and 'shuffle' and 'be feminine' and et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. [pause] To some degree, the danger is that one gets oneself into a position of trying always to second guess what it is that one's male colleagues and professors are going to find acceptable. I think that in the long run it may be better to try to decide what it is that you want to be, what you're comfortable being, how you're comfortable dressing, how comfortable you are not smiling, and I think not smiling means to take yourself more seriously. We've done linguistic studies of women that show that women do a lot of backtracking, which is that we do taglines. "You understand what I mean, don't you?" That's a tagline. And also, we do a lot of smiling. And smiling tends to, or may tend to be self-deprecating. I think that one has to be

extremely careful. I managed to short-circuit, when I first came to Portland State, the male attempts to put me in the role of secretary and to tease me a lot by simply just being deadpan. It hasn't been pleasant, it's just been deadpan. But I think you want to at least think about those kinds of alternatives.

Okay, I've had my say. What I'd like to do is to hear questions from you, because as I sit listening to us talk, I keep wondering whether or not we've been addressing the kinds of things that [*emphasis*] you are concerned about, or whether we've been doing very reasonably with the things that we've been concerned about in our five careers.

LC: Nona, I'd like to bring up one thing I didn't say: is that I applied for a job and I was heads and shoulders above everyone else, the very best-qualified candidate, and I did not get the job, and they told me that I did not get the job because I would not be willing to travel from Monday through Friday since I had children and yet, I had indicated by applying for the job that I had that problem under control, which I did. And just lately has the sex discrimination case come before the organization to whom I applied, and their point on me now is that I would be a disruptive factor because I stood up for my rights. And while I was trying to say that I address people as a woman, that does not mean that you are not firmly in control of yourself, but rather that if you are in a traditional type of attire, you do not pose that threat, okay? And so what I think, I agree with Nona there in that you should be your own identity. That isn't the problem, but the problem is not to... inadvertently, by however you come across, put yourself at a disadvantage, okay?

NG: ... No. [*laughter*]

LC: Okay.

NG: Yeah, she said, "Okay," and I said, "No," because I think that the difficulty becomes one of a double standard. I know a woman who was just fired from Cornell University in the department of sociology with a long list of publications. She's not hostile to men, but she is imperious because she thinks she's damn good, and she happens to be damn good. And it's pretty clear to me 'cause I've been involved in an investigation of the case, that... she wasn't liked because she was imperious, and she's extremely confident, comes from an academic family, and just knows that she's really good, and they don't like... they didn't like that. They couldn't deal with that. And in discussions with some of them, we also talked about some other women that they had to deal with that they didn't like because they were just too kind of cutesy-tootsie! [*laughs*]

FS: Well, that's not being feminine, though. That's being cutesy-tootsie.

AUDIENCE: And men do that too.

FS: And men... I didn't mean giggle, I meant smile. [*laughter from audience*] I think that everybody has their own style. It's one thing, and I don't think anyone is going to accuse me of not saying what's on my mind; it doesn't bother me at all, but if I have to really lay it to someone and I want to have a chance of getting them to change the way they're going to do it, hopefully I'll—the way they're doing things—hopefully I'll do it in a way that they'll end up my friend and my ally when I'm done with them. And if I have to use a human device to bring that off, I'll happily do it. I don't think that it's a feminine device. I'm horrible—one thing I've always wanted to be was a cocktail waitress, but I couldn't bring it off 'cause I didn't have the equipment [*laughter from audience*]. I feel... I'd love to be able to do that but I can't. I think that you use your own style, and frankly I prefer men who smile at me when they're giving me hell, but not giggle.

[LC]: You said the whole thing right there, and I think the whole crux of what we're talking about, it's style, and for Dr. Storrs, if it's smiling, then it's smiling, and she can pull it across. When I'm with my people, like the people who work for me, if I smile, they begin to think that it's an OK thing to continue in the behavior that they have. If I come down hard and say, this is the acceptable behavior, that's how they can accept it. They don't feel like I'm bad or I'm mean or anything; that's just my delivery and my way. You talk about dress. Dress is something that is universally a detriment or a help to you. It's for men and it's for women. It doesn't have to mean that you dress in a dress. You can dress in pants or slacks, but you have to be dressed for the occasion. It's like so many young women scientists and engineers I see in college and I see them on the job, and they're in dungarees, and they're in vests, and they're in all sorts of clothes that were great for college, but are rotten for work. And you're judged by how you're dressed, and you watch the men who come in their suits, and they're the ones who progress. And you watch the women who come in their suits, and they can be pantsuits too, and they're the ones who progress. So it's not a matter of wearing a skirt or pants or whatever, it's a matter of dressing for the occasion, and there is no discrimination between men and women. You go to a large corporation, it's the men who act as if they're they are on the board of directors who go; it's the women who act as if they're on the board of directors who go. So it's choose your own style. I think it's a message coming across.

NG: Can we have some questions from the audience? And maybe if you could use the mic for the recording, if not, just talk loudly. [*pause as someone comes to grab a microphone*] There's a mic right down here.

AUDIENCE 3: [*side comment*] Does it come off or does it come straight out?

NG: Just straight out.

AUDIENCE 3: I'd like to ask each of you to talk about how you decided to do what you did. Was it a gradual decision or... Dr. Storrs already talked about her parents being helpful with her decision, but *[interruption that causes laughter from the audience]* could you each talk about *[it]*?

NG: Why don't ya just start down at... *[trails off]*

LC: Okay, I never considered that I would not go to school. I had a very stern grandmother who sent my mother to college at a time when nobody went to college. And my mother raised us girls with the idea that *[emphasis]* we would go to college, and I just never outgrew that. And the other thing is that I have *[emphasis]* always liked academic life, and I have always liked being a student. And this last time—I have a background in Marine Biology—and it was too far for me to go with my children, so I had to choose something close to home so that I could manage my family and them. And I felt I was too old to start medical school but as they say, “Well, in four years, you'd've been that age anyway,” *[laughter]* and so I chose it this way. *[continued laughter]*

DR: I think I just got interested in psychology, experimental psychology, taking courses as an undergraduate. Going into physiological psychology, however, was more perverse. I think I did that because I found it the hardest thing I had tried to do, and I wanted to go into something that was difficult for me, for some reason at that point in time. It turns out that I love it, after having gotten into it, so there must have been a component of like too, but there was a certain perversity in that choice of, I purposely went to graduate school in physiological at a school in which I could sidestep into a couple of other programs that I was interested in, in case physiological... you know, I always left myself those back-outs and I was... yeah, the insurance, yeah. And I was, I think I did choose physiological over those other two, in the first place because I found it the most challenging, as opposed to necessarily the most interesting at that point in time, which, I don't know what that says, probably something.

[inaudible response] *[chuckles]*

NG: I'm probably a maverick because I always assumed I was going to go to college even though I grew up in the Depression... and had a rather spotty childhood. But I wanted to go into art and I always wanted to be an artist, and I couldn't go to art school because I didn't have the money to go to the art school I wanted to go to, so I was reduced to going to the University of Illinois, where there was no art program in the extension in the city of Chicago. So I had to rethink what I could possibly train in and I entered into psychology, and did a lot of work in experimental psychology, and then saw the light and moved into sociology. *[laughter]* But...

AUDIENCE: Which light?

NG: Sorry?

AUDIENCE: Which light?

NG: I know. The dim light [*chuckles*]. The light went out [*chuckles*]. I think that what we know from studies of occupational choice is that... for most people, it's not a question of choice; that the decisions are made over some... for many, over some very long period of time, rather than being a kind of neat decision in which one describes in seventh grade that one's going to be a scientist and then goes on. There are some people like that, but the studies of occupational choice show us that those people tend to be in a minority rather than in a majority, and that particularly for women who drop out to take care of kids, drop out to get married and so on, that the decisions are made over some really long period of time.

TO: Unless you're engineers. [*small chuckle*] In fact, most of 'em, if you do most studies, most engineers, men or women, have decided to be... they're engineers by the time they're 13. And that's really because of the background you must take in high school if you don't want to be behind when you get to college. But I was just one of those people that by the time I was five years, I was going to be an engineer; there wasn't any question. I was just going to be an engineer. I don't know where I got that or how it came from. My father's an engineer, so it just might be from that [*laughter from audience*] but I was always going to be an engineer. I come from a Mexican-American family. I come from a place that's now known as a ghetto—except we didn't know it was a ghetto when we were growing up—and as a result my grandmother was a very strong, forceful person, and every one of her 49 grandchildren went to college, and we all had... there was no question of it! It wasn't a matter of going to college or not going to college, it was a matter of which college would you go to, and what kind of scholarships were you going to get to go there? Because there wasn't any money. So I had a lot of background, or a lot of influence from my family. As Dr. Storrs says, it was very [*emphasis*] powerfully influential, as far as going on to college.

And this didn't matter, like I started college when I was 25, so you can see that getting married and having children was no detriment. That push was still there. "You're not in college, yet? Hmm... is something wrong with you?" I got to college. I made it through. And being an engineer was something that I just always wanted to do. The choice of industrial engineer I made after I was in college. I had always wanted to be a civil engineer because I thought that was very exciting, but when I was putting my husband through school, I worked in a department where they had this new thing called a computer, and you probably all know things like in transistors. Well, this is a drum core memory type thing, if you're familiar at all with computers, which is the very oldest you can get, it's just past the big vacuum tubes... and that was exciting to me! So I said, "Give me that. Give me that. That's just what I want to do," and so happens that industrial engineering had computers, and I was hooked... and from then on.

But I also had the opportunity in high school of having a physics teacher who thought being women in science fields was terrific. And I never involved all these things with math, gee whiz! Math was absolutely the greatest thing ever. I could achieve at it; it was fantastic; it was a lot of fun; and I had lots of support from all my math teachers, so I never experienced people who said math wasn't a lot of fun or really great. I was 12—1 of 12 of 2500—well, there were 12 women out of 2500 in my engineering college. So we were a little bit minority, and now they're 20%. *[laughter from audience]* It was a lot of fun, though! There was... I mean, you work with these people all the time, you just don't marry them. *[reference to her former husband who was in the same field]*

[laughter from the audience]

NG: Okay, another question.

[squeaks of microphone and chairs as next audience member comes up to ask their question]

AUDIENCE 4: Along with each of your decisions to go into the fields that you did, was there a point in your life where you ever were faced with a fear of success, or anything, and what did you do about it? How did you change your attitude? Was it an all-or-nothing type question, or how did you work that into your life?

NG: Shall we start with...

TO: All at once? *[laughing]* ...Let's see. I don't think I've ever had as much of a fear of success as a fear of failure. That's kind of an inherent thing in an engineer, too, that I read all those things about being an engineer and I got hooked on the stereotype. One of the things that we don't really care about is being right, it's we care about being wrong. And I had a lot of things going for me; I had a family and things like this that I was into. So I've already described the failures that I've achieved, but success, no. Success is kind of fun. You feed on it. It's really a stimulant... at least it is for me. 'Cause you can set up a challenge and when it works, wow, you feel good and then you set up another one and you just continue on... and it's a lot of fun.

NG: Could you... would you say a bit more about your question? Like, what is it that you fear about being successful? Or what is it you think women fear about being successful?

AUDIENCE 4: *[Off mic]* The attitude they feel they have to acquire... *[inaudible]* Do I really need to marry to be successful *[inaudible]* talk about society and stuff... educational role.

NG: I guess I wondered what you meant... whether or not what you meant was: if you're successful, then you do yourself out as some other things. Is that what being successful means, or is it something ... ?

AUDIENCE 4: [Off mic, barely audible] ...What men expect, what you're expected to be...

NG: So that people wouldn't... that you couldn't get married and you couldn't have kids. Is that what you're kind of thinking about? [...] Okay, I asked that specifically 'cause it seems to me that that really comes down to be the basic question, rather than fear of success in some kind of abstract sense. That women do seem to fear that they're not going to be able to do the traditional kinds of things that women have done, and that women want to continue to do, like fall in love and get married and and have children and be happy and someone in a family life. [pause] I think that that's something that a lot of women have thought about it, and I think it behooves us to kind of support strong men who appreciate women who are strong. Maybe get some men early and support the men, I think especially the younger men. Not only the younger men, but especially the younger men who really are not at paralyzed by the notion that women can be three-dimensional or four-dimensional creatures, too. I think I could say that rather than whether... I think I had some of those fears, is really what I'm saying, and just have to work those... work them out I think in that way, at least for me.

DR: I kind of heard you say two things, and I think I'll take off a little more on the other one which was the fear of not doing what was expected of you. And I think the the crisis that I went through was that of clearly not doing what my parents expected me to do and what they, in some very real sense, had brought me up to do. Now, they obviously were giving double messages. There are three women in the family and we all three are professionals: two Ph.D.s and a Masters. So they obviously were telling us [chuckle], "Go out and achieve, young women," but they were also clearly telling us that they wanted us to have a life like them, and had sent out continuous distress signals that we're not doing that. And... it basically took about a year and a half in therapy to get me out of graduate school. As the time got closer, and as it became clearer that I was actually going to get a Ph.D., that I was actually going to be on the job market, I became paralyzed for a period of time, during which I couldn't do anything. [mumbles] Depressed, the whole thing. And what I found was a woman therapist who talked me out of it [chuckle] and now, I personally feel that the process, as Tony suggested, is self-sustaining; once success is felt, once I got that degree in hand, once I got the job that I had gone after, and now am feeling successful in that job, I think it would be very hard to send me into that crisis again. But it clearly was there, and the only way I could handle it at that time was, in fact, finding an outside perspective on what I was doing, personally.

LC: I think that this is not a unique problem to women scientists, as I heard Senator... Representative Vera Katz [*she was actually the Oregon House Speaker in 1977*] talk the other night. And she gave a speech on women, what it takes to survive, and of course she was a politician, she was talking about that. And I asked her if she found it rather lonely, where she was, in finding someone to talk to on, and she said, "Yes," she did. She had one other state

representative with whom she could sit down and really share. And I found that since I got my Ph.D. very late in my life, that I did, initially, isolate myself from what I [*emphasis*] lovingly (note the word lovingly) called the henhouse society [*laugh*]. Because women felt threatened by my achievement, and therefore did tend to draw back from me, at first. But as I was satisfied with my success and I felt comfortable with it, then they became comfortable with me. And as long... and I have used my title 'Doctor' when I have usually been somebody's mommy, and it took them a while to get used to 'Doctor,' but as soon as they got used to it, they now are as proud of me—my henhouse society that at first put me down—as I am.

So I think it's partly, again, your attitude, but this is a universal problem among very educated women. We tend, by our achievements, to isolate ourselves from the support of our fellow women and therefore we feel lost, and in this book, which I bought the other day, which sociologists kind of "mmmm" [groan] but for us [*laughter*] but for a scientist, who is not very good at sociology, it's called *My Mother, Myself* and it's brand new. Anyway, it deals with some of these problems, plus some I wish it didn't deal with. Anyway, I'd like to read a passage out of it. It says, "We say, 'Go to college. Succeed. Be self-sufficient,' but we also give them," (meaning our daughters), "this message: 'If you don't succeed as a wife and mother, you have failed.' The message need not be spoken. A mother's own life is experienced by a daughter as a standard of achievement. No one tells us that it is difficult, painful, even more impossible for many women to be a success in a career and a good mother as well, nor does anyone prepare us for the fact that to be a success, you must be competitive, and that most men in our culture still can feel the competitive woman to be a threat." And so there you have another problem with your success. But as soon as you put people at ease and let them know that you are content with yourself, then they will be content with you. Does that answer a question for you?

FS: I guess the first thing I was going to say is my husband calls those henhouse ladies "lady tigers." [*laughter from audience*] [*pause*] I also wasn't afraid of success, as we said earlier, but really of a fear of failure, but I think that... mostly because of the expectations generated by the family I grew up in, but I do think that the after-the-fact thing, after the degree is over, the maintenance of it, if you will, is very frightening and produces a lot of anxiety and a lot of desire to give up all the time. Now, that must happen to men, certainly it does, and certainly the men I talk to it happens to. And I think men who are achieving and aspiring also feel lonely, and especially those who have been singled out for one reason or other, have fewer individuals that they can relate to. So I don't feel that that is necessarily a problem that's confined just to women. There is this aspect of socializing with men that I mentioned earlier that they enjoy, that women don't so much, within the profession, but certainly men have the same sort of difficulty finding people that they can relate to, as well.

I want to stop all the time, and I'm sure you've all gone through the thing when you're preparing for an exam and you see someone cleaning out the bathroom and you think, "My God! That's the job for me. What am I doing here?" [*laughter from audience*] I used to be, you know, you think you've got five exams or four papers, like right now, I have... I have the three national meetings I have to go to within the next three weeks and I'm speaking at two of them, and I haven't begun any of those presentations. I have a paper that was supposed to be written, I've been in Washington two weeks ago... I've already been paid to go to Washington for the conference, I haven't written the paper yet. [*laughter from the audience*] I find that sort of anxiety very distressing, and [*laughter from audience*]... I don't even know what day is hamburger day at my boy's school, you know? I have to call up and say, "Is today hamburger day or hot dog day?" [*laughter*] And that's sort of a feeling of 'You're not doing well on that front' coupled with 'Falling behind faster than I can get ahead...' is damn depressing. [*laughter dies out*] It really is.

NG: It's oppressive. One of the things that Frances talked about was bringing female values into medicine, but I think that that can be extended to the whole professional career, so that we can humanize the careers, or we should be working, I think, to humanize all the careers, so that we don't have exactly those kinds of overwhelming pressures for men as well as for women. There's a wonderful article written by a woman by the name of Arlie Hochschild called "Inside the Clockwork of the Male Career," in which she makes exactly this plea for the professions, so that we all can slow down a little bit. You may have three papers, what happens to me is as soon as school starts in September, I wake up regularly at 3:30 in the morning. And what happens when I wake up is, my mind is immediately going, "Did I finish that? What else? What is it—when am I going to get that other paper done? Is it on the 1st of December that that project is due or is it on the 15th of November? My God! I have to get up and look at my calendar." I guess that's really fear of failure rather than fear of success. I think one more question. [*pause*] Two more questions.

AUDIENCE 5: First of all, Dr. Carter, I loved when you said, "You can't do it all at once," because that's right where I am. I'm trying to do it all at once, and I, honestly, can clean my kitchen sink better than I can take an anthropology exam [*laughter from audience*], there is absolutely no doubt in my mind. And damn I want to... you can't hear me [*moves microphone*]... I wanna talk to you afterwards because I have a midterm in social psychology on Tuesday on the dissonance theory of learning, [*laughter from panelists*] and I might need some help [*laughter continues*]. What I would like to know is, I feel very isolated right now, very alone, I have four children and a husband, and I feel sometimes I don't have the support I need, although it has to come from within... you know, within. It has to come from me. And sometimes I really get... I wake up at night, and I think, "God! What am I doing?" and how do you just keep saying, "Okay, it has to come from within, and that's where it is." And do you just keep telling yourself that?

LC: [*serious tone*] What you say is, “I can’t let all those people who’ve supported me this far, down. I have to finish. Even though I’m sick.” [*laughter from audience*]

AUDIENCE 5: Oh yeah, yeah.

FS: [*serious but comforting tone*] No, what you can’t let down is yourself.

PANELIST: [*muted, in background*] You can’t let all those other people...

FS: [*overpowering*] That’s the person you can’t let down, is yourself.

PANELIST: Right.

AUDIENCE 5: And that’s why I think I get so frightened, you know...

FS: Yes, but you can’t let yourself down. And that’s the important thing. Most of all, you can’t let yourself down.

TO: Or you don’t have to let yourself down. [*laughter*]

[AUDIENCE]: Pardon?

TO: You don’t have to let yourself down. You can if you want to let yourself down, but you don’t have to if you don’t want to.

LC: Go get in the closet and scream. [*laughter*]

AUDIENCE 6: ...Support from other women. That is one thing, like I teach at Portland State in the evening classes and I had a woman come in. She says, “What am I gonna do? I’m going through a divorce,” and she says, “I can’t get my exams done and I’m having all these problems.” I said, “Where are your women friends?” And she said, “I don’t like women.” I said, “Wait a minute, wait a minute. They’re your best allies, are women friends. I mean men are great friends and I really like men friends too, but draw on your women friends! That’s what they’re there for. Use ‘em.” But Tony, I think, was tremendous when she said, “You don’t have to let yourself down.”

NG: You know if you... all of the anxieties that you have stirred up inside of yourself, you can really make a safe bet that half the other people in the room have exactly those anxieties. If you think you’re dumb, you are never gonna be able to make it through, you’re bluffing your way through, that you somehow got in the program by mistake [*laughter from audience*], that they really don’t know you or you wouldn’t be here, those common feel... I know those are feelings ‘cause I talk to my graduate students all the time, and I just have this list that I can rattle off because these are feelings that women—and men too, but I think especially maybe women—

are very likely to have. "I'm not gonna make it. I don't... I'm not really competent. Nobody else is really as worried about the work as I am. Nobody is really as frightened about writing term papers as I am. Nobody can... is really as anxious about exams as I am." I think one thing to do is to realize that those are feelings that come from... they're generated by social situations and not because you're crazy or incompetent. And the other thing is to think of things as... one step at a time. I mean it sounds corny when I say it! But it's the only way I can understand the whole process of going through graduate school for myself, which is: one step at a time. One month at a time. One year at a time. One language exam at a time. One comprehensive exam at a time. One thesis or dissertation at a time. One paper...

[recording stops and continues later with last question]

AUDIENCE 7: ...question. I'm also entering a very male-dominated field, and I have a sister in medicine, and we both have found that we seem to be treading a very fine line between either male intimidation, or not being taken seriously enough, especially for me at professional meetings, and her in medicine. If she'll be right in a—she's doing residency right now—if she'll be right and a doctor will be wrong. And both of us are having a lot of problems trying to cope with that. And another thing I was wondering about that's a major problem for me, and also for women, and some men, is funding right now, and I'm wondering if any of you have any sort of suggestions on funding for women.

TO: Uhhhh *[laughter from audience]*... Okay, there are funding for women, but one of the things that is more advantageous is if you're older. The government's really more supportive if you're older, on funding. Otherwise what type of it is, I... probably Dr. Storrs can tell you there are programs for the government in medicine, but in engineering, if you look into the scholarships, they have lots of weird scholarships available, and they have a service... have you tried out all the routes through the University and things like that? Have you tried the borrowing route?

[inaudible]

TO: Okay, that's not a bad route, it paid off my last National Defense loan. I could tell you how long ago it was: it was three percent interest! *[laughter]*

NG: But it still is...

TO: No.

[inaudible]

[PANELIST]: ...are getting three percent on loans?

TO: Are they? Okay, then that's good. That's good that they're...

NG: *[mumbling, in background]* On a national level, [...] that's three percent....

TO: On a professional level, it's really difficult sometimes to put yourself across or have them not take you seriously, but you know they don't take the men seriously sometimes, too. I'm in several professional organizations and... when you first get out there, they'll tell you... they call you some of the things. They say, "Now honey, do you really mean that?" and you talk to them about it, and you say, "I really don't see this as coming across that you take interest in what I'm saying." *[male rebuttal scenario]* "Well, you know, sugar, I wouldn't do that to you!" And it does. The only thing is you just... it depends upon what you're aiming for. Are you aiming to correct that person? Or are you aiming to get your point across? And sometimes, you just have to go ahead and get your point across. It's not easy. When I said that you can overcome things, it's not easy. Nobody gives you a joyride. Nobody gives you roses or anything like that. But you don't have to be put down by it.

LC: When I was working as a consultant with all-male engineers, one of the men... I stated I had three and a half employees working with me, and one of the men asked whether we used the top half or the bottom half, and I said, "We use the top half, because all our people have their heads in the right place," *[laughter]* and I never had anymore trouble with those men, as far as that again. It's the thing that lets them know you aren't going to put up with it. At the same time, you're not making fun of him, per se, it's just, you know, this is the way it is. I'm here and I have as much right to be here, and you know. But you have... you're going to have to learn the fine line of your personality so you can get yourself across, and you don't do it in an instant.

NG: I'm very sorry, I'm going to have to interrupt. I was just passed a note that said the building closed at 10 o'clock *[commotion]* and, unless we wanna spend the night here, for those of you who might wanna continue this, there's a Copper Kitchen across... where you can have coffee... if you pay for it. *[laughter]* And for the rest of you, we'll see you all tomorrow. And I want to thank all the panelists very much.

[some inaudible conversation]

[program ends but static on tape continues for 20 seconds]