

UC Santa Cruz

Institutional History of UCSC

Title

Edges and Ecotones: Donna Haraway's Worlds at UCSC

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Introduction

When I was an undergraduate at UCSC in the early 1980s my best friend invited me to come listen to one of Donna Haraway's upper-division seminars in feminist theory. I remember how her teaching electrified and energized the students in the room. Haraway's intellectual depth and breadth, thinking across disciplinary boundaries, wit, and phenomenal energy left a deep impression on me at the time. Little did I know then that a quarter of a century later I would be an oral historian with the University Library's Regional History Project and conduct this oral history interview with Donna Haraway about her years at UC Santa Cruz.

Donna Haraway came to UC Santa Cruz in 1980 as a professor in the History of Consciousness Program (Histcon), one of the first interdisciplinary graduate programs in the United States. Her position in feminist theory within Histcon's graduate program was probably the first one of its kind in the country. Haraway's eclectic background was an excellent fit for the prestigious and innovative Histcon program. Her BA from Colorado College was in zoology with minors in philosophy and English, and she earned her Ph.D. from Yale under G. Evelyn Hutchinson in an interdisciplinary arrangement with the departments of

Biology, Philosophy, and History of Science and Medicine. After graduating from Yale, Haraway taught History of Science at Johns Hopkins University and then taught in the Department of General Science at New College, an experimental liberal arts college of the University of Hawaii at Honolulu, experience which also prepared her for UC Santa Cruz's college system and other non-traditional approaches to higher education.

When I interviewed Haraway in her office at Oakes College at UCSC on two feverishly hot days in the summer of 2006, I once again experienced her vibrant presence, a presence that sparked and transformed my own practice as an interviewer. As an oral historian I generally do not see myself as being in conversation with the narrator; rather my questions and witnessing presence help create a space for the narrator to delve into memory and reflection. While this interview is primarily Donna Haraway speaking, there are several sections where the interview becomes more of an interactive co-creation. For example, when I ask Haraway if she thinks of the university as an ecotone, my background as an environmental studies major enters the oral history; her responses then reshaped my own views on the university. I also was fortunate to be in a deep personal, intellectual, and artistic friendship with the writer Gloria Anzaldúa for many years until her death in 2004. Anzaldúa was a student and colleague of Haraway's so there are several places in the oral history when we engage with Anzaldúa's ideas, particularly her work on the borderlands.

This project owes its impetus to Christine Bunting, head of Special Collections and Archives at the University Library, who thought it would be an excellent idea for me to conduct an oral history with Donna Haraway that would amplify and contextualize Haraway's archive housed in the Special Collections

department at the library. We are not attempting here to do an oral history which encompasses all of Haraway's life history and scholarship, both of which are well represented in her own writings and in the book-length interview by Thyrsa Nichols Goodeve published as *How Like a Leaf* (Routledge 2000). While Haraway's philosophy and theories infuse this narrative, the focus and scope of this oral history is her life at UC Santa Cruz. Haraway's interest in aurality and in the interview format has encouraged us to provide the recordings of her interview(s) in streaming audio on the library's website, in addition to this transcript. While Haraway lightly edited the manuscript in places, for the most part the transcript can be used as a "finding aid" to the oral interview.

Thank you to Lizzy Gray, who transcribed this oral history, and to Donna Haraway herself for carefully reviewing the transcript, providing the frontispiece, and generally being a pleasure to work with. Copies of this oral history are on deposit in the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley; in Special Collections and the stacks at McHenry Library at the University of California, Santa Cruz; and on the Library's website. The Regional History Project is supported administratively by Christine Bunting, Head of Special Collections and Archives, and University Librarian Virginia Steel.

—*Irene Reti*

Director, Regional History Project

McHenry Library, University of California, Santa Cruz

September 2007

Coming to UCSC's History of Consciousness Program

Reti: Today is July 25, 2006. I'm Irene Reti with the Regional History Project. I'm here with Donna Haraway in her office at Oakes College on this rather hot July day. So Donna, you were hired in 1979 to come to [UCSC].

Haraway: Actually, 1980. I interviewed in either late January or early February of 1980, and I began teaching here in the fall of 1980.

Reti: How did you hear about the History of Consciousness program?

Haraway: Well, I knew about UC Santa Cruz in a very general way as an innovative campus. My first teaching job was at the University of Hawaii, in a combination arrangement between something called New College and the General Science Department. New College was a collaborative faculty, student, staff—kind of a radically democratically run part of the University of Hawaii, where faculty and students met extensively to plan the kinds of courses that they were going to be doing during the next term. Everything was run by a kind of troika. My husband, Jaye Miller, and I were resident faculty advisors for New College. And I knew a little bit about UCSC as a similarly state-funded institution that had certain kinds of common ideals around community and serious integration of students and faculty in co-shaping an education. But I didn't have any idea that I would actually be teaching here. I would have liked the idea, but I didn't specifically know about History of Consciousness, though like other people of my academic generation I read Norman O. Brown avidly, and I read Gregory Bateson avidly. Gregory Bateson was living downstairs in the

faculty apartments the first year that Jaye and I were at the University of Hawaii (1970-71), because I believe that's when he began doing his dolphin research.

Reti: Oh, that would make sense, yes.

Haraway: I didn't know him then, but I watched him walk to campus. There were connections, but they didn't have any goal to them. It's just that I knew about UCSC a little bit, and some of its people.

[Then] Jaye was denied tenure at the University of Hawaii, in no small part because of his gay identity and gay politics, and both of us were really seriously hurt by various aspects of that whole scene. We had gotten a divorce in Hawaii that was the first "divorce without a lawyer" kind of thing.

Reti: A do-it-yourself divorce?

Haraway: Yes. And we'd gotten our first petition thrown out of court. We flipped a coin to see who would be plaintiff and who would be defendant. (laugh) And then we went off to court together. We were very good friends. We didn't know how to be married. It was a bad idea to be married. So anyhow, we were thrown out of court because Jaye had typed the form in pica and it was supposed to be in elite. It was very hostile.

Anyway, the point being we both left Hawaii for many reasons. I went to Johns Hopkins University in the History of Science department, and Jaye went to the University of Texas, Clear Lake City branch. While I was at Johns Hopkins, I became good friends and colleagues with Nancy Hartsock, who at that time was both in the political science department at Johns Hopkins, a feminist political

theorist, a feminist theorist, and a part of the collective of the magazine called *Quest*.

Reti: I remember *Quest* well.

Haraway: You remember *Quest*? Which really thought of itself in those years as a major organ of social change, and not as a scholarly journal. It wasn't like *Signs* or *Feminist Studies*. It really thought of itself as an intervention in politics. Nancy was very deeply involved with that. And she and I and other people in Baltimore were part of a Marxist feminist collective in Baltimore, which was mainly not on the campus. Though it drew from Johns Hopkins people, it also drew a lot from people in the city of Baltimore, various kinds of active women's groups, and there was active feminist publishing in Baltimore at that time. Anyway, Nancy and I became good friends and colleagues, and got some Women's Studies courses going at Johns Hopkins, and one thing and another.

I believe it was Nancy who found the job ad originally for the History of Consciousness line in feminist theory. She and I decided to apply for the job together, and we did. So it was a joint application, in fact, by Nancy and me. Everybody here assumed we were lovers, which I didn't have any idea of at the time. (laughter) They were greatly disappointed to meet Rusten, although I think everybody loved him. (laughter) Much fantasy work going on.

Reti: Yes, indeed. (laughter)

Haraway: But Nancy and I were very close friends, and we did apply jointly. I still think History of Consciousness would have been smart to hire both of us at half time each.

Reti: As a shared, half-time . . .

Haraway: Yes, as a shared job. But we got the word from the search committee here that they really didn't want to consider an atypical application, because it was already out-there enough to be hiring in feminist theory, and they didn't want any glitches in the appointment process. If we really wanted to be considered seriously we should apply separately, was the word we got. So Nancy decided not to apply, and stay at Hopkins, for various reasons of her own. I decided to go ahead and apply, and interviewed here with no real idea that I would . . . I had no idea if I'd get the job or not. I was both happy and unhappy teaching history of science at Johns Hopkins. Really neat people applied for this job in History of Consciousness: Joan Kelly-Gadol, Evelyn Fox Keller. Who else? Kelly-Gadol was a feminist theorist in history, and Evelyn in broad kinds of psychoanalytic object relations, psychoanalytic issues, as well as science studies. I was kind of the unknown in the lot in all sorts of ways, but had just published the two articles in *Signs* on the studies of monkeys and apes and the whole set of issues around natures and cultures in the study of these very closely related animals to us. I was always interested in what counted as nature, and to whom, and at what cost, and was extremely interested in the way women as primatologists were particularly drawn to the study of monkeys and apes in field settings, the ways that did and did not make a difference to the science, to the women, to the men, to the animals. So I was beginning to publish in the context

of feminist theory on animal-human relations and the relations of biologies and anthropologies and politics, and so forth. Those articles got some attention, and the people here really liked them. So they invited me to interview.

I gave a kind of crazy job talk that had Jack Schaar running from the room in horror, and Norman O. Brown jumping up and down in pleasure. (laughter)

Reti: Okay. Why was it crazy? (laughter)

Haraway: Oh. Why was it crazy? I think because it had the kind of messy mix of things that my work has always had, that characterized "The Cyborg Manifesto," that characterizes, for better and for worse, who I am. For better and for worse, I have the kind of mind and soul that just makes connections fast.

Reti: Yes.

Haraway: And riffs on them. And draws people into them. And I've had the privilege of a good education, in the sense of classics and history and philosophy and science, and so forth. So some of the connections I make are drawing people in from their different scholarly connections in a way that gives people a kind of whiplash, for better and for worse, in a: "I've never thought of that and I think it's probably wrong but it's also interesting" kind of reaction.

Reti: So even in an interdisciplinary program like History of Consciousness, it was still pushing the boundaries . . .

Haraway: Yeah. And I had the authority of a Ph.D. in biology. It wasn't just authority. It was the privilege of having actually gotten the training, in a context

in which the money was there for graduate education for people from my particular kind of background, in elite institutions with really good teachers and really good labs. There was a lot of really good luck, as well as hard work, and just plain pleasure in ideas, in the background. You know, part of the women's movement, in bell hooks' sense of that word, in the sense of movement, you know?

Reti: Mmm.

Haraway: Where connections that seemed to be about the world and were exciting, were built into the talk. I also don't read talks. I work orally. They're heavily cued. They're heavily prepared. There's a lot of scripting. But it's invisible to the audience. And the audience response itself is part of what the speaker works off of. If it works, all kinds of connections are happening in the talk that you didn't know about beforehand, because they're made to happen by the encounter, right?

Reti: Yes.

Haraway: And it's the way the encounter itself shapes inventiveness in the world. That's been a theoretical question, an area of theoretical curiosity for me for a long time, and it's really the center of my animal work now—that kind of inventiveness that comes out of encounters that are not fundamentally mediated by language in the linguist's sense. It's not like there is nothing of that, but it's mainly not what's going on. I am extremely interested in the kinds of inventiveness that go on cross-species, the kind of semiotic work, the kind of

playful, making something happen in the world that wasn't there before out of what you've inherited. Right?

Reti: Mmm, hmm.

Haraway: So the talk was about generation, working off of Aristotle's "On Generation," and picking up various kinds of critiques of compulsory heterosexual reproductivity, and what generates new things in the world, including new bodies, and the way natures and cultures are part of that. The outline for that talk is going to be part of the archive.

Reti: Great.

Haraway: It was flaming crazy and it was fun! And it got people excited. Nobby [Norman O. Brown] loved it and Jack Schaar thought it was nuts. The search committee, which was made up of Adrienne Zihlman, and Barbara Epstein, and Helene Moglen, and Bettina Aptheker, and Jim Clifford, and Hayden White, I think, each from very different places, liked it. So they ended up hiring me, in spite of, I think . . . in spite of the way that, particularly Joan Kelly and Evelyn Keller, in a lot of ways, were better qualified . . . had all kinds of qualifications for the job, and wonderful things to bring. I think they deliberately hired someone who was unpredictable in some interesting ways. And I think that had a lot to do with the kind of craziness that Hayden White had, and liked, right? A kind of fundamental hatred of being bored. (laughter)

Reti: (laughter)

Haraway: (laughter) Not that he would have been bored by any of the other candidates either, quite the opposite, but a kind of quirkiness in the history of this department.

Reti: Yes.

Haraway: I think I was both smart, well-educated, and quirky, for better and for worse. They hired me for exactly the same reasons and in the same month that Johns Hopkins fired me. I was coming up for promotion to associate professor at Hopkins, and I had a book from Yale University Press, and publications and so on and so forths, and my department supported me. The next committee in the university at Hopkins looked at it and said, "This doesn't constitute the profession of the history of science. This is something else. And we don't recognize it." It wasn't exactly hostility. It was more indigestibility. They couldn't recognize it as what was supposed to be done in a leading program in the history of science. And in some very deep ways they were right, although I think history of science might have been better off with more people like me than it actually had. But nonetheless, I think from their point of view what they did made perfect sense. And from History of Consciousness's point of view, what they did made perfect sense. I think what I got out of that experience of being desired and recruited and regurgitated and fired almost in the same week and for the same reasons, was how very unpersonal that kind of thing was, how very historical it is, right? It was an historical moment in the history of scholarship, in the women's movement, in the kinds of risks universities would and wouldn't take. I got it in my bones that while I felt both of those things deeply personally—deeply excited, deeply hurt—that fundamentally these things are

not especially personal. And that's been an invaluable thing to know when I talk to graduate students now, I mean, all along—that you experience all of these things in your heart and your flesh. And it is of course you. But in very deep ways, whether you get a grant or not, whether you're chosen for a short list for a job or not, whether a publisher likes what you're writing or not—in very deep ways it is not personal, but a historical state of a discourse, and the nature of the kinds of possibilities that are being opened up and closed, and where you are situated in that. These are very collective and very historical matters.

Reti: So one thing that was going on historically at that moment was the development of feminist theory.

Haraway: Oh, absolutely right. I think History of Consciousness was the first department in the United States to hire a person in feminist theory. There were plenty of other people who were doing feminist theory at that time. And feminist theory was not canonized as this Thing yet, thank God. It was highly diverse, located in many domains of practice in and out of the university, and *understood* to be this highly diverse activity. And for an all-Ph.D. program—History of Consciousness was from the get-go established to be an all-Ph.D. program—for History of Consciousness to ask for and get a faculty line in feminist theory was an innovative thing to do, not just in this institution, but nationally. It was the first line as such, and I think that . . . It would make sense that UCSC and History of Consciousness would do that. It grew out of the history of feminist work on this campus, which was largely undergraduate. Because there was a Women's Studies program already. In fact, there's a whole history here that involves

Helene Moglen and Barbara Epstein and many others. You probably know some of the versions of that (laughter).

Reti: I do. Yes. Yes. Well, I was around for some of that. I was in Women's Studies in the seventies.

Haraway: Oh, you were around for that. You were in Women's Studies in . . .

Reti: In the late 1970s.

Haraway: In the 1970s. So you were around in this period.

Reti: I was. I remember when you came.

Haraway: Okay. So you know exactly what happened to make that faculty line possible. It came out of the struggles in the undergraduate Women's Studies world that had made feminist work on this campus happen, even though it was sort of regulated in ways that made some people angry and some people happy. You know, when Helene Moglen came and appointed a proper chair to get things in shape, that relieved some people and horrified others.

Reti: Yes, and took it from a student-run program to a program run by faculty.

The Shaping of the History of Consciousness Program in the 1980s

Haraway: And appointed a faculty director. Which was exactly the same thing that happened to History of Consciousness, which had been largely a student-run program.

Reti: I'm not familiar with that history.

Haraway: Oh. So you know, Helene appoints Barbara Epstein, poor Barbara, who bore the brunt of that, and did yeoperson work, as Barbara always does. Barbara can handle conflicts in ways I can't, God knows. (laughter) Anyway. So Helene [Moglen] came as dean, right? Helene was really important. Without Helene, feminist theory in History of Consciousness would not have had a faculty position for it (if that's an English sentence). In any case, it was Helene in conjunction with Hayden, and then Jim [Clifford] liked the idea, and Bettina [Aptheker] was . . . It was Helene who was a big factor in this happening in History of . . .

Reti: I wondered about that, how that actually happened.

Haraway: Oh, absolutely. And Hayden, meanwhile, had been hired to whip Histcon into shape. Not by Helene. I believe Helene and Hayden maybe came the same year. But it was out of the same re-doing of UCSC in the late 1970s that regularized a lot of the more radically democratic structures that had characterized the first ten years of the campus, for better and for worse. I don't think they would have survived otherwise.

Reti: No, I don't think they would have.

Haraway: And there was both gain and loss. But History of Consciousness up to that point, which had always had amazing people, both faculty and students, associated with it, like Stephen Toulmin, and Gregory Bateson, and [Albert] Hofstadter, and Norman O. Brown and many faculty on this campus who gave their life's blood to support Ph.D. students in History of Consciousness, but whose own appointments were in other boards of studies, like Jack Schaar in

politics, and Peter Euben in those years, and people in the literature board of studies, lots of people around the campus . . . Loki Pandey in anthropology. Lots of people . . . Bob Meister, really worked . . . they *were* the faculty for History of Consciousness, but none of them had an appointment in History of Consciousness.

And there was no reliable structure responsible to History of Consciousness graduate students. History of Consciousness was organized by praxis groups, which were student groups. There was a feminist praxis group, and there was a Marxist praxis group, and there was a prison praxis group . . . and there was a praxis praxis group, I don't know (laughter). They were all highly politically focused, and it was really the students who were the main force in admitting who was going to come into the next class of students. Some fabulous people came in those years, people like Sharon Traweek and Chela Sandoval [were] admitted in those years, and a bunch of others. But the ones who, for whatever reason, could handle not having any real help, any real Ph.D. program . . . There were courses, and there was a praxis group, and there were faculty, but there wasn't any really . . . if you were falling through the cracks you just fell through the cracks. If you could hold it together and make it work for yourself, then it worked. There was great work produced in those years, and there was trash produced in those years. And there were just people who didn't get the help that they needed, including Che Sandoval, in those years.

But when Hayden came . . . They hired Hayden to whip Histcon into shape. The decision was either to kill Histcon, or get it into shape. And they decided to give it a try. They hired Hayden. Hayden hired Jim. Hayden and Jim hired me. On it

went. A structure was put into place. And we had a board that also included outside members that were voting members of the board in those years. Peter Euben, Jack Schaar . . . (I'm trying to think of the psychologist. I'm blanking on names a little bit. Really good people.) A philosopher. And as History of Consciousness got more and more of its own faculty, we came together and invited our off-board members to go below the line and not be voting members anymore, which they didn't like very much. But we took control of our own department when we got to be big enough to do that. Which is exactly what Women's Studies has done. And it always makes the people who kind of feel like that they founded the program feel like they aren't appreciated anymore. Which is, of course, perfectly true and appropriate that they not be appreciated anymore. It's time to go away! Or just be part of the background support, but you're not the leader of the program anymore, and it should be that way. But it's emotionally kind of hard. Anyhow, we did that to our gang too, and caused some deep hurt.

But what we did with . . . well, I was talking about Che. What happened, because we brought on our own faculty and because of the deep commitment . . . our faculty has been prominent internationally for our publications, across the board. Every member of this faculty has an international reputation, some in important ways . . . important with a small i. And every single one of these people is a workhorse in the department. None of our people is a *prima donna*. If any of us were a *prima donna*, this department would fall apart. We have our feet of clay, and various problems, and all of us fail each other in different ways all the time, but I think that when you look at the history of the faculty in this department,

you see people who have regularly been here for their students, for the department meetings, for the committees . . .

Reti: Nobody is coasting along.

Haraway: Some of the best teaching was to free students up as writers. So if someone like Che, who was smart as a whip, really committed, great ideas, real theoretical verve, a kind of theoretical creativity, deep scholarly curiosity and passions, but a lousy education, didn't know how to write well and coherently and sustain a project, had done great video projects in the L.A. lesbian scene . . .

Reti: Hmm.

Haraway: . . . was quirky and not orthodox and not dogmatic, interested in what didn't fit, interested in a lesbian feminism that wasn't going to be held together by some kind of taxonomic category, a women of color feminism that didn't fit easily with lesbian feminism. On and on. Che from the get-go, in some of the same ways as Gloria [Anzaldúa], never fit the categories that everybody tried to make her fit, and in some of the same ways as Gloria, had that kind of flaming creativity. But Che did not [then] have the skills to pull it off as a Ph.D., as a scholar. Che took every seminar Hayden ever offered, and Hayden's a dynamite teacher, and Hayden worked with Che almost line-by-line for a long time. Che became a seriously good writer. And still heterodox. Hayden didn't make her become some kind of peg who would fit a hole, but loved her craziness and worked with her line-by-line. I've watched Jim do that again and again, and get people through dissertations that they never would have gotten through in any other institution in this country, that turned into good books with university

presses, and people who are out there in the world doing it. I think all of us have done that. Because from the very beginning, History of Consciousness has both admitted people who already had all the skills and a perfectly proper elite education to pull it off without help, and people who weren't going to have had a chance without help, but who had ideas that caught our curiosity, and that we thought had a real scholarly project, and who are seriously labor-intensive students. We still do that. Maybe a little less than we used to. I don't know but . . . especially in the early . . . many years History of Consciousness very deliberately admitted people who probably wouldn't have been admitted anywhere else in the country, because we thought they had really neat things going on. That means that our faculty has regularly worked with people one-on-one a lot, and still do. Add to that an amazing history of student collaboration and networking . . .

So I loved the teaching atmosphere at this place. It had some of the same pleasures of New College at the University of Hawaii that were not really there at Johns Hopkins. I learned history of science at Johns Hopkins, in a certain sense, since I had never studied the subject and was hired to teach it in a Ph.D. program, literally. (laughter) I mean, Hopkins knew they were hiring somebody who didn't know any history of science to speak of. The way they educated me was by assigning me the intro graduate course. So I would teach first-year graduate students the introduction to history of science. They just kept assigning me that course for two or three years until they figured I was properly socialized. And it works. You know?

Reti: Yeah.

Haraway: So I learned history of science at Johns Hopkins, and I had a good time and I published some good stuff, and I liked my colleagues, and I learned a lot from them. But it was a very straight place in every sense of the word. One of the colleagues, the chair of my department at Johns Hopkins the year I came up for promotion (and he wanted me to get promoted), he comes to me with a bottle of White-Out (because this is pre-computer) and the curriculum vitae that I had prepared and he says to me, "I would like you to white-out the following publications. I don't think they're going to do you any good. *Women: A Journal of Liberation . . .*" Okay? Remember that magazine? (laughter)

Reti: Oh. Yes, I do.

Haraway: (laughter) I had a piece on Marge Piercy in there. That definitely had to be whited-out. And interestingly, a peer-reviewed, fifty-page small monograph in a major history of science journal, he wanted whited out because he thought it was too politically invested. So both *Women: A Journal of Liberation* and *Studies in the History of Biology* had pieces that he couldn't accept, even though the editors of *Studies in the History of Biology*, who were prominent historians of biology, liked it and foregrounded it. Even that was off the map for my colleagues in my department at Johns Hopkins. That told me something important, even though I could kick myself for having obediently whited them out. I find that a mark of shame in my history. (laughter) But it's also helpful in being an advisor for graduate students . . .

Reti: I was thinking that, yeah.

Haraway: . . . you know? To know that you give people advice that maybe is correct professional advice, maybe not, but that is a kind of violation of their integrity. Maybe you still have to do it. But you have to leave them the space to obey or disobey. Because it's not an innocent piece of advice to wipe out some of your best writing and some of the writing you care most about because it doesn't fit, because it embarrasses your colleagues. That was the real reason. It embarrassed him, and he didn't want to argue for it on the committee. Which I thought . . . at the time I had very little perspective on that. And it had everything to do with the feminist passion in the work. It was too out-front. It was way too out-front.

So where are we? (laughter) We've run afield.

Building Women's Studies at UCSC

Reti: Well. We're all over the place, of course. (laughter) So when you got here you were also involved in building Women's Studies?

Haraway: Yeah. Absolutely.

Reti: Would you talk about that?

Haraway: So it was understood, and I wanted this, that my appointment was in History of Consciousness and that I would be below the line . . . Actually it wasn't even below the line. I was on the faculty of Women's Studies even though my appointment was in History of Consciousness. So my appointment was never in Women's Studies, even though it was understood that about a third of my teaching would be in Women's Studies, and that I would help . . . Since Women's

Studies already existed, I wasn't inventing Women's Studies at all, but I was working with the other people in Women's Studies, faculty and students, to continue the reshaping of Women's Studies that had begun before I got here.

Reti: I wasn't actually in the feminist theory course that you taught, but I had friends that were. I was an Environmental Studies major.

Haraway: Ah.

Reti: I did Women's Studies as a six-course concentration [along with Environmental Studies] so I did two interdisciplinary majors, which I don't know if now I could do, (laughter) but anyway, I remember that when you came, suddenly there was this incredible intellectual infusion of ideas, and people grappling with what you were bringing in, but also not completely understanding it. They were really being challenged. They were used to a whole different kind of Women's Studies.

Haraway: Yeah, absolutely. In those years too many people taught something like feminist theory as, here are the following kinds of feminist theory: There's radical, and socialist, and cultural, and lesbian, and women of color, and blah blah blah. I swear to God it was taught taxonomically, as if those boxes had somehow generated the work, or held the work, as opposed to being interesting but situated markers that themselves did work on the work. I think of those . . . well, Katie King, who was a graduate student in History of Consciousness in those years, was the one who really gave me the model for thinking about the way that these taxonomies work. The taxonomies aren't some kind of enemy that you never do. They're tools, and they both work and get worked. They're part of

situated conversations. And they're constantly morphing in regard to the ongoing reworking that people are doing both against and with each other, in what Katie called "theory conversations." There are these situated conversations and most people are part of more than one at a time, right? And are pulled in different ways, sometimes painfully, sometimes in a way that makes you feel incredibly alive and better, and at other times make you feel deeply hurt. But almost everybody is organically part of more than one conversation at a time, and ought to understand that as the normal state of things. Too often too many people in every political movement are working to a kind of clarity of ideological position. That has its purposes, because you can do certain kinds of things in the world when you've got that, that are harder to do if you don't. But [they] are then used as tools to produce what got called political correctness, that got used to produce those who do and don't count, as opposed to a much bigger sense of what feminist movement is, and a kind of vulnerability to not being who you thought you were, and to being open to being redone. And among many things, I think the history of both racial and sexual politics in feminism would have been very different if there had been more of a culture of cultivating that kind of openness to risk, and less of a defensiveness, and less of an attack mentality, attack and defend, and a shaping each other up into vanguards. So when you look at Che's theory of oppositional consciousness and then differential consciousness it all grew out of her thinking about these issues by living through them. Che contributed some of the most original theory out of inhabiting that kind of place. And people like Gloria Watkins/bell hooks, Che Sandoval, Bettina Aptheker, me, Gloria [Anzaldúa], Katie King, Caren Kaplan, Debbie Gordon, others, were all *here* in History of Consciousness and literature, but in feminist

theory seminars in History of Consciousness—all those people, we were all talking to each other in the same seminars in those years. It shaped all of us ideologically, politically, as scholars. It made a huge difference, I think, to our work.

Reti: Can we talk more specifically about a couple of those people?

Haraway: Yeah, let's do that, but for a minute I want to talk about how that affected my teaching in Women's Studies.

Reti: Okay.

Haraway: So I taught three courses in Women's Studies regularly: *Feminist Theory, Methodological Issues in the Study of Women*, and *Feminism, Science, and Technology*. All of those course outlines will be part of the archive. I don't know, in a way, what syllabi tell folks about what was going on at a certain moment there. They are like hints of conversations. All of them were courses organized around what felt like growth points, that felt like points of pain and excitement, that felt like slightly infected areas under the skin that you needed to touch, and also felt like sources of vital pleasure. And *all* of them paid precious little attention to what you had to know first in order to ground what you could do second. I've never been a good teacher in terms of laying out the groundwork of skills you're going to need to go on to the next level of skills. So my courses did and do produce confusion and excitement, and: "I think I'm getting it but I'm not sure what I'm getting." But my courses always loop back, again and again and again, through the same material, back to the questions we were raising before, watch what's happening to the language, so that by somewhere in the middle of

the course, or maybe at the end of the first third of a course, most of the students in the course start saying, "Oh! That's what's going on. This is the way these connections work. This is why I care. This is what I can do here. This is how I can make these things connect." So that my sense of a course is that people start getting it that what you're learning in these courses is a way of paying attention, a way of understanding that scholarly work works by modes of attention, that you never start at the beginning of scholarship or politics. You are always jumping into the middle of something that's ongoing before you, all around you, and after you. Right? You are always jumping into the middle of many conversations, and you've got to learn to know how to pay attention. What you're learning is how to hear, how to feel, how to see, how to get it. You're learning how to *get it*. And you're learning how to get it in several ways at once. You're learning that if you need to know something about the way the history of certain kinds of notions of mind-body relationships in philosophical writing have been taken up . . . the kinds of layering upon layering of textual work around mind-body problems in philosophy, the way those things have come into feminist theory around, say questions in medicine, or questions in animal-human relationships, or thinking about the nature of the relationship of emotion and cognition, or what have you. Any number of issues, okay? Then you're going to realize that you can go read de la Mettrie's 18th century *Man a Machine* (1748), and you can read Descartes, and you can read the commentators in the 18th and 19th centuries. You don't have to swallow a digest. You don't have to do a cartoon version. You can *read*. These are not questions of great mystery. You can get it. If you need to know something, you can get it. Of course, you go to people who have serious educations in the subject, and you ask them questions, and you read

their books. But what I was trying to do in those Women's Studies courses is give my students in Women's Studies the intellectual skills to go read, and not to do cartoon versions of feminist theory by doing cartoon versions of the history of philosophy, or characterizations of biology, or whatever it was. So those courses were real scholarly undertakings. And most folks liked it. In general. There were always people who . . . it just was not their cup of tea. (laughter) Though . . . I don't know. My sense is that the majority of the Women's Studies students in those courses felt they had gotten something that mattered to their lives at UCSC and afterwards.

Reti: One of my friends whom I was talking with yesterday had been in your class years ago. And her best friend at the time got so overcome by something you said that she went charging out of the room and burst into tears.

Haraway: (laughter)

Reti: She was so completely stimulated.

Haraway: (laughter) Good. I think that what folks did together in those courses was understand that doing theory was a kind of act of love. You know? And that it took your best. You didn't know what you were doing a lot of the time. Theory was about asking questions about what you most cared about, and thinking as best you could. Some of it was profoundly individual, and some of it was relentlessly collective, and it involved a lot of reading and a lot of writing and a lot of rewriting. (laughter) And learning how to write. And how to play with ideas. That kind of thing.

Interdisciplinarity at UC Santa Cruz

So by method, you know, I didn't have the slightest idea of how to teach . . . over here is social science method and that's how you do a proper interview protocol. Actually I *do* know something about how to do those things, and I'm interested in them as tools. I do know how to tell people how to go get some information about how to do some statistical tests, and how to put together a proper sample, and why you would do that, and that it actually matters to know if you're wrong about something, and you can know if you're wrong in rather interesting, situated ways. If you throw that away, you have lost something acquired over long histories of people's struggle to know how to do that sort of thing. So I actually do know something about how to use the tools of the disciplines, and how to respect the tools of the disciplines without making method something that you teach taxonomically, and that you don't think about interdisciplinarity as something that you just sort of . . . add one of those, you know, add a sociologist, and an anthropologist, and a performance art person, and a philosopher, and somebody who does policy, and put them all together and call that interdisciplinarity. That's not interdisciplinarity. A lot of Women's Studies programs are, in fact, put together that way. They aren't . . . they do not actually expect people to be doing conversations in the way Katie would mean it, or Gloria, or Che, or the way I tried to mean it. They actually mean an interdisciplinarity program is one of each—you know, somebody from sociology and somebody from literature, and whatever, and add that together and call it interdisciplinary and do your work that way. I'm being deliberately mean. But I

think too many of us work that way, and the university invites us to work that way.

Reti: To work in the sense of affiliations . . .

Haraway: To work taxonomically. Because disciplines police their boundaries in various ways at certain key moments of socialization—the time of qualifying exams and dissertation committee formation, and first job, and tenure, and your first book, though probably not your second. There's a kind of cumulative permission to be disobedient that happens in the history of a scholarly life, though by the time you get permission to be disobedient, for an awful lot of people it's a bit late. (laughter) Too many really creative, disobedient people have dropped out along the way, smart, creative, disobedient people, because they didn't get it that actually you're as likely to be professionally successful if you do what you really want to do, as if you . . . you're as likely to be successful professionally when you do what you really seriously want to do, as if you don't. You can be obedient and be more or less successful, but you are no more likely to survive professionally if you're obedient than if you're not, in my opinion. I think that's what I learned when I was hired and fired for the same reason.

Reti: Hmmm.

Haraway: (laughter)

Reti: But not everybody has a place like *History of Consciousness* to go.

Haraway: Of course not. And you know, we protect our folks in a million ways. We make sure they've got the field studies they need. We make sure they get the

folks on their committees who can really help them. We watch that they publish in journals that are really going to give them a kind of identity, and that they learn what that means, not just strategically, but with some kind of integrity. We're protecting our people all the time in terms of the skills they're going to need, and why that isn't just opportunistic, why those are real skills, not made-up skills. And the reason for doing it is to enable them to do what they want to do, not *instead* of doing what they want to do. And that if you are not in some deep sense in love with what you are doing, go do something else, because you're not going to be happy, and you're not going to be creative. You're going to be miserable, or you're going to become boring. I think Histcon at its best keeps nurturing that mode of attention to our work.

Reti: UCSC as a whole has had a long history of interdisciplinary work.

Haraway: Yeah. Well, it was set up with that approach, with the boards of studies rather than disciplines. And of course it has become significantly more disciplinized as we go. But even as we've become more disciplinary . . . and we are no longer boards of studies, but departments, so it's no longer the board of studies in literature but the literature department, well, what difference did that make? In some ways, none. But in some ways it made . . . it's a marker that all of its faculty in some way are loyal, must be structurally loyal to a discipline in a way that a board of studies didn't convey. The faculty that were originally hired at UCSC were also all part of colleges. And of course we are still, but it's a pure formality now. The colleges were intellectual centers as important as the board of studies. You didn't get promoted if you didn't have that dual location at UCSC in the early years, and of course that hasn't been true for many years. I think

there was gain and loss. We couldn't have kept doing it that way, because of the larger ecology in which we were all working. And there was both gain and loss in that.

But at the same time, as we have become more heavily disciplinized, we've also been inventing, again part of the larger ecology, new kinds of interdisciplinarity as we've been going. I think one of the really good examples of that would be biomolecular engineering, which is a new kind of interdisciplinarity of a highly creative kind that I have deep interest in, and so do a number of other people in feminist theory, including Jenny Reardon, a new appointment in sociology, who is also a Women's Studies, feminist theory person. I think also of the ties in cognitive sciences between philosophy, linguistics, and psychology that I also have . . . that science studies, including feminist science studies, has major interest in and major scholarly conversations that are also political. And of course the vibrant interdisciplinarity of cultural studies at UCSC. There are all kinds of new interdisciplinarity that are exhibited in real social forms on this campus, as well as in forms of publishing and public life. So I think sometimes we pay attention to our institutional apparatus of departments or whatever, and don't see that at the same time all over the campus new kinds of conversations are being invented in stabilized and social forms—sometimes departments, sometimes programs, sometimes just research clusters, sometimes reading groups, sometimes with funding, sometimes not. There is a kind of mini-scale of quasi-organization going on all the time. We pay too much attention to the forms of organization that we don't do anymore, sometimes, and don't recognize what we *are* doing.

Reti: You mean like having a kind of nostalgia for the past?

Haraway: Yeah. Exactly. Instead of respecting what we did in the past and getting how creative that was, and also that it wasn't just the outside that forced us not to do it anymore, but that most of us didn't *want* to do it anymore.

Reti: Because?

Haraway: Because we wanted to do something else. Because our hearts were actually no longer . . . Well, I guess I'm speaking about myself as much as anything, and a number of the other people I know, that at the same time I really loved what I did when I was in New College, and when the college structure was more viable, and so on and so forth, I was really loving what I was doing next. And the organizational forms that evolved weren't just forced on me and us. They were also enabling certain kinds of freedom and time that were less there in the extremely labor-intensive, face-to-face quality of the college structure, which was wonderful in its own way, but I couldn't have written my books *and* been part of that with the intensity that it required. And I wanted to write my books. And I think so did a lot of people. And not just for external reasons. Not just because it was imposed as some kind of criterion of professional advance or something like that, but because those were things we felt like we needed to be doing in our hearts.

Reti: Because of the passion that attracted you to be scholars to begin with.

Haraway: Yeah. To begin with. And because, you know, again with a small *i*, because it felt like what we were doing was important, and alive and

interesting—that it had audience, that it had real readers, that we were readers and writers together, and while it wasn't as face-to-face, or it was more episodically face-to-face, the kinds of collegueships and friendships that come together in intense knots through practices of travel, meeting at conferences, working groups, workshops, episodic and travel-mediated, but very intense, and forming lifelong friendships. Less at home, less in Santa Cruz, although there is plenty of intense stuff going on in Santa Cruz still. But more travel-mediated, more pointillist in time and space, you know. But nonetheless, enduring. These forms of sociality, these are organizational forms that sustain our work.

UC Santa Cruz as an Ecotone or a Borderland

Reti: When I was reading some of your work, I was thinking, well, if UCSC were an organism . . . I was thinking of that metaphor and how you would apply that?

Haraway: It's more like a species assemblage. It's certainly not an organism or even a super-organism. It's more like an ecological assemblage. It's like a complex . . . I think universities are like edge areas in ecology where different habitat assemblages intermix.

Reti: Ecotones?

Haraway: Yeah, like ecotones, where all of the species are in a sense outside their comfort zone. (laughter)

Reti: Ah! I like that.

Haraway: They are outside of their normative comfort zone, but they can still make a living well enough to be there. But new things are happening in these ecotones. Their livings aren't being made in quite the same way that they are at their centers of distribution, their population centers, right? In ecotones things are happening that can't happen in the comfort zone of any of the species in question.

Reti: Right.

Haraway: Right. So I think of universities as ecotones more than as organisms.

Reti: Would they be borderlands as well?

Haraway: Sure they are. I think borderlands are ecotones. Or, I like to think in terms of kinship groups of words, which I think Gloria [Anzaldúa] did too. Right?

Reti: Yes.

Haraway: So a borderland as she thought of . . . as she invented or re-invented that term, *was* this place where nobody was in their comfort zone. It was a real geographic place, but it was also a place of pain, of invention, of fantasy, hope, of possibility, of defeat. A borderland was a place of breaking and building. It was a place where no one could be the same. There was no way you could inhabit a borderland and be who you were before. And you didn't know what that was going to mean. And you couldn't really control it. So if you relate that to the biological metaphor of an ecotone, you see how these are actually contact zones. I was thinking of Mary Pratt's *Imperial Eyes* and the way she invented this term

“contact zone” for thinking about colonial studies and post-colonial studies, where peoples, and ways of living, and technologies, and ways of doing the world are forcibly brought together in relations of serious inequality, but which do not take the simple shape of dominator and dominated, or victim and oppressor. It does not take a binary shape, even though inequality of relations of power define the zone, as they do borderlands, as they do ecotones.

Reti: As they do universities.

Haraway: As they do universities. So that because you are paying strict attention to relationships of power, does not mean you are going to do it with a binary logic. Both [are] metaphors that are also real places. I've always been interested in metaphors that are also real places, simultaneously. Of course Gloria was too. Right? Okay. So a borderland, an ecotone, a contact zone, a cyborg, a companion species, so forth. All of these things are simultaneously figural, imaginative, science fictional, metaphoric, or not always metaphors, sometimes other kinds of rhetorical figures . . . they are all figurings that are *also* lived in the flesh. Okay? And always unequally lived, but not in a binary way. Or if binaries are sometimes actually the shape things take, they are never the *only* shape things take. (laughter) It's that kind of thing. There will be times and places where you damn well better be interested in a binary structure, or you're not going to . . . But if you mistake your foregrounding of binary structure for the only thing that's there, you have forgotten that your mode of attention is doing the foregrounding, and the world isn't actually built that way. You [have] engaged a mode of attention in order to do a certain kind of work, and you are mistaking that mode of attention for the world. Whitehead called that misplaced

concreteness. You are mistaking your abstraction for the thing. And a thing is always this messy borderland. Okay? When you mistake your mode of abstraction for the thing, you've done two terrible things. You've disempowered your mode of abstraction. It loses all its power. Which is a great loss. Abstractions are precious and they take a huge amount of work to know how to build them well. Okay? So you lose the power of abstraction, and you lose contact with the world by mistaking the abstraction for the thing.

So I'm interested in these sorts of naming practices, these ways of inhabiting—ecotones, borderlands, cyborgs, zones of implosion, science fictional worlds—where you are required to be dead literal, you are required to be precise, analytically good, unforgivingly technically right, and flaming imaginative at the same time. Okay?

Reti: Yes.

Transformations and Movements

Haraway: If you're going to get it. And of course you can't do that. Nobody can do that. And so you get it that your breakdowns (this is what phenomenologists in the history of philosophy taught us best), you get it that your breakdowns are your most precious moments. Because a breakdown is where the normalizing fails. And so the possibility of something else emerges through breakdown.

Reti: So when you have times of huge transition like, let's say, the late seventies when you arrived . . .

Haraway: Where everything was breaking down? (laughter)

Reti: Everything was breaking down, but then there's this incredible transformation that comes in this very cross-fertilized feminist theory, for instance, that you were talking about before.

Haraway: Exactly. And some of this, which I think Gloria had in spades, was some kind of . . . I don't know, a grace given to you by the structure of your cells. I don't know. There's some kind of root hope, root sense that the world is not dead. I don't know what it is. Call it grace. You might as well. Something that you can't choose to have. You don't know where it comes from. It's got a grip on you that gives you a sense that there is something possible that is not yet, even in the face of the intense suffering of the now. I don't know what that comes from, but I do know that every collective needs its people who feel that way, who are that way in the world. I don't think you choose to be that way in the world. And I think every collective also needs its people who feel despair, its people who are not reconciled by a sense of possibility. That's one of the many reasons that I think something like feminism is *movement*, is a relentlessly collective, historically moving entity. It isn't just that nobody can do everything, and that we're not a leader-driven undertaking, you know, that we don't work by fathers, the fantasy of fathers, and these kind of single creators. Okay? That's why we're anti-monotheists. But I think that the sensibilities of people around what it's going to take to make something like feminism actually happen in the world, (laugh) to make something like a deeply viable differential consciousness come into being, an anti-racist, women of color feminism, whatever, however it's being named at the moment, if we don't have people who have the sensibility of . . . kind of a nonsense, "Get out of here. You're way too messy. I want to do a study that has

some real methodological rigor. I want to emphasize the despair of . . . that is, I want to emphasize in Lebanon the futurelessness of it all." As well as those people who will not go for futurelessness. I think our movements need all of this. So it isn't just that we need different kinds of skills, like filmmakers and sociologists and people who know how to address a crowd and folks who can do a Laurie Anderson (laughter)

Reti: (laughter)

Haraway: It isn't just that we need all those skills, which we do. We also need the sensibilities that are angry at each other. I don't think we choose our sensibilities in life, for the most part. I just think we wake up and figure out what they are.

Reti: Where do you see yourself in there?

Haraway: Well . . . I'm much more like a Che in this regard. For better and for worse, my way of getting it in the world, my way of saying, here's . . . the sense of where are we? That kind of, "Oh, it's here." That kind of moment of getting it about the world, my way of getting it is an apprehension of vitality. It's a sense that things are moving and alive and future-full. And not in some kind of abstract sense. Rather, the world isn't finished. The sky hasn't fallen yet, and may not. And that what we do, small m, matters. Not capital m. We may not cause the heat death of the planet earth. But we may. We may engineer as a species now, and the way our species has organized itself, actually may wipe out ourselves as a species, and vast . . . and we *have* wiped out vast ways of life, and we are doing it at an alarming rate. It *is* happening. And it isn't inevitable. So my way of getting it is to refuse the story of the apocalypse again and again and again and

again. It's to block inevitability in every way I can figure out how to do. And still recognize the depth of the trouble.

Reti: When you say, "block inevitability" [what do you mean]?

Haraway: Refuse to believe it. Because I think refusing to believe it is one of the crucial tools for making it less likely rather than more likely. I think if you believe in the inevitability . . . first of all, I think there's a kind of odd and highly perverse pleasure in believing in inevitable failure.

Reti: It's very seductive.

Haraway: It's extremely seductive. It is deeply pleasurable. Freud would have called it *thanatos*, a death instinct. It's a deep, instinctual lure. It is unconscious. It is a lure. I think that the idiom of the unconscious, and the lure of death . . . And of course our individual deaths are inevitable. But what we make of that, (laughter) you know? The kind of deep instinctual pleasure of a death drive, a kind of inhabiting the death drive. The idiom of psychoanalysis is not bad at that. (laughter)

Reti: (laughter)

Haraway: And I think it's descriptively very apt for what goes on in political movements, in individual subjects. Teresa de Lauretis is a genius at thinking about this stuff. She is really good at it. In the last few years she has written a great deal about the death drive, and with her relentless lesbian and feminist sensibilities, kind of redoing Freud's theory of instincts. I think of Teresa as a friend and colleague and person for whom I have extraordinary intellectual

respect. And I think it's shared. We could no more do each other's work than jump off a cliff holding hands. (laughter) We could not *possibly* write each other's books. We can barely *read* each other's books. But we *do* read each other's books. And we struggle with each other's books because I think each of us has the sense that we need them. They come out of *very* different places and I think it has everything to do with this issue. Because I think Teresa is a person who risks the feeling of . . . of despair. Teresa risks understanding what thanatos is about, and not as pleasure. And I don't. I think I risk things intellectually and emotionally that Teresa can't, that have to do, I don't know, with whatever it is that I've been trying to talk about. I think that's why we need each other. It's a kind of siblingship. And I think our students get that from each of us, oddly. I mean, they get all kinds of things from each of us. Teresa is much stricter about particular bodies of reading that people need to have mastered in order to argue well in a certain domain. She's inevitably right about that and I'm much more cavalier about that. And I'm also right, in terms of being able to do creative work with a kind of good-enough approach to a body of scholarship, as opposed to being completely inside of it. I figure, good enough. Teresa says, "No. Dead inside or not at all." I mean, I'm exaggerating both of us, but you know. But as teachers we give our students, both graduate and undergraduate, very different messages about this. And it's not about disciplines, in the sense of whether it's literature, or sociology, or what have you. It's about a fidelity to a tradition of interpretation. I am way more willing to live with and needy of inhabiting many things that I've only got half-digested. Teresa insists on pretty thorough digestion. And we're both right. But we can't both do the same . . . And because

we're both right, and because they are not only not the same thing, they in some ways struggle against each other, we need each other.

Reti: I can see that, yes.

Haraway: Coming through this department, I think our students as a whole, as a body of people, understand living with contradiction, making choices, without necessarily turning the other choices into something an enemy does, an intellectual enemy, or a political enemy, or a whatever enemy. They are better at living with contradiction than most of the folks I know coming through other kinds of graduate programs that are also good, because of the way Histcon is set up around work, and not around bodies of knowledge. Women's Studies is set up that way too. And now that it's Feminist Studies, its name change was consequential in a lot of ways, including its people taking full control of its program, and saying thank you to those of us who were historically important. (laughter) Thanks and goodbye. Obviously . . . you know what I mean. And doing it its way. I think feminist studies is reinventing itself, both in a disciplined way and in this kind of body of work way, at the same time. I'm really interested to see how it comes out. And its transnational feminist theory graduate program, which I really want to get approved, I think could be dynamite. Histcon has been very much part of that—Angela Davis, especially, but also Neferti Tadiar.

Writing and Teaching

Reti: So can we talk about being a writer in Santa Cruz? In an interview I came across you talked about how important Santa Cruz had been to you as . . .

Haraway: A place to write?

Reti: Yes.

Haraway: No question. I wrote good stuff when I was at other places in a range of ways, and stuff I learned from, but it's at Santa Cruz where I just started flaming with writing that . . . It was at Santa Cruz that I wrote "The Cyborg Manifesto" and "Teddy Bear Patriarchy" and "Situated Knowledges" and the material that other people, for reasons I couldn't have predicted, people I had no idea were going to read this stuff, in and out of universities, have read it, and re-read it, and published it, and re-published it, and translated it, and keep translating it and keep republishing it . . . There is a body of papers that I wrote here that have had a life of their own that was the fruit of . . . those papers were the fruit of coming into this place, and getting permission to write through that kind of connectivity that those papers perform.

Reti: So that was the key, the atmosphere in which connectivity was . . .

Haraway: Was honored, and, and foregrounded, and expected, and it's the reason they hired me. And it's the way the seminars worked. Particularly . . . well, graduate and undergraduate. But I think the graduate teaching was more formative for me in this regard than the undergraduate teaching was, although it's hardly either-or. But it's because graduate students are more like colleagues than undergraduates are. They're older and they've got their own research projects. It's just different. The graduate students who were here that first year and on, really got my attention. And it shaped the writing.

You know, that first graduate seminar . . . I had worked incredibly hard to design that syllabus and I passed it around. And sitting around the table were Bettina, and Caren Kaplan, and Debbie Gordon, and Katie, and Che, and bell hooks, who was then Gloria Watkins, and seven or eight other people. Actually it was more like about twenty-five people that were sitting around the table. I explained the syllabus and we read it and Gloria . . . the first thing that happened when we started the conversation was that Gloria took the syllabus and held it up like it was tainted, and you know, dirty, and said, "This is the most racist document I've ever read," Gloria announces, (laughter) the very first thing that was ever said to me in a seminar at Santa Cruz. (laughter) I'm exaggerating slightly, but only slightly. (laugh) And Che picks it up and says, "Gloria, you're full of shit." (laughter)

Reti: (laughter)

Haraway: And other people had other things to say. And we re-did the syllabus, basically, because there were ways in which Gloria [Watkins] was her usual *prima donna* self, doing whatever she did without any particular effort to nuance anything, (laughter) particularly in those years. There were ways in which she was both right and wrong. And the syllabus got re-done out of both of those things. I never designed a syllabus the same way again. It was really clear to me that you couldn't add women of color and stir.

Reti: Ah. Okay.

Haraway: Or something, you know? And . . . I don't know. It was a really good place to teach. And that teaching shaped the writing for sure.

Reti: What does it mean to be a feminist teacher?

Haraway: Well, you know, I used to give these little riffs on that, particularly in the undergraduate classes in feminist theory and then the theory and methods courses. I mean, one of the things that happened when Women's Studies redid itself was that the split between those things was done away with.

Reti: Between methods and theories?

Haraway: Yeah, it's not taught that way anymore and it never should have been. We didn't teach it that way anyway. It was a misnaming and it misled the students. Anyhow.

I think . . . One of the things is loving women. I think feminism really does have some kind of deep love of women right at its heart. Not a particularly romantic love, and it may or may not involve sexual . . . And it's sexual, but not in the sense that people would understand that narrowly. It's instinctual. I'd say that, rather than sexual. It's rooted in an unconscious somehow. It takes you . . . I think love of women is at the heart of feminism, and some kind of a deep sense of outrage, too, that all is not well with women and never has been. And some kind of profound agnosticism or nominalism, that you don't even know what you mean by *women*. That as soon as you name it, you've told some kind of really impossible lie, because you know that *women* is an impossible category. You don't know who inhabits it, and yet you know it is an inhabited category. So I think feminism has to do with this kind of impossible . . . and Catholics are well-prepared for feeling this way, some kind of recognition of an impossible thing. Catholics are very good at recognizing and affirming impossible things. You

have to be in order to be a Catholic. It's outrageous. It's irrational. It's a lot of things. So my Catholic sensibilities really mattered in my feminism in a lot of ways. But in this way: that feminism, and teaching feminism, and being a feminist involve a recognition and affirmation of multiple impossibilities, and multiple outrages, acts of love, anger, the category itself, the ism of it all. (laughter)

Reti: (laughter) I love that!

Haraway: And the kind of extension of this ism to all the time everywhere, knowing how wrong that is, and yet that it does say *something* true—that something that is true is also deeply wrong, and so something you need to affirm you also need to unaffirm at the same time. And you really do need to do them both seriously. It's also about taking real-life other women seriously and knowing that you have been taught not to, out of your own particular little historical traditions and where you are in the world. You know, people like me and us, that we've been pretty good at paying more attention to men than to women, and expecting things from men we don't expect from women, and vice versa. We've been pretty good at making the division of labor compulsory in all sorts of ways. So not to devalue, for example, the women and science question. Not to say that feminist theory is some kind of fancy thing and other people study how many women are in cell biology, that that's not where the prestigious work is. In other words, reproducing the very hierarchy that we've learned to know how to name? So not to rebuild the very hierarchies between the theoretical and the empirical, that feminist theory is *always* also about the actual empirical stuff.

Reti: The lives of women.

Haraway: The *actual* lives of women in their actual situations, which are always quite particular, okay? And if you are not respectful of those details, you are not doing feminist theory. And you can't do feminist theory without doing those details. So that . . . In *Feminism, Science, and Technology* you would regularly hear certain kinds of cartoon versions—that this is not about women in science. Well, it's not reducible to women in science, but it damn well encompasses women in science! And without thinking seriously about women and science, you're not going to think well about all the rest of it, and vice versa. So feminism is actually about women! (laughter) And because it is about women it can never only be about women. In a particular research project, or a particular aspect of work, you may not actually be talking about women directly. Which doesn't mean that your work isn't . . . wouldn't be impossible if you weren't somehow also paying attention to women in doing it. For example, you may be, in thinking about the way that international genomics is organized, you're not for the most part going to be talking about women. But your mode of attention to women in the world is going to shape your mode of attention to the way databases get set up, to the way interdisciplinarity gets crafted, to how you think about tools and genomics enabling really creative research projects in ecological developmental biology, and that this is feminist work in some way that you're not going to be able to name by the ism. Most of the time, you're not going to be talking about women and science, and it will be kind of beside the point in ways that it's not beside the point in other projects. So it's not like you always have to be using a privileged

set of . . . You're not going to be using the same vocabularies, okay? But you are part of a collective map.

And there's another thing that I think being a feminist means that I used to, and I still talk about in the teaching, and that is that if you're in it for life, as opposed to the next four years, (laughter) or the next ten minutes, you know, if you actually are in this for life, you are going to have to assume that you're going to go through many painful category changes, and vocabulary changes, and that none of those is going to feel good. And you're not going to disown your past histories because you find yourself using another vocabulary. You're going to own your histories. One of the things that feminists have gotten a little better at and need to get even better at is how to inherit our histories. I think it's a really hard and interesting question to figure out how to inherit histories without trashing them.

Reti: For instance, Catholicism, in your case.

Haraway: Or being white. (laughter) And on and on. Whatever history . . . And people like Minnie Bruce Pratt and others who wrote about shame. I think getting to the place where you feel shame is one of the places where it will be really interesting to figure out how to inherit a history that you don't want to inherit. I think the Truth and Reconciliation commissions out of large human rights contexts are an interesting place where that goes on, where people figure out how to inherit the worst, and a way to go on together somehow. You're not going to be able to do it with categories of victim and oppressor only, because you can't go on together with just those two categories.

Reti: Right. It's like how do we retain our memory?

Haraway: Right, and how do you build memory? Memory is a really amazingly creative practice. Remembering is a very, very creative practice. And you can't make up your histories; it's not like you make them up. But you don't just have them out there as things to collect either. They aren't like eggs that you put in a basket. They're more like ecotones. Memories are like ecotones.

Reti: Hmm.

Haraway: Anyway, so that's what I think being a feminist is about.

Reti: And thinking pedagogically, in the classroom being a feminist teacher versus another kind of teacher, is that a question that's meaningful?

Haraway: Oh, yes. Sure it is. But it doesn't have a catechism of answers. You know, feminist process is *x* and not *y*. (laugh) I don't know. Yes, it is a meaningful question, and yes, there have been some important little tools mentioned that are called feminist process, that *do* have to do with making sure that people who speak most easily don't take up all the air space, that you actually do know how to explain what somebody else said and not just what you said, that you leave . . . that you not just leave space, you *make* space for those who are not necessarily already good at inhabiting it. *And* you make space for those who *are* good at inhabiting it. Both. That you figure out how to disagree with each other as well as agree. That no statement is going to be taken as evidence of being the enemy, and how the hell are you going to do that if that statement is so dangerous that you're going to get trashed outside of class if not

in it. You know, how the out-of-class stuff works as well as the in-class stuff. So you make a space that is safe enough, but you are not out to make a safe space. You're out to make something safe *enough*. I don't think a classroom should be a safe space. I think it should be safe enough to be at a certain amount of risk, but not risk of doing each other in. So that you are accountable for what goes on out of class as well as in class, and as a teacher you damn well better find out what it is. So I've regularly flapped my ears in the breeze to know whether people . . . and people do get punished out of class who say things in class. I think it's part of my job to know about that, not in order to punish those who did it, but to somehow . . . although sometimes I will call somebody in and talk to them quietly and privately. More likely I'm apt to make a joke, or indicate some kind of level of awareness, or use my authority. Because I've got authority and I don't disown it, and I think that's part of feminist process.

Reti: Absolutely.

Haraway: So yeah, I think feminist process is an important issue, and that people have figured out how to do things better in some kinds of important ways that do help. But I will lecture, and I will let somebody who knows more about something hold forth for quite a while. I don't think the exercise of authority is illegitimate, and I think we should know how to recognize authority that's earned, as part of feminist process.

Reti: I think that was one of the problems in the early feminist movement, was the complete inability to deal with authority.

Haraway: Yeah, we were so alert to how hierarchy shut people up that we didn't acknowledge the hierarchies that emerged out of that.

Reti: And I think especially when you are teaching in a university to pretend that there's no hierarchy is kind of crazy making.

Haraway: It's, among other things, simply dishonest.

Reti: Absolutely.

Haraway: And confusing to students, does damage to students. Yeah. And you're going to abuse that authority. I actually think that one of the things we've learned to do with each other that I regard as part of feminist process, is being a little bit more patient with the mistakes that we make. You know you're gonna blow it, and you know everybody's gonna blow it. You're paying so much attention to trying to do *this* right, that you do *that* wrong. And that's built in. You don't get all upset about it. You just regard that as a normal part of everyday life and you go on. I really do think that kind of . . . getting used to making interesting mistakes, as opposed to trying to avoid them. (laughter) To find mistakes interesting, as opposed to failures, is part of feminist process, or any inventive process. And classrooms are fairly safe spaces to figure out how to do that. They're safe enough to make interesting mistakes. I think teachers have an obligation to create an atmosphere in which interesting mistakes can get made.

History of Consciousness Students

Reti: In *How Like a Leaf* you were talking about how UCSC, and generally your students have changed over the last twenty to twenty-five years. Can you talk about that some more?

Haraway: Yeah. Well, you know, they have and they haven't. When you ask that question today I'm much more struck by the continuities than by the differences.

Reti: That's interesting. That is so much about doing an interview on a particular day.

Haraway: It depends on what you're thinking of, yeah. The students I'm working with right now, it depends on how you count . . . I'm principal advisor to about twelve Ph.D. students in History of Consciousness, and I'm on the committees of lots of other people in Histcon, and out of Histcon, in anthropology and literature and so forth, other departments. And it's a similar number to . . . well, I started working here in 1980 and I've pretty well always had, I don't know, about twenty Ph.D. students who are on my mind. (laughter) And maybe about half of those I feel really principally responsible to, but significantly responsible to the others, too. I know what they're doing, and when I see things I think of them, and they're in my citation network, and I'm aware of what they've told me, and the kinds of things they are writing about and the words they're inventing are in my vocabulary too. There're kind of like fifteen or twenty graduate students at a time, over those years, and some people are here for five years and other people are here for ten years, but there's a lot of overlap, and that world of graduate students who are no longer graduate students, who

have become colleagues, and those who are still graduate students is very present, is a major form of my social life, even though it often is less face-to-face than built into a soul. A lot of it is of course face-to-face, but a lot of it isn't anymore. And the former graduate students, one of the things that I do a lot of is telling current students what people who used to be here did, giving them their books, giving them their email addresses, referring them to their websites and their current projects. There's quite a network of Histcon alums. In fact, there is a listserv of current Histcon students. I didn't invent that. They did. They did it themselves. I had nothing to do with that, although I really like it. And there's a listserv of Histcon grads, and there's a lively looping through current graduate students and former graduate students. And some of it is griping and critical and trashing, and some of it is quite the opposite. The faculty don't see any of it. There's quite a conversation on "Histcon grads" that goes on. And I see our current graduate students using the scholarship of former graduate students in all kinds of interesting ways. And I don't think it's just Histcon. I think there's a UCSC world out there.

Reti: Oh, absolutely.

Haraway: Histcon is an important part of it but it's only a part. And that's true for people who are here now as well as former people. And lots of people in other departments are a part of Histcon, and vice versa. Our students are part of their programs too, organically.

So that's continuity. And I think the people I'm working with now are just as forced to take risks. I think of Scout Calvert who is working on

technobibliocapital. Her word. She was a librarian. She loves books. She's interested in the technologies of books, the way books are capital and commodities, the way books are objects of collection and distribution and knowledge building, and the way books work in research libraries and community libraries and private collections. She is interested in the circulations of books, the technologies of writings, the way books circulate as commodities. She comes to it as a librarian. She comes to it as a feminist, as a queer person.

Reti: Fascinating!

Haraway: Also as a person deeply interested in animals. Scout has this really interesting kind of . . . she's interested in how categories are built, because she's interested in the way that works in library practice, and she's interested in the way categories explode in library practice, in other parts of life. Scout's sensibilities, she's writing a wonderful dissertation, those are the *same* sensibilities that a Bettina, or a Katie, or Che, had in the early years. But they are historically specific to now, too. She is the one who is knowledgeable about the way the digital apparatuses are working, and the kinds of tensions and creativities between the cyber infrastructures and the other kinds of . . . She's interested in the way in which informational management discourses displace other book discourses. Those are historically located questions.

Reti: Absolutely. Those are evolving as we speak.

Haraway: Those are now. So Scout's doing stuff that is very much only possible now, but in many ways those sensibilities are similar to feminist theory, as Histcon, as lesbian theory, over decades.

Then I think of Astrid Schrader, who came to Histcon with an advanced credential in theoretical physics from Germany, who is a feminist, who felt unable to continue in physics as a woman, who was extremely alert to the near impossibility of survival. That's a very old issue in physics. She's not writing about that. She has no interest in writing about that *as such*, although it deeply enables what she's doing as a feminist science studies person working on . . . she's working with Karen Barad, and me, and also with a biologist, Mary Silver, working with David Hoy in philosophy. A reader of Derrida, deeply committed to post-structuralist philosophy, and finds in Derrida many of the tools that she needs to do the kind of feminist theory of knowledge that she's doing, case studies in physics and case studies in, actually watershed management and biology in the Chesapeake Bay. She's got two domains where she's deeply interested empirically. Anyway, that stuff is hers, right? It's historically very particular to now, and it's also very typical of Histcon.

I think of Eva Hayward, who is a trans person, a transgender person, a male to female person, who is not writing about that, but that experience shapes her. What she's writing about is marine critters and visual cultures as they come into entanglements with marine critters, especially invertebrates, in the Monterey Bay Aquarium, in laboratory work, in film practices. She's interested in optics, in the optics in which marine invertebrates and people come together through visualizing apparatuses. So she's part of animal studies; she's part of queer studies; she's part of visual studies. She's writing really fun stuff that's going to show up in journals like *Society and Animals*, in *Science, Technology and Human Values*. It's science studies. It's all these things. She's not writing directly about

trans people. She teaches about it to some degree. She's theoretically adept in that area. But that mode of attention makes her pay attention to other kinds of category encounters and embodiments and re-embodiments. Her passions are the fingery eyes of marine invertebrates. That's Histcon.

There's Gillian Goslinga, who has just finished a dissertation that is rooted in an ethnography in Madurai, a city in south India, and a temple dedicated to the god Pandi, who helps the infertile. And one of her main ethnographic encounters, informants, is the priestess of the god Pandi. She also worked at the infertility clinic in the city of Madurai, and people who use both the temple and the clinic in their quest for children. And women's ways of doing their lives and the mini-encounters that they have with Pandi is Gillian's dissertation subject. She's also involved in debates in anthropology on the kinds of categories of modernity that are used to divvy up the world into the traditional and the modern in such a way that women's encounters with Pandi can't be told. So she's got a strong critique on the categories of modernity as they work in the discipline of anthropology. She's right on the line between what can be digested and what can't, in terms of her radical hearing of the women's encounters with the god. The question of the reality of the god is what's at stake here, and the kinds of materiality of the god that don't fit any of the available categories. So Gillian's writing this smart dissertation that's about ethnographic knowledge, that's about these women's actual lives, that's about the materiality of the god. It's in the knot that connects all of those. That's very much Histcon. It's also straight-up anthropology. And it's not. That's typical of Histcon, and it's only work that could be done now, too.

So I'm struck by both the continuities and the now-but-not-then quality of it. Gillian has used our network, the Histcon network, in a lot of ways, including, say, my friendship with Marilyn Strathern, who is an eminent British social anthropologist, and I think of her as an ethnographer of cognitive practices. Marilyn knows how to think about thinking. She does ethnography of thinking practices in very situated ways. She's unbelievably creative. Gillian uses Marilyn and me, both uses and rejects both of us. There's this extremely rich intellectual network out there.

Reti: I had no idea of how it went back in time in terms of connections between previous students . . .

Haraway: Yes, and Marilyn was not a student at all. She's quite the opposite. But Marilyn's students, my students, Gillian read and used . . . well, Che, Katie, Sharon Treweek, used . . . Gillian has also worked very closely with Jim Clifford and Jim Clifford's former students, and Jim's networks in theories of ethnography, in ethnographic practice. Histcon works by networks, as well as by people who have used their authority to establish a certain kind of presence in the scholarly world. And Jim was a good example of that. He has a very substantial earned authority. He has worked with Gillian line-by-line, paragraph-by-paragraph, face-to-face, labor-intensive work. Gillian's a dynamite writer. She's one of the most talented writers around. And her talent is sometimes out of her control. Jim has taught Gillian a great deal about the control of her own power as a writer. I couldn't teach Gillian that because I gave her too much permission. And Jim will discipline her. (laughter) I don't know. Anyway, we need each other.

Science Studies

Reti: Today is August 28, 2006 and I'm here with Donna Haraway for our second interview. Donna, today let's start by talking about science studies. First, I'd like to hear about the classes that you've taught in this area, like *Science and Politics*, and *Science as Cultural Practice*, as well as other developments in the curriculum.

Haraway: Well, I came to UC Santa Cruz with, as we talked about before, a Ph.D. in biology, and previous teaching experience in a general science department. That was in Hawaii, at the University of Hawaii, where my main job was teaching this wonderful category of human beings called non-science majors (laughter) their university distribution requirement stuff, and high school science teachers who were coming to get their master's of arts in teaching to improve their situation in the schools, and so on. And in that context, I was teaching history of science, and science as politics. Because, as I think we talked about before, by the time I finished my dissertation in the biology department at Yale, I was already very much connected with philosophy, and history of science and medicine, and had always been connected with literature, in the broad sense, from undergraduate days.

Then I taught history of science in essentially a graduate department at Johns Hopkins, but also with an undergraduate major, which is where I learned history of science in any professional way. When I came here to Santa Cruz in 1980, it was understood that I was bringing the connection of Women's Studies, feminist theory, the connections with science and technology, as well as whatever else I brought. So from the get-go, I organized courses, all of my feminist theory

courses included a strong kind of interest in scientific practice, scientific culture, scientific debate, issues around science and race, science and war. Probably, in the early years, my approach was much more fundamentally critical of the ties of science and power. That is an incredible oversimplification, but it also always included a rather deep commitment to the ties of science and competence, pleasure, empowerment, this craft where you [did] this incredibly fragile, important, hard work of asking questions of the world in such a way that you might have half a chance of knowing if you're wrong. That way of asking questions of the world that is involved in the craft of making interesting mistakes, okay?

Reti: Ah.

Haraway: And the incredible tie of that set of practices to the history of science. It was also . . . I remember teaching in some of my early Women's Studies courses, not just *Feminism, Science, and Technology*, which I taught as an undergraduate course from the get-go, but also in my *Feminist Theory or Methods* course. Teaching about the way the anarchist women in Russia in the mid- and late 19th century would go to Germany, which at that point was about the only country in Europe that was admitting women to its new doctoral programs in agronomy, or whatever, or medicine, or what have you, and then go back to Russia and [become] revolutionaries. They would form fictional marriages with their male peers because they couldn't leave the country without permission of either father or husband, so they formed fictional marriages, got their scientific credentials, went back and worked as revolutionaries and scientists—science in the empowerment of the serfs. I mean, there are a million stories about the ties of

science and utopian hopes for the world of one or another kind, or activisms of many kinds, right? So from the get-go, my feminist theory courses, or whatever I was teaching, whatever the label was, included that kind of double relationship. On the one hand, critique. How could you not have gone through the . . . you know, you don't live through the Vietnam War without understanding the relationship of the electronic battlefield to the enlistment of the best science in the war projects of the state. You can't not know about that. And a million other examples, right?

As a graduate student I had taught in the biology department as a TA in a course on science and social responsibility, or whatever it was called, that one of our faculty members initiated. This was during the Vietnam War and he was an activist on the chemical and biological warfare issues. My experience of being a biology graduate student was very much to be in the midst of science-for-the-people activism, of anti-war and anti-racist science activism. So it wasn't from the outside. The faculty and the graduate students in the biology department were activists on *our* issues—chemical and biological warfare, science in the service of war, scientific racism. This was not something that I learned from the outside and applied to science. There was a whole lot of very strong 1960s and . . . well, and it was way older than that, but in my lifetime, in the 1960s and 1970s.

So that came with me in my teaching here. And I remember teaching as a TA, as a biology graduate student at Yale about science and race, and science and biological racism. Skip Gates was one of the undergraduate students in that course where I was the TA, which was kind of an odd moment in [my] life. I

mean, he wasn't *the* Skip Gates then. He was a bright kid, undergraduate black guy at Yale.¹ (laughter) So all that stuff came with me.

So I began teaching science-oriented courses both in Women's Studies and in History of Consciousness, from the start, both undergraduate and graduate student. And they were called different things at different times. The syllabi for *Science and Politics*, which was my first 80s course, namely for a large undergraduate . . .

Reti: Oh, the topical courses.

Haraway: The topical courses, right, that are intended for freshmen and sophomores. But every History of Consciousness topical course, all the 80s courses in History of Consciousness are always taken by a whole lot of juniors and seniors who take every History of Consciousness course they can, whatever it's called, and then maybe do a paper for upper-division credit. And then a whole lot of Women's Studies students, who took and still take my topical courses, and we usually, depending on their needs for their credits do various paperwork so they get the kind of credit that they need. So there are always a lot of Women's Studies, or now feminist studies students in those topical courses. And those topical courses, for me, were always called either *Science and Politics* or *Science as Cultural Practice*, and they have always involved an effort to build in

¹ Henry Louis [Skip] Gates Jr. is chair of the Afro-American Studies Department and director of the W.E.B. Du Bois Institute for Afro-American Research at Harvard University. With 40 honorary degrees, Gates is a world-renowned scholar and teacher of African and African-American history and culture. He has authored seven books and written numerous essays and reviews on a broad range of African and African-American issues, including slavery, race, feminism, dialect, and identity.

some kind of deep getting it about the kind of human achievement that scientific practice is, and why it's a fragile accomplishment, and also a highly fraught and troubled one, and so on. And how . . . that's for the students who come into the class who tend to be rather anti-science at the beginning, again a cartoon-generalization, but on the whole that's the feeling—very suspicious.

Reti: Because of science's history of involvement with the war machine?

Haraway: That, but I think more because of not knowing very much about science, basically, and the way our culture remains way too split between those who feel themselves competent and confident in scientific literacy and those who don't, and those who feel themselves competent and confident in the skills of the arts and literature and many other things, and those who don't. There's a lot of mutual suspicion. So I get also kids who are filling a humanities requirement, who are information sciences majors, or business majors, or chemistry majors, or what have you. So my big, general undergraduate courses, the ones that aren't named feminist studies courses, get students across the board, which I like, a lot. The courses change. I don't think I've ever taught the same course twice, so I can't generalize what the syllabi include. But those are all on file, so one can see.

Reti: Are those going into the archive?

Haraway: Yeah, in fact, I think I've already sent most of them over.

Reti: Great.

Haraway: So one could, if one wanted to, one could follow the syllabi from the get-go, from 1980 to 2005, and see how they've changed. But I think what has not

changed is this kind of commitment to get the contradictions into the same course, and to get people kind of curious about what they were suspicious about, without necessarily losing their suspicion.

Reti: Mmm.

Haraway: There is a feminist film theorist named Ann Kaplan, and I got this from her, where she talked about reading or watching a film with a mode of attention that she called generous suspicion, or suspicious generosity.

Reti: (laughter)

Haraway: I really love that, and have kind of stolen that term from her and used it in teaching, but also in writing, and also tried to cultivate as a scholarly habit, or as a habit of a person in the world. I think one of our strongest ethical obligations is curiosity. If we engage in critique without curiosity we become ideologues, basically. And that is really a terrible failure and doesn't work politically. It defeats us. Or worse still, it might succeed. (laughter) In that case, witness Bush. The success of an ideology is a terrible thing, actually. So how do we keep our politics from becoming ideology, since we *are* engaged in a struggle against power and . . . It's not simple, right?

Reti: No.

Haraway: And everybody knows that. I think of teaching as an ongoing effort to struggle with that, with your students and your TAs and yourself.

Reti: You cultivate that. You transform that curiosity into critical thinking. Or not curiosity, but suspicion.

Haraway: Yeah, and you try to put yourself in a situation where you're going to be called on something. You try to put yourself and your students in situations where their assumptions are not shared, and where they have to learn to hear it, and even repeat it, and even explain the other person's position, their way of getting it. To state what your position is on something is not the same thing as ... you know, you could repeat someone else's arguments but still not get it why they make sense to someone else. I think breakthroughs in teaching and in scholarship and in politics come from those really scary moments of getting it, without necessarily going over to it. But getting it. So that you can't say, "There is the enemy," but you get it why the world makes sense over there. And then you might have a chance of figuring out something else. Anyway, that's the way I try to think about this stuff, and try to get my students to think about it. Some of them already know more about this than I do, and some of them don't have a clue.

So I've always taught *Science and Politics, Science as Cultural Practice* to this mixed group of students, and until recently always taught an undergraduate course called *Feminism, Science and Technology*. Actually, not all that recently now. I think it may have been more than eight years since I taught that course. Too long. And that one was explicitly, unapologetically focused on the feminism, science and technology issues. I didn't feel like I had to jolly students along to not think of feminism as a dirty word, which is the case in the other course, more so now than in the past. We did many, many, many kinds of things in that course. There

was a wonderful moment when I remember a TA named Faith Beckett, a wonderful woman, who gave a lecture on Descartes, on his meditations especially, his Second Meditation of doubting everything, that wonderful, famous one, and she illustrated her lecture with a Mattel toy called “Dissect an Alien.” I’m not remembering how she made all the connections, but she took this toy out of the box, and it was this insectoid alien with sort of orientalish features, highly racialized insectoid alien that came with this map that you unfolded and laid out on a flat surface, and the map was a map of the alien’s inner organs, and it was all in bastardized Latin—Stomachus, Brainicus, Latinesque terms. On the cover of the box was a kind of Benetton, colors of the world population of kids, of all available hues, all wearing little white lab coats and wielding little dissection instruments, getting ready to dissect the alien. The alien had a transparent plastic skin. This is the same company that made silicone breasts. So it was a kind of a silicone creature that you could unzip and take out its organs and lay them on a map, and you could dissect its head and take out its brain and lay it on the map. And then you could reassemble the alien. And then you could take the blood, the components of the blood, and you could mix them, and you got this fluorescing slime mixture that Faith passed around the class and everyone was feeling the slime mixture. And then pour it into the alien and solidify its organs and zip it back up! (laughter)

Reti: (laughter) How bizarre.

Haraway: It was just fabulous, because what she was talking about was the mixture of the highly rational and the highly fantastic that rationality is. And she was using . . . You know, most people think of Descartes as this exemplar of

rationalism in this highly purified sense. And Descartes, if you read him, is this extremely interesting writer, this fabulous mix of the fantastic and the precise and the rational and the out of control and the . . . At the same time, the doll was an extraordinary lesson in xenophobia, the uncanny, racism . . . So it was just this great moment.

Reti: So then you begin to question the whole basis . . .

Haraway: No. What you learn to do is read! And forget what you were told about what someone said. What you learn to do is actually read what's in front of you. You become open. You become available to getting it. And you relax a little bit about what you have been told something already means.

Reti: Right. The kind of predigested version of—this is what Descartes is about. End of story. He's a bad guy or whatever.

Haraway: Right. Exactly. End of story. And then you just build a little taxonomy, and you have this . . . The same thing applies to doing the history of feminism. You know what the different kinds of feminism are. You have this little taxonomy, and you don't actually need to *read* a so-called cultural feminist writing in 1978, or whatever. But when you do, you realize how unbelievably cleaned up it all was to make up the taxonomy. And how very interesting all of this is when you start reading to whom it was addressed, where it came from, what it's struggling with. It all becomes interesting. And that's a little bit what I mean about the obligation of curiosity. Because curiosity puts the reader or whoever at risk in an interesting way. Because then you start having to figure out how to do something that you don't already know how to do, including drop

your prejudices to figure out what someone you may at the end of the day still think is an enemy, but at least during the day you were trying to figure out what was going on there, as opposed to what you were sure in advance was going on there.

I think with the natural sciences and technologies this is an especially important task for everybody because it is so built-in to ideologies of many kinds—the ideologies of progress, the ideologies of deep ecology, whatever. Everybody knows what science and technology is. Until you don't.

And then the graduate courses . . . the principle of being a university teacher is to have as few course titles as possible so that you don't constantly have to do the bureaucratic work to get a new course approved. So the names of courses are extremely misleading in terms of what the courses actually include. Before the online versions of advance course information, you would read the catalog. The catalog was a terrible guide to what the course was actually going to teach. Because every faculty member I've ever known, most certainly including myself, and the entire support staff, do not want you to write a new course and get a new course approval. (laughter)

Reti: I'm smiling because I used to work at the Office of the Registrar helping get new courses through CEP [the Committee on Educational Policy] and that whole process is very familiar.

Haraway: Who wants the hassle! You want to teach what you want to teach. And you try your best to . . . once in a while you will go through the hassle of getting a new course approval because it really has changed too much, and you start

worrying about the students. But I don't worry about that very much. I just make my courses with completely meaningless labels, or vaguely indicative.

Reti: Broadly defined. (laughter)

Haraway: (laughter) Broadly defined. And now with advance course information I actually do write my course descriptions (and I don't know how many of us do that) for the course I am actually going to teach. Then if anybody bothers to look they will know, and I actually post my syllabus best I can, as soon as I have it. I'll post a draft when it's still wildly in progress so that people at least have a clue. I don't know how frequent that practice is, but I figure it's a good idea.

So what's happened over the years is I have . . . as I change my own interests, what gets called feminist theory, or introduction to science studies, or readings in science studies, tracks whatever topics I'm interested in. Which rarely have been directly related to my writing. They've almost always been much wider than that. And they've always drawn graduate students from a range of departments. The literature department has always had a lot of students. The anthro department, sociology. Histcon, of course, usually has about half. And others. An occasional student, rather rare, a student from one of the natural science departments, a graduate student. And then some folks from around the Bay Area, from Stanford or Berkeley, or wherever. And in recent years I've taught courses that *are* more closely related to my writing in animal studies, and to my current research, which we'll talk about at the end, the *When Species Meet* book. So that animal studies, science studies, and feminist studies have all come together in this entanglement that most of my teaching is about these days.

Departmental Affiliations

Reti: Well, that segues really well into talking about some of your affiliations with other departments over the years.

Haraway: Yeah. Well, most of them come from colleague friendships, and from finding myself on the committee of graduate students from other departments. So, environmental studies has pretty much regularly been part of the teaching I do in science studies or feminist theory. I've regularly had Environmental Studies graduate students and undergraduate students in my courses. And colleague friendships. So they've invited me to be a below-the-line member.² Very simple. It means nothing except that they . . . students who are considering applying here, particularly graduate students, will look at that below the line list too, and they will think, ah, I can draw on professor *x* for my committee. When you allow your name to be a below-the-line member in a department, then I think you take on a little extra obligation to say yes when a student from that department asks you. And a little extra obligation to make sure there's space in your seminar for people from those departments.

Reti: Environmental Studies now has a Ph.D. program.

Haraway: And has had one for quite a while. I became a below the line member in their department when they had a graduate program. I always had their undergraduate students in my classes, and I used to give a lecture in their intro

² "Below the Line" refers to the formatting of the listing of faculty members in the *General Catalog*. Faculty for a department are listed with their professional interests. Then a line appears, below which are listed faculty affiliated with the departments.

undergraduate course, oftentimes “in order to be controversial.” That’s why I was invited, because of the cyborg stuff. Because so much of the ideology of Environmental Studies in those years was anti-technology. Not to put too fine a point on it. That’s not true any more. And . . . anyway . . . It was. It was that: “if you have that kind of deep love of technology then you probably don’t love nature” silliness.

Reti: I know exactly what you mean.

Haraway: But that was a long time ago.

Reti: A very long time ago.

Haraway: But I became a below the line member, I think, when they got their Ph.D. program. The same thing for anthropology, though I always had anthro undergraduate students, and always had good friends who were in the anthro department. Adrienne Zihlman, who was a huge help to me in my *Primate Visions* book. Carolyn Martin-Shaw, Shelly Errington. The so-called “old gang,” you know, the people who’ve been here a while. And then the new people. Anna Tsing, Lisa Rofel, others. When Susan Harding came . . . we had connected before and then she came here, to my huge happiness. And Susan and I . . . we don’t think alike, but there’s a way in which we connect, and kind of grasp the way in which each other thinks, and we love the way each other’s verbal competence works. She was brought here in order to help develop their graduate program, which she did. And David Schneider, who retired here after having been at the University of Chicago for years, was important in helping to build the graduate

anthro program. And others. So it was about that time that I became below the line in anthro, partly because Jim Clifford is so important in anthropology.

Reti: Oh, of course.

Haraway: He's a colleague here in History of Consciousness. Jim and I have always represented deep connections in anthropology in Histcon. And for me that also includes bioanthropology, and particularly as that relates . . . well, really from many points of view, but particularly the animal behavior dimensions of that, including the primate dimensions of it. And cultural anthropology. And the ties between the two. That's why when you read my little thing on the website you'll see: "the ties between the life and human sciences." That's partly what I'm figuring there, not just biology, but the bioanthropologies, the life sciences, the human sciences. And human sciences, which is really more a French term than an English term . . .

Reti: Yeah, it's not a term I'm familiar with.

Haraway: It includes . . . that would include what in the English term is both humanities and social sciences. And in the French term they don't divvy things up quite that way. The human sciences will include linguistics, semiotics. In some ways, linguistics is more a natural science than it is a humanities or a social science, the way it has developed. It's an information science. It's a *lot* of things. It's a very complex and interesting field. There is no way to label this stuff. Okay? And all the labels have their own histories connected to them. But to call it the humanities and social sciences leaves out the arts, leaves out the biologies. To say life and human sciences does not leave out the biologies, or the

bioanthropologies. I don't know, the labels are bad. But I've always had a deep tie to anthropology, and that's only become more so as time has gone on. I feel like I have a green card in anthropology, a sort of permanent resident alien. They like that too. I serve very regularly, much more in anthro than in Environmental Studies, on people's dissertation committees. And I teach . . . Anna Tsing and I have taught a graduate seminar together. We did a really fun graduate seminar on various kinds of environmentalisms, particularly in transnational contexts, a few years ago. And we're going to teach again next spring together, I think this time on storytelling. We'll see what we're going to do. But we're going to do a joint graduate seminar in the spring of '07, Anna and I, again. Susan Harding and I have taught together, our undergraduate course on alien invasions, or alien discourses. Her *Theory of Religion* course and my *Science as Culture and Practice* course, we just managed to schedule them at the same time . . . people signed up for our courses but it was the same course and we met in the same room.

Reti: You mean it was cross-listed?

Haraway: Well, we didn't cross-list. We basically just scheduled our courses at the same time and, with the help of our department assistants, in the same room. We finessed the Registrar. (laughter) We *had* to! Because you only get half credit for co-teaching. And there's no way that that was half the work.

Reti: No way. It's probably double the work.

Haraway: So we used our other room for breakout sections, and one thing or another. But basically we just taught this huge undergraduate lecture course together on aliens, her religion and my science dimension. We had a ball and the

students had a ball. We had no idea what we were doing, which we told them from the beginning. We had this huge amount of material that we were trying to digest. We watched movies, and we watched video clips, and we read reports of alien takeovers, and reverse engineering, and black helicopters. We had a ball.

Where else am I below the line? Well, Feminist Studies, but we talked about that. And also Film and Digital Media.

Reti: Tell me about that.

Haraway: Again, it's a friendship thing. Warren Sack, in particular, and I have connections through science studies, the profession. And they have a master's program now. They will have a Ph.D. program, I think. And there's a very strong science studies component of their world, so it made sense for me to be part of that. And we now have, really through Ravi Rajan's unbelievably hard-working good citizenship initiative, a lot of us, graduate students and faculty in a lot of departments, are in the broadest sense science studies people. Jennifer Gonzalez and Warren Sack, her husband. Karen Barad, of course. Myself. Ravi Rajan. Jennifer Reardon, new in sociology. Melanie DuPuis, not new in sociology, recent but not brand new. Minghui Hu in history, who is fairly new, but Alexandra Stern before him. I know I'm leaving people out. [Paul] Roth, the new chair of the philosophy department, and a couple of other philosophers. There are several faculty around this campus with deep ties in science studies, and several graduate students working with various of us. And we just put in an NSF proposal this summer for a graduate training grant to make our work with graduate students more coherent, and maybe eventually form a formal graduate

group. We're going to be hitting up on all the deans in the different divisions for some money to bring this together. All of this stuff happens through face-to-face collegueship, and then regularizing it within the institutional apparatus that's available. And the below the line department membership has been available for a long time.

Reti: Great. It's very exciting to see that happening.

Haraway: Yeah. That's the way UCSC works. The bureaucracy is more or less helpful, in the sense that it's kind of general, and you can use it. And then it gets in the way so that actually it's fairly hard to co-teach across the divisions, because you have to buy out what the other division feels like its giving away, and it gets in the way. So people try to find ways to finesse it.

Reti: Speaking of divisions, some people talk about a divide on this campus between the sciences and the humanities, in particular. You're someone who crosses that divide . . .

Haraway: Well, I do and I don't. I also am an example *of* it in a range of ways. When the so-called science wars were waging ferociously in the nineties, a couple of . . . well, one physicist in particular decided that I represented the enemy, and did a lot of damage, as a matter of fact. I think basically he's become irrelevant. And at the same time, from the beginning I've had some deep connections with scientists on this campus. But fewer on this campus than other places I worked. And most of my deep connections with working scientists are not UCSC people, partly because of the busyness of daily life, and partly because they're . . . It's hard, for odd reasons. Not necessarily on a one-to-one, face-to-face

basis, but it's not all that simple. My best experiences of crossing those divisions on this campus have been in Academic Senate committee work on other topics like the Graduate Council or the Committee on Academic Personnel, or whatever, where you're working with your colleagues in the different divisions and you find out that each other is rather literate. (laughter) I've had the experience, I think, of folks realizing that I'm both highly literate in the sciences, in several sciences, not up-to-the-minute, but not stupid either. And they're sort of surprised. Then I think I've had to break down some prejudices about how deeply curious they are, and not at all uninformed, you know, and willing to read. But that's all kind of below the structure. There aren't good structures on this campus for doing things that organically put together, let's say, science studies graduate work with field-based and lab-based projects. We may yet get there, but we have not found a good way to do it. What can I say? And I do think . . . this is not just true at UCSC, but I think it is extremely true here, people work too hard and don't want to do anything more. And I don't care what job in the university you're talking about.

Reti: (sigh) It's so true.

Haraway: And you don't have any emotional space beyond wishing each other well (laughter) to actually say, "Oh, I'd love to join a reading group. Let's do it." You don't! I think it's a big problem. For example, I just bought this fabulous book that Charles Daniel and Page Smith did based on a course they taught at Cowell in 1972 on the chicken. Do you know about this course? Did you take that course?

Reti: I do. No, I haven't been here that long, but it's a classic piece of UCSC history.

Haraway: Oh well, have you seen the book that came out of that course? Get your hands on that book! It's been reissued recently, so it's now in a brand-new paperback. It was originally published in 1976, I think. I'm not exactly sure. It is a liberal arts education. It is a fabulous book.³ You had there an historian and a biologist, and they took on the chicken, and they turned their undergraduates loose on research, and they used their undergraduate research in writing that book. And it is still a serious scholarly read, as well as fun and well written. And you can't do that now. You just can't. First of all, to get a historian and a scientist teaching a course together you're going to have to buy each other out, or you're going to have to finesse the Registrar. (laughter)

Reti: Well, that was through the colleges.

Haraway: It was a college course. Well, the colleges made it possible. Actually, there were many courses like that.

Reti: Exactly. The structure that we had (that we no longer have) made that possible.

Haraway: Yeah. And it should be . . . I think that . . . It was not possible to continue the college system, for good and bad reasons. But why can't we do the equivalent of that more easily, with our current structure? And to do that . . . I don't know . . . Americans work too hard. Ordinary faculty members who are

³ *The Chicken Book* (University of Georgia Press, 2000).

doing a good job are working sixty-plus hour weeks, sometimes more. And it cuts into the freedom to do that. Undergraduates are . . . they have to get out in four years. They don't have a lot of freedom to do an add-on, and really let it take over their lives for a quarter.

Reti: I think of places like the Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems, or some of the other research units on campus, but that one, in particular, as a place where both undergraduates and graduate students, and also apprentices from the community, or communities internationally, are able to come together with faculty across the disciplines and do some of this kind of grounded research.

Haraway: Yeah, and people do do it, because that is what the program is. I was on their board for one year, I think, or maybe two years, and went to some meetings and had a good time, and was not really active. I was glad to do it and so on, but I was never a factor beyond a friendly presence. I think they invited me because of my interest in Environmental Studies and agriculture. And Elizabeth Bird, who was a Histcon graduate student whose advisor I was, if that's an English sentence, (laughter) she is consumed by the questions of sustainable agriculture, and was then too. And that was the period in which I ended up having some connection with the Center.

Reti: So part of your work is on agriculture?

Haraway: Well, only in the sense that . . . how could you not think about agriculture if you're interested in the way science and culture works? Right?

Reti: True. (laughter) That's definitive.

Haraway: And many other things. Yes, part of my interest is agriculture for sure. And it comes up all the time. You can't not be in the midst of it. If you're interested in animal studies, how could you not care? And that's what's kept me from veganism. What keeps me a meat eater is actually my interest in agriculture and sustainable life ways that involve the breeds that are disappearing in factory farming, and those kinds of up-to-the-minute . . . You see, I am *not* interested in having all those incredible animals that have been developed in the world in people's practices *with* animals as food and fiber and work animals, turning into nothing but museum pieces at best. I think it's genocidal. I think veganism is genocidal. (I'm putting it in the most extreme possible way. I don't actually think quite that.) But I do think that vegans sometimes don't get what they kill, and indeed what they make extinct, and it is most kinds of animals that have long histories in close association with people. I believe that is a deadly imagination that very few vegans think about. I am not a vegan, even though I understand the moral . . . more than moral, the wholistic, complex claim that veganism makes on us, including me. But I find myself in unstable opposition, unstable for a zillion reasons, and deliberately setting out to buy meat and eggs and dairy products from businesses that are not treating their animals like museum pieces, and deal with the problem of killing up front. Because I don't think there's any way out of the problem. I don't believe there's any relationship to this world that does not involve extensive killing. And . . . Ach! Anyhow . . . The point of all of this is I don't think you can talk about animal studies in a serious way if you don't deal with agriculture.

Reti: Okay.

Haraway: (laughter) And that involves you in the midst of this complicated situation around opposition to factory farming, where animals are concerned as well as plants, and supporting the people who are attempting to build new markets, people who are not dealing with this as a heritage culture problem. Obviously, heritage culture is part of the mix, but it is *now*. It is not yesterday. It's not preserving. It's not a preservationist project.

Reti: I see.

Haraway: It is a current lifeways project. And if we deal with it as a preservation project, we're just always trying to think of ways to stop things from disappearing, as opposed to—which ways of life are we going to make flourish, now? And that will involve one, using up-to-the-minute techniques like internet advertising, say, forming cross-national consortia for finding ways to market products and exchange gene stock, which will involve genome archiving and databases for who you're going to get your sperm from. In other words, I think any serious approach to loving animals that people have developed over thousands of years involves one in up-to-the-minute technologies of all kinds. Those aren't the enemy! And so on. So yes, I teach about this stuff.

Reti: I bet that provokes some . . .

Haraway: The kids in my class break out in huge hives. But then I also have them talk about why veganism is a necessary kind of contemporary witness. Because I actually think it is. You know, Marge Frantz is my model in life. That's who I

want to be when I grow up. (laughter) Because Marge is the person who always reminds everybody that if you are in this for a lifetime you need each other. You need each other's extremes. People like me, who are probably all too ready to find the complexities, need the people who insist on the point beyond which you can't compromise.

Reti: Yes. I know she's been that for so many people on the campus.

Haraway: Right. So Marge is *always* the person who gives our movements . . . who reminds us to open up to our extremes. And I'm the person who always reminds our movements to open up to what you're not sure of. I actually think they come from the same kind of instinct, Marge and me. I think that's why we've liked each other so much. But Marge is overwhelmingly the teacher-activist. And I'm overwhelmingly the teacher-scholar, in terms of what I do with my days. My activism is not the same . . . I'll show up at the demonstrations and so forth. But I have not worked as an activist in building the organizations and doing what it takes to sustain them. Marge has. And I think we need each other.

Activism and the Academy

Reti: That whole question of activism and the academy is something that I wanted to talk about, and how feminist studies addresses that.

Haraway: Yes. Well it never goes away as an issue. I have *no* patience for the split that puts scholarship and activism on two sides of some sort of separation. Nor do I have much patience for the notion that everybody has to do everything. I think we need to find ways to be in productive alliance. And we need to find

ways to say, for now I want you to prioritize this even though publication might be later than it otherwise would. I think it's fair to make those demands on each other. But I also think one must understand that scholarship is an incredibly demanding, full-time occupation, and that it is also an act of love and a lot of other things. It's an ongoing engagement with people whose ordinary daily life has them prioritizing different kinds of things, and being a little suspicious of each other because of those prioritizations. And scholarship flourishes inside certain kinds of institutional and professional structures that are not fundamentally friendly to activism.

Reti: (laughter) Right.

Haraway: (laughter) It's not all or none, but basically speaking, but there are always the caucuses inside professional associations that are more activist-oriented, and people of my generation have had a fair amount of experience with those caucuses and subgroups and so on, but they're readily assimilated into professional structures, really. They didn't used to be, and now they are. And on the whole I think that's not a terrible thing. It changes . . . the relationship . . . what activism means isn't the same thing over my lifetime. What does it mean now? What would constitute feminist peace activism these days? Well. You've probably met Dalit Baum, from Israel-Palestine, an Israeli citizen who is here, a peace activist, anarchist, lesbian, who has been involved now in projects with Palestinians. I don't know if . . . My guess is that at this exact moment it's completely impossible. But she . . . Talking to Dalit . . . she took some of my animal studies seminars, which is how I know about her. Just because she was curious about life. Trained as a mathematician, a doctoral degree in mathematics.

Retrained herself as peace activist and a feminist theorist. Is not doing mathematics, though she could have a very fancy job if she wanted one. I think she felt a different urgency in a lot of ways. Anyway, talking to Dalit about what constitutes feminist peace activism these days, you cannot not face the complicated issues around security apparatuses, and different national struggles, and histories of dispossession and genocide that cross a million lines. (laugh) Okay. And I'm a pacifist too, I think, although I *swear* that is a tough position. I don't know . . .

Anyway, what does activism mean? In the United States at this point I think it means, among other things, undoing some of the institutional damage done, during the sustained Bush administration, to the Supreme Court, to the congress, to the presidency, to the whole apparatus of the state that has been turned into a right-wing instrument in the last . . . period of time, a couple of decades . . . I don't know how long you date the beginning, with some very modest periods of slowing it down, it seems to me that working for electable candidates in the Democratic party is a really important kind of activism, and a rethinking of what it's going to take to make a difference . . . Look, the U.S. public when surveyed these days, most recently, forty-five percent of the U.S. public does not "believe" in Darwinian evolution. (laughter) Okay? And on and on the figures go. We belong to a culture that is *extremely* religious. It's just really complicated! And we have *got* to talk to those folks. We have got to give up our self-certainties around secularism. It doesn't work. We have got to get it what the world looks like without giving up. You know, I'm not about to go over to the dark side. (laughter) We've got to learn how to argue. We've got to learn how to talk.

We've got to learn how to *hear*, politically. So there's a kind of take-back-science movement, there's a defend science movement that I feel really connected to. I will not . . . Whereas maybe in the 1970s I was much more likely to be more out front initially about my criticism of science, now I'm going to be rather careful about that for a while.

Reti: Ah.

Haraway: For political reasons, more than intellectual reasons.

Reti: Yes.

Haraway: Because I think overwhelmingly in the culture I belong to it is important to be able to articulate and explain and defend what science means.

Reti: Does your early background in Catholicism give you any insight in how to . . .

Haraway: Into totalitarianism! (laughter) Yes.

Reti: (laughter) That wasn't what . . . Okay. (laughter)

Haraway: I recognize the Bush administration for what it is. (laughter) No. That wasn't your question. What were you going to ask?

Reti: That's okay. (laughter) You answered it the way you needed to!

Haraway: But totalitarianism is . . . that's facetious. I have a love-hate relationship with Catholicism and I always will. I am still . . . Well, look, my brother Rick is the head of Catholic Family Services in Raleigh, North Carolina.

He is into every peace and justice aspect of contemporary Catholicism that exists. He's in Raleigh politics around housing issues or food issues or . . . You know, he takes Catholic teaching . . . The term became "preference for the poor." That's the term that's used in contemporary Catholicism, post-Vatican II Catholicism. It's the theological obligation to put the poor first.

Reti: Preference for the poor.

Haraway: Preference for the poor is the teaching of the papacy, contemporary teaching. Well, you take that seriously and it takes you a long way, right?

Reti: True.

Haraway: Rick also grew up more than I did in post Vatican II Catholicism that has always been suspicious of the priesthood, and has always been very clear about the importance of the laity in the church, and very clear about working toward the ordination of women, and toward women's authority in the church, and so on. On and on. I think it is still possible to work within the church. And I am damn glad my brother's doing it. And he's in a faith community. The question "do you believe?" acts as a bad question because it's a dogmatic question that's about—do you believe a list of dogma? And that's the way the Darwin question is usually asked: do you believe in evolution? It's a weird question.

Reti: True.

Haraway: It's weird! It's like: do you believe in God? Wrong question! Rick is in a faith-based community. And it's not about a list of dogma. That's what I mean

when I say you've got to grasp what the world looks like in faith-based communities. And *that* we can relate to without . . . I don't think we can approach these questions as a checklist of dogma.

Sometimes you can't help it because you end up *having* to get into a fight over something. Rightly so. For example, I am very happy to get into fights over what ends up in California high school textbooks in biology. You can't help it. Just like you can't help it getting into fights over whether young women are going to have access to safe abortions. You can't help it. But we've got to get it that there's another aspect to the work, which is understanding that what really drives pro-life is not dogma. (laugh) It just isn't. So, that's actually about having grown up a Catholic.

Reti: I understand that.

Haraway: I will never not know what it's like to be in a believing community, in a faith-based community. And I will also never not know what it was like to grow up in a community in which dogma was enforced, namely the Catholic Church. Both. Right?

Reti: Yeah.

Haraway: Like Gloria [Anzaldúa]. She understood what it was like to be a Catholic.

Reti: Oh, absolutely.

Haraway: And that you never could walk away from it. And that you understood both aspects of it: the deadliness and the irreplaceable liveliness. And the sense of loss in . . . There is no current . . . The organizations of the Church, and I don't mean just Catholicism, but of faith-based communities, are very rich. And there is no comparable secular organization. We try once in a while but it doesn't come close.

Reti: I went to Catholic high school.

Haraway: Oh, so you know.

Reti: But I'm not a Catholic. That's a long story.

Haraway: So you weren't a Catholic when you were in the high school?

Reti: I was not. I was Jewish.

Haraway: So you had a different view.

Reti: Yes. But I didn't know it.

Haraway: You didn't know you were Jewish?

Reti: I didn't know I was Jewish, but I did have that experience of being in Catholic school.

Haraway: So how did you find out you were Jewish?

Reti: Oh. That's another story. I'll tell you later because it's about me and not about you.

Haraway: Okay. (laughter) That's an interesting story. Well, I always thought of American feminism . . . Bettina Aptheker and I are firm on this point. We think of American feminism as made up of Jews and lapsed Catholics.

Reti: Yeah. I'd say that's a pretty accurate assessment. (laughter) I can be both, I guess, right?

Haraway: (laughter) You can be both. You can definitely be both.

The West as Home

Reti: Okay. So what about California, and northern California generally, and Santa Cruz . . . I mean, we've talked about UCSC as a place that . . .

Haraway: But then there's Santa Cruz.

Reti: . . . but then, you don't live Santa Cruz all the time.

Haraway: Yeah, I only live in Santa Cruz half the time, literally.

Reti: How has that been for you as a place, a sense of place?

Haraway: It's become really important. But sense of place has always been important, because I think of myself as a kid of the Western states. I grew up in Colorado, the Rocky Mountain West and then the West Coast. The East Coast was always kind of an . . . other place where I never was quite at home. I loved Baltimore when I was teaching at Johns Hopkins, and it was fascinating to be in New Haven when I was there because it was the period of the Black Panther Party and the Yale, New Haven activism.

Reti: Yeah, what a time you were there.

Haraway: It was a great time to be at Yale and a great time to be in Connecticut. But it was never home. The East Coast was never home. Hawaii was home after a while, even though I was only there four years, in a different way. There is a way in which the Europe-looking Atlantic take of the East Coast was never naturally mine. I think it was partly also about being kind of first-generation educated Irish Catholic, never at home in the elite institutions of the East Coast.

Reti: Ah. Yes.

Haraway: And much more at home in the different kind of populist democracy of the South and West? I don't know.

Reti: Yeah. It makes sense to me.

Haraway: You get it.

Reti: Sure.

Haraway: California . . . Well, at first I thought of Stanford and California as similar to the East Coast, kind of an elitist East Coast-West Coast scene that thought everything happened there. It happened on one of the two coasts. Anything that happened in the rest of the world, or the rest of the country wasn't up to snuff. You know, the women's movement happened in either Berkeley, or Boston, or New York. As far as I was concerned it happened in Honolulu and . . . (laugh) So I was always very . . . am still actually . . . I still hate Berkeley and love Santa Cruz. (laughter) Yeah. It's fair. And it's because of this issue of places

where a fair number of people tend to think it's where everything interesting is. I'm a parochial person. I really am. I like to be at places that are not the most prestigious, one way or another, partly because I don't like the added pressure of the seriously elite places. I saw them up close and I didn't like it. It felt dangerous, and I didn't feel at home.

Reti: Dangerous in what sense?

Haraway: It roused insecurities; roused competitiveness, it roused that I don't belong here and if I'm going to stay here I'm going to have to . . . I *don't* belong here! I could be here. I could succeed here, but I will never belong here. I don't feel that way about Santa Cruz. I belong here. It's my community.

Northern California. We bought land . . . a long story. I was in a commune in Yale, New Haven, and a guy named Jaye Miller, who was in that same commune in New Haven, he and I got married. He was gay. It was like you being a Jew in a Catholic school. We just didn't know any better.

Reti: (raucous laughter)

Haraway: (laughter) We had a wonderful friendship, and it was a sexual friendship, but it was really . . . I don't know, brother-sister incest? I don't know what it was. But we got married and it was mistake. But we went out to Hawaii together, married. I had this funny life as a faculty wife for a while, which was really weird. And anyway, Jaye and I filed for divorce but we couldn't figure out who got the camera and who got the sewing machine. And we never really separated. (laughter) And . . . Anyway. I moved to Johns Hopkins and he moved

to Texas, but we still were spending . . . we took our divorce trip together to Mexico City. We were never very good at divorce. We weren't very good at marriage. It was a little strange. The upshot of it was, my lover, Rusten, we ended up marrying to legalize our Kaiser health insurance, literally true. (laughter) He was a pacifist and against marriage for the same reasons he was against war. I mean, a feminist understands that immediately.

Reti: Exactly. There was a time that being . . .

Haraway: That was Rusten's background. Anyway, Jaye's lover, Bob, and my lover, Rusten, and I . . . we bought land together in Sonoma County. And we repaired an old, semi-collapsed house into a quite nice house. Because we were young and stupid, and Rusten and Jaye knew a fair amount and checked books out of the library and we rebuilt the place. (laughter)

Reti: That's a great story.

Haraway: And we have this nice place in Sonoma County. I've always half lived there and half here, which in a way has meant I've never lived either place. There's a down side to this.

Reti: I was wondering about that.

Haraway: Absolutely there is. I've never really been part of the town of Santa Cruz, which I don't think has been good. Or the town of Healdsburg. Jaye and Rusten much more were, in Sonoma County, not here.

Jaye and Bob both got AIDS. Bob died in 1986 and Jaye died in 1991. Another person was also part of our land too, Nick, who lives in Santa Cruz, Capitola, here. That completely changed the land in Sonoma County. Then another friend of mine from college years, a woman named Susan Caudill, bought into the land a few years ago. But it's never . . . Which is a good thing and it's a good friendship and many things. But the land in Healdsburg for me has become more and more problematic. I love the land, but it's hard to have to live in two places. I think, finally, it's not any longer a really good idea. Rusten and I have been more moving toward living here. We'll see. It's still very much in . . . I don't know what will happen. So yeah, there's a deep sense of place, but it has meant also not really being a part of the town. I'm very much part of the university, and I'm very much part of a history of friendship and collegueship, but I have not been part of the town.

Reti: How about in terms of landscape, this coastal California . . .

Dog Agility Sports

Haraway: Oh, yeah. Landscape is extremely important. Absolutely. And you know, playing . . . the last seven years I've played agility with my dogs. And that has taken me into the Central Valley, to the fairgrounds. So in Fresno, and Madera, and Dixon, and Elk Grove, and I don't know where all, ranches that have horse arenas and fairgrounds where agility fields get set up on weekends by the clubs. I sleep in my Honda Odyssey, roll out my eggshell foam . . . (laughter) and drive up there on a Friday night into the Fairgrounds and other people are there in RVs and tents, and some folks stay in motels. I stay in motels

now more than I used to. We play agility all day Saturday and Sunday. We set up . . . You know, you wake up at six in the morning, and you exercise with your dog, and you feed your dog, and you check in, and you do your judge's briefing, and you walk through your first courses, and you are on the line running by 8AM. And you run all day Saturday and Sunday. Then you drive back and pick up your life. There's an agility joke. "Back Sunday. Feed the kids." (laughter)

Reti: (laughter)

Haraway: So that's actually about landscape. Both the driving, of which there is too much, because you go a long way, but also being in a part of California that isn't . . . it's very much the fairgrounds, so the NASCAR racers are using the other part of the fairgrounds Friday night, and you're watching the Chicano wedding in the fairgrounds building on the Saturday, and you've got the Mariachi band, or the whatever, the wedding music, and you've got I don't know who all using other parts of the fairgrounds. It's a very interesting scene that playing agility has put me into awareness of. It's a different class scene. Agility is an overwhelmingly white sport. Not totally, but way more than the university, oddly. And it's a sport made up of women, hugely women. Ten to one, maybe twenty to one.

Reti: Why?

Haraway: Ah . . . I think partly because women are . . . well, that *why* is actually a deeply interesting and complicated question. There are plenty of men and dogs, but they do different things with their dogs. More into the hunting scene. Some women hunt with their dogs, too. But that's male-dominated in a big way.

Agility is a women's sport. Men play it and men are very good at it, but they're hugely in the minority and it's an overwhelmingly white sport. Why is that? People of color have dogs in huge numbers and do things with their dogs in huge numbers. But it tends not to be the organized sports. I don't really know why. I think some of it's disposable income, on average. And I don't know what all . . . I mean, you can give reasons that all make sense but I don't know that they quite add up to a why. Do you see what I mean?

Reti: Yeah.

Haraway: To play agility, it makes a lot of sense that there are a lot of retired people who do it because you have to . . . and a lot of people get RVs and drive from meet to meet. That's a retirement activity.

Reti: Right.

Haraway: There're people who do that, mainly. There are plenty of people who are still working who have a shell on their pickup truck, who drive and play. You get people who are really passionate about dogs. And you train. It isn't just the weekends. You train and it becomes . . . A really interesting sociologist in Utah, Dair Gillespie and Susan Loeffler, who run with their dogs, and are lesbian sociologists, use this term "passionate leisure" which I love. And they write about agility too.

Reti: Ah.

Haraway: Anyway, that's taken me into California in a different way, and has put me into the dog scene in California. So there's the Sonoma County world,

which is . . . I've watched the town of Healdsburg move from an agricultural service town to a very much tourist economy and winery town, very high-end, very wealthy.

Reti: Because the wineries have been moving north over the last . . .

Haraway: Well, Sonoma County has always been wine country. And the explosion of the wine industry in the last decades has deeply influenced the town of Healdsburg. It's a very prosperous town. Which was not true when we bought land in 1977. The wineries and the vineyards then were much more in Italian families that had had them all along. We live up a beautiful creek valley, Mill Creek, outside of Healdsburg, and on fairly steep land, where we've kind of terraced and carved out flat. I've been carving out a practice agility area. And we bought a lot of apple trees from the antique apple orchard.

Reti: Heirloom varieties?

Haraway: Yeah, we have a lot of apples. We have about a dozen different apple varieties. And we've always had gardens, fairly extensive ones, that we've watered when we come back to Santa Cruz because we have them programmed on a computer-controlled drip water system that will work when we're gone, famous last words, most of the time. (laughter) Living . . . It's so beautiful. But being on the freeway a lot driving 150 miles point-to-point, you are extremely aware of the petroleum-based practice that that is, and the petroleum-based practice that agility is.

Reti: Yes.

Haraway: And I don't know, you can't not see it all.

Reti: Right. Maybe that's a good place to segue into your new book.

Haraway: Yes, and then we'll have to stop because we're getting close to [time].

The Placenta Story

Reti: We haven't gotten to the placenta story.

Haraway: Let me tell the placenta story first because it's an origin story. It's about coming to Santa Cruz. So we're talking January of 1980. I told you last time that Nancy Hartsock and I had applied together for this job?

Reti: Yes.

Haraway: But I was the only one . . . Nancy decided not to and . . . So I was invited to interview for this job. I was extremely excited about this job. I really, seriously wanted this job. So I worked incredibly hard on my job talk. And actually, the file that I'll give to Special Collections has the lecture notes from my job talk.

Reti: Great.

Haraway: So they took me out to dinner afterwards. I had been picked up from the airport by two women: Mischa Adams, who still lives in Santa Cruz and has been part of a writing group. She was a History of Consciousness graduate student.

Reti: That's a familiar name.

Haraway: Yeah, she's a writer, a very interesting woman, Mischa Adams. And Katie King, her friend . . . they were both Santa Cruz undergraduates from Cowell. I know Katie was in Cowell [College]. I think Mischa was too, in the seventies. Katie went to the Chicago Committee on Social Thought, and then came back here as a graduate student. Didn't like . . . was very unhappy in Chicago. She and Mischa were good friends. Katie was applying to be a Histcon graduate student the next year and she was already living here. And Mischa was here. They picked me up from the airport and dropped me off at the Dream Inn, which is now that hotel down there on the ocean [the West Coast Santa Cruz Hotel], a beautiful spot. They dropped me off at the Dream Inn, saying they were sorry they couldn't stay and socialize and whatnot, but they had to get off to a ceremony in the Santa Cruz Mountains to celebrate a home birth.

Reti: (laughter) That's so classic for the time.

Haraway: (laughter) Absolutely classic. Yeah. And they were going to be able to make the job talk, but they were going to be late to the dinner. So they went off to the birth ceremony. And it turned out that one of the . . . it was a lay midwife-mediated birth. The point was to consume the placenta. That was going to be part of the birthing ceremony to celebrate the birth. The placenta had been saved.

Reti: Consume, as in . . .

Haraway: This was veganism before its prime. (laughter) Well, but that comes into the story. So the placenta was to be shared by everyone who came, to be eaten. Now, being a lapsed Catholic, I understood immediately what it was like to eat the flesh, right? I thought this was a good thing. The sign and the flesh

come together. Consuming the placenta is serious. They thought that too, so they were heading off. But then it turned out that the husband of the placenta had cooked it, or the father, or whatever his relationship to the placenta was. The placenta was cooked and served. Then that completely changed the semiotics as far as I was concerned. Right? It kind of made it rather yuppie. So you're no longer facing this bloody (probably it was important not to get food poisoning or something), but in any case, you are no longer facing this immediately physical product of birth, but it's cooked and served . . . What in the world does a *cooked* placenta signify? Well, that's a mystery. And is it easier or harder to eat it? And for whom? So anyway, Katie and Mischa get to . . . we were at India Joze, an important Santa Cruz restaurant of the period for lapsed Histcon students and everybody else. (laughter) Katie and Mischa show up at dinner and talk about the ceremony to celebrate the birth. And immediately ensues this fabulous conversation about who *could* eat the placenta, who *would* eat the placenta, and who *must* eat the placenta. It was a Friday. So the question of whether you could eat it on a Friday if you were a pre-Vatican II Catholic also came into this discussion. (laughter)

Reti: (laughter)

Haraway: Adrienne Zihlman was hard line: "This is meat. It's animal protein. It's meat. If you are a Catholic of that period, you can't eat it because it's meat." That was Adrienne's position. Others are saying you should eat it out of ... it doesn't matter whether it's cooked or raw or whatever else, you have accepted the obligation to share in the ceremony and so good manners alone, if not dedication to the cause (laughter) prevail. Others maintained the position that cooking the

placenta is a violation of all of the relevant symbolism, and you must not, no matter if the poor person who cooked it was doing his best and had his feelings deeply hurt. Others would have allowed . . . (laughter) Every imaginable position on the placenta appeared in this fabulous, very funny, very smart, really, discussion about politics and semiotics and disgust and rationality. It was a really fun discussion. And the position that trumped it all, was: the only people at the ceremony who were required to eat it because of their convictions, as opposed to good manners or something, were vegans, because this was the product of life, not death. This was not milk or cheese or eggs or flesh. This was food from and for and about life. It signified giving birth. And that it was animal is neither here nor there. That it was an animal protein is irrelevant to the semiotics of true veganism.

Reti: Fascinating.

Haraway: Veganism is *not* vegetarianism, as every proper vegan will immediately tell you. And it isn't just because they have more things on their "cannot eat" list. It's because their fundamental philosophy is different. It is not vegetarianism. It's not health-based. It's not for one's personal health. It's for the planet's health in some way. It's definitely about human kinship with all the other animals. The only people who were philosophically obligated to eat the placenta were vegans.

Reti: And they did eat it?

Haraway: I don't know. The empirical facts of this ceremony have been lost in the mist. (laughter)

Reti: (laughter) You don't have a roll call.

Haraway: (laughter) I have no idea if anybody ate it. I suspect everybody at least pretended to. And I don't know what vegans at the ceremony thought. I'm sure there were some. It's just that those of us at India Joze decided that they were the only ones who really had to.

Reti: A theoretical discussion.

Haraway: And I decided that night that this had to be my community.

Reti: I can see why. That's great.

Haraway: This was definitely my place. Because of the wackiness of it, in kind of a serious way.

Reti: That's a great story.

Haraway: So that's my placenta-eating story. This was where I could still have communion as a lapsed Catholic.

Reti: (laughter)

When Species Meet

Haraway: So then we were going to do the—the book I'm working on now—story. Because all kinds of things are listed [on Haraway's online CV] that aren't happening.

I'm writing a book, actually I'm finishing a book—it will be done before Christmas and it will be out in a year—called *When Species Meet*. And it is about a

lot of things. It's the most biological book I've written since my dissertation, *Crystals, Fabrics, and Fields*. It has all kinds of relations to biology and biologists in it. It is absolutely an animal studies book. Dogs are at the center of the book. Dog-human relations are at the center of the book, but lots of other critters too. And it is a science studies book. There's a huge amount of thinking about what it means to take up all these relationships in cultures saturated with science and technology. And it's a feminist theory book. It is relentlessly interested in who lives and who dies in these knots of relationships. What kinds of differential liveliness and equalities and inequalities, and who gets parsed how, how categories work, including the category of gender. But kind, how kind and kin work off of each other, which is an old Shakespeare pun. The kind/kin pun was an early modern English pun because they are the same word. And they are about category, and they are about relationship that is flesh of my flesh that isn't literally, but it is because we are kind to each other, or we are *of* the same kind, even if we aren't kin. Anyway, it's a wonderful pun that Shakespeare worked and that I work, because I had this great Shakespeare teacher when I was an undergraduate. Anyway, *When Species Meet* is also a book in which I take on some of the philosophers, in particular some of the post-structuralist philosophers, Félix Guattari, Deleuze, and Derrida, and some others, more slowly and more carefully than I have elsewhere, both learning from and also . . . not (laugh), a kind of anger at both in different ways. And it's also a book that I want to be readable by my animal studies scholar friends, by my agility people, by my science studies colleagues, by my feminist theory buddies. I don't know if you've read a piece called "Chicken" that I did for *Shock and Awe* that New

Pacific Press⁴ put out before the last election, in an attempt to take back control of some of the words, post-9/11.

Reti: No.

Haraway: I wrote a piece on chicken in there. The kind of writing that is in "Chicken" is much more like the kind of writing in *When Species Meet*. A revised version of "Chicken" is a chapter in *When Species Meet*. There are twelve chapters. The first chapter is called "When Species Meet: Introductions," introducing kinds of species to each other, and it's an argument for the notion of companion species, as opposed to, or at least along with, but in some real tension with post-humanism or anti-humanism, certainly post-feminism. It's an argument that I am more at home in that category, companion species, than in the various humanisms and post-humanisms or anti-humanisms, including the anti-humanisms of some of my animal people.

I'm looking at the term "companion species," which is a term that . . . most people in my experience when they hear the term "companion species" immediately think of dogs, cats, parrots, dying turtles, pot-bellied pigs . . . pets of various kinds. It does mean that, of course. But it doesn't mean only that, in a rather major way. For example, look at the word "companion." In Latin it means *cum panis* or with bread. With whom do you break bread? So that etymologically, the term "companion" is all about with whom you are at table. Which for an environmentalist, of course, immediately opens up the earth, right? Literally. So that with whom we break bread is what the word "companion" is about. And it

⁴ (Santa Cruz: New Pacific Press, 2004).

is at least about—to be *Homo sapiens* is to be in multi-species interdependencies. Literally. Ninety percent of the genomes in the space taken up by my body are not human. Only ten percent of the genomes that you're looking at are human genomes. The other ninety percent are mostly bacteria of various kinds, and also fungi and various protozoa. You know this. Ninety percent of the cells in the space taken up by the body named Donna Haraway are not human cells.

Reti: Hmm. Wow.

Haraway: Ten percent of the cells, they're bigger cells, of course (laughter) but only ten percent of the genetic material occupied by the space you are looking at would be archived under the Human Genome Project. I think that's fascinating.

Reti: That's incredible.

Haraway: Isn't that a lovely factlet? Factoids like that are how I teach.

Reti: And watch people's brains explode.

Haraway: Little factlets that are . . . It's a perfectly true statement. But it *does* make your brain explode. And you're not quite sure why, but it does make your brain explode, and then you explore why it makes your brain explode, about how unbelievably literal it is that we are a multi-species interdependency.

Reti: Yes.

Haraway: So that human exceptionalism becomes really, really strange at every level of the onion. Okay, so that's just the word "companion." But there's more about the word companion, actually. "Company" is one of the words that

companion immediately goes to, and it means a guest. The first meaning that you'll get from that at table would be a guest at dinner. But it also means a business association, a company. It is also a unit, an order of knights. It is a fleet of merchant ships. It is the CIA, "The Company." It's got commercial meanings; it's got security meanings; it's got war meanings. By the time you're through with "companion" there's not a lot that it doesn't mean. Meanings foreground and background. They swirl. But they always have some kind of . . . they don't swirl at random. They loop through that *cum panis*, that "breaking bread with" meaning, that sense of co-interdependencies in various kinds of time and various kinds of space. Karen Barad's intra-active, agential realism; and intra-action naturally is a sibling term to companion species, for similar reasons.

Reti: Yes.

Haraway: Folded times, all this stuff. So that's the word "companion." And then there's the word "species." Well, species means many things. If you're a philosophy major, your first meaning for the word species is probably going to be as a logical type. You will know that the word is *speciere*, from the Latin: to see. And you will understand that it has to do with a visual impression, and then feeds into the history of logic through the history of the importance of vision in the development of various doctrines about thinking. So you will think of species as logical category, logical type, visual impression, members of a category that have the same characteristics. But then, you might remember that when you tell somebody in ordinary colloquial English, "Be specific," you want the opposite. You want a list of relentless particularities. Not members of a logical type. You want particularities. So there's a way in which the word "species" is internally

oxymoronic. It contains its own opposites. But then if you're a biology type you immediately have the Darwinian meaning of species at hand. And as long as there's been biology there's been the debate about (you know this as an Environmental Studies person), species are real entities or convenient taxonomic boxes. So there's again that internal tension in the word. What is a meaningful biological reality, versus a useful biological concept? And there's no answer to that question because it is productively . . . it is a generative tension rather than a question that has an answer.

Reti: Yes.

Haraway: It is a way of asking questions about the world, as opposed to something that will ever settle itself. Which, I think, is what species is. And if you grew up a Catholic, you learned the Baltimore catechism that the real presence, that Jesus [is] the real presence under both species, bread and wine. "The body and the blood are present under both species," is the way the catechism reads. So you understand that species there has to do with the bread and wine, and the body and the blood are present in the bread and wine, not only as sign, which, if you're a Catholic, it is, it's about a signification, but also *really*.

Reti: Literally.

Haraway: So if you grew up Catholic, your semiotics from the get-go had to do with the *implosion* of sign and flesh, not the separation.

Reti: True.

Haraway: If you grew up a Protestant, which is the origin of most academic semiotics, and most academic secularism is mostly Protestant-derived, you grew up with the *separation* of sign and flesh, and the arbitrariness of the signifier. Well, that's not the way Catholic scholars grew up, at least not of my generation. I don't think kids growing up now get this quite the same way. They do, but I think Latin matters in knowing something about your heritage. You also can't miss the elision of Jewish semiotics and dominance of Christian histories in supposedly secular academia.

So "species" for me is also about a particular kind of semiotics, where sign and flesh are tangled, really tangled. And if you grew up reading science fiction, it's also about aliens. You hear the word "species" and you're immediately with Joanna Russ, and James Tiptree, Jr., and Samuel R. Delany, and . . . so by the time you get finished with the two words "companion species" you have a gold mine for not going post-humanist. You have a gold mine for walking away from the argument around humanism and post-humanism, and talking about the entanglements. So that's what the argument of the book is in every way I can think of making it. There's a "Training in the Contact Zone" chapter that's about playing agility. It's about a controversial relationship in contemporary worlds, which is training with another critter who's not a human being, training with an animal for competitive sport to a high degree of skill. It's a controversial thing to do, especially for some of my animal rights friends, some of my vegan animal rights friends. So I take them on in that chapter about this relationship, including its power issues. And "Chicken" takes on eating meat, among other things. Of course, doing it with chicken is the perfect place to do it, because the People for

the Ethical Treatment of Animals were dead right to take on MacDonald's. And furthermore, they won. Partially anyway. Anyways, chicken is a great place to inhabit. And there is a chapter on "Cloning Mutts, Saving Tigers," which is about archived genomes, and international conservation projects, and the similarity of that to some of the dog cloning stuff. Anyway, a bunch of chapters. Then there's a chapter on my father and that the significant other in a companion species relationship is not always another organism. It might be a machine. It might be a pair of crutches. Significant others come in all species.

Reti: So this is interweaving so much of the work that you've . . .

Haraway: Yeah. It feels like a book that brings everything together. And I've gotten to be a better writer over time, in the sense that more people can read it without tearing their hair out and running away. (laughter) So I'm trying to do my best writing in this book, and to offer more invitations to people who might not feel it's theirs.

Reti: That's wonderful.

Haraway: And we'll see if it actually works. I have no idea if it will actually work. But that's what's happening. It will be out in a year, a little over a year.

Reti: Well, I'll look forward to that very much.

Haraway: And I only have one chapter left to write, which is about this wonderful woman in dogland, named C.A. Sharp, who lives in Fresno, which is one of the reasons I go to Fresno. She was a breeder of Australian Shepherds for the show dog scene, the confirmation show dog scene. Has become a health and

genetics activist for the Australian Shepherd breed, and an alliance for lots of other breed people. She's the one who recommended the breeder from whom I got my agility performance dog. She's a really interesting woman. She has a genetic disease that causes blindness, so she hasn't been able to breed for many years because she can't see well enough. She publishes a health and genetics newsletter for dog people. She's an activist bringing together breeders, researchers, for example at UC Davis, because it's a land grant college it had the vet school, and it has the really important small animal clinic, and does a lot of dog-related basic physiology and genetics research, as well as clinical medicine research. Anyway C.A. forms bridges between dog people and researchers, and is out there re-educating breeders about their practices, so as not to do damage to dogs. Anyway, she's fabulous . . . she's my activist in the book. She's my example of activism. The chapter I've got for her is called "Examined Lives." And she's about fulfilling the obligation of curiosity. I think the obligation of curiosity and the obligation of love is much the same thing. It's a very simple ethical principle: it's that you'd better know more by the end of the day than you knew in the morning. If you're actually in love with somebody, in her case a dog, you'd better know more at the end of the day than you knew in the morning, if you're not going to be violent in your love. If you're going to do more good than harm, you have to know more. It's a very simple ethical principle.

Reti: Because if you don't know more at the end of the day . . .

Haraway: Than you knew at the beginning, and you go on about your business, you will be acting out of culpable ignorance. It's that if you're really serious

about activism . . . it's back to what we were talking about, curiosity, at the beginning of our conversation . . .

Reti: Yes.

Haraway: You never know what you need to know. Anybody who belongs to an organization like a university realizes that when you get in your staff meeting or your department meeting, you're passing regulations for yesterday's disaster?

Reti: Right.

Haraway: (laugh) And that what actually makes an organization work (I mean, good rules are a good idea), but what actually makes an organization work is people who can get what's happening now, and become knowers as part of their doing a good job.

Reti: And it's so challenging, because the organization is constantly changing.

Haraway: Exactly. And what comes up today is not covered by the rule you dealt with in yesterday's staff meeting, most likely. I think the same thing applies . . . I don't know, I think of C.A., who has become expert in genetics. She had no . . . she was a radio, TV and film communications major as a college student years ago. She writes under a pseudonym for some women's magazines once in a while. They are kind of love stories. They are kind of soft porn. She's very good. They're very good. (laughter) C.A. is just this really interesting woman. She talks way too much, talks way too fast. A little bit out of control. She's absolutely fascinating. She works as a conservator for the Fresno Zoo, which has made her a target for the animal rights people, who have excoriated her in the local

newspaper, and made her feel very unsafe, even for the safety of her person and property. She's in the middle of a fray, and is a very intelligent person, very . . . down to earth and smart. Kind of a Marge Frantz of the dog world.

Reti: (laughter) Okay.

Haraway: So I have to write that chapter. I have to write C.A.'s chapter. I have the interviews. I did a couple of extended interviews on tape, and I have to now go back and see what I've got.

Reti: Well, do you have anything you'd like to add, Donna?

Haraway: No. I think we've done all we can. (laughter) This has been fun.

Reti: Yeah, thank you so much.

Haraway: You're welcome.

Reti: It's a fascinating interview and makes me think about a lot of things.

Haraway: You're more than welcome.