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**WOMEN AT THE CENTER:
HISTORY OF WOMEN'S STUDIES
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE**

TAPE LOG

Pascha Bueno-Hansen is an Assistant Professor, Women and Gender Studies, with joint appointments in Latin American Studies, and Political Science. She has been teaching Women's studies at UD since 2009.

Name of person(s) interviewed: Pascha Bueno-Hansen

Other people present: No one else present

Interviewer: Marie Laberge

Date of interview: June 28, 2013

Location of interview: In Pascha Bueno-Hansen's office in Women and Gender Studies building,
34 West Delaware Ave. Newark, DE

Special conditions (noise, interruptions, etc.): No special conditions

General description of contents: Dr. Bueno-Hansen discussed her educational history and her ambivalence about continuing as well as her involvement in women's studies in California. She discusses her experiences and influences at Santa Cruz, and how she engages with several different disciplines in her work. She describes her research and also how she works to help students understand how to listen to the "stories" of others. She also discusses many of the recent changes in UD Women's Studies program including the transition to Department and the name change.

Recording Format: Video interview

Total Running Time: 51:15 minutes

TOPIC SUMMARY

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00:00 Born in Berkley California. Discussion of being a tomboy and aware that her male cousin had more privileges as a boy and she was rebellious about it. Early education discussed. Wanted to explore the world and travel. Discussion of backpacking experiences. Was expected to go to college. Started BA at Tufts University in Massachusetts. Discussion of difficulty getting used to the eastern campus setting but loved involvement in massive demonstration in 1989 and with other campus activist groups. Returned to Santa Cruz and switched major from International Relations to Women's Studies. Felt very shut out by masculinity focus in IR.

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5:15 Discussion of Santa Cruz location and activism and Ultimate Frisbee. Majored in Women's Studies and minor in Politics. Had no interest in any more academia, wanted to travel and backpack. Turned down a research assistance to be a counselor for backpacking camp. Discussion of backpacking work and classes. Working at restaurants and volunteering at NARAL.

9:35 Worked at a nonprofit social service group for women dealing with dependency and domestic violence issues, doing outreach work for the organization on domestic violence and sexual assault. Realized she needed a professional degree and went for a Master's in International Relations at San Francisco State University. Was an amazing experience, with incredibly diverse students group, only three native born Americans. Began to make connections with IR work and feminist theory. Was supported in making connections between feminism and IR. Discussion of her master's research.

14:29 Interested in working with Sonia Alvarez at Santa Cruz. Still ambivalent about graduate work. Asked different peoples advice, deferred a year, applied for her dream job in funding for women's issues and then didn't get the job so entered grad school and loved it. Detailed discussion of dissertation research which focused on impact of internal armed conflict in Peru on women and the NGOs involved.

19:38 Discussion of job market at time of her hire at UD, several other universities not hiring and was offered position at UD.

20:22 Discussion of difference between Mid-Atlantic and the West Coast.

20:50 Discussion of what Women's Studies departments are like, comparing Santa Cruz and other universities. Being at UD has helped offer a more national perspective about Women's Studies.

23:00 Women's Studies and interdisciplinarity have been important, because there have been too many boundaries in the disciplines. Also can see how students begin to develop a critical way of reading the world. Many just do it for the credit, but the few that follow through are passionate about injustice and they want to make a change.

24:30 Discussion of feminist theory in the IR field as well as comparative politics and Latin American politics. At this time, is involved in conversation with others who are interested in these issues. There is enough interdisciplinary space to be engaged.

26:24 Arrived in Fall of 2009 at UD. Discussion about changes in WOMS, including becoming a department, which has allowed us to claim our curriculum. The grant for the Domestic Violence concentration is important institution building for us because it helps show the path to a job in this market.

27:32 Also growth around Sexualities and Gender Studies. It will be important to think about how to we address students interest in this area. The name change has been important to move out of essentialist thinking about women and how the field has changed.

28:31 Move to department shows we are a player now.

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29:00 Name change speaks to the national trend and how the field is rethinking our modes of analysis and getting past women as women, to bring more ways of thinking about not just bodies but also systems and structures. It will take time to see change in practice.

30:30 Discussion about diversity in women's studies. Not sure can answer question about it here at UD

31:32 Impact of her own work in the different fields that she is engaged in, women's studies, transitional justice and conflict and human rights, Latin American Studies – in all these areas she is making an argument that is engaged with the different fields. Impact of her work.

34:40 Impact of transnational work in Women's Studies. Really exciting work, but in terms of day to day teaching it is often a huge struggle to get students to understand how we study women transnationally. Discussion of how to break through the student's resistance to changing their views. Students have begun to self select her classes and is now getting more diverse classes as students learn about her work. Class material discussed and how she frames it around women's "stories" and social positions. Show links with their own lives and also in the world.

39:40 Discussion about where we will be in the next 5 – 10 years. Need to revisit the strategic planning materials from our retreat, and establish a good collective vision. The transnational element does not seem to have student interest even though it's a trend in the field. Discussion about how to continue with the domestic violence concentration once the funding ends. Also need to discuss the Sexualities and Gender minor to fit better in the Department. Also how we use student's involvement in cyberspace and use that in the future. Discussion of her class that she is developing about online activism and learning about how to do it.

43:22 Discussion of the closing of several women's studies departments due to financial issues, while Delaware has been able to navigate the economic crisis effectively. Interdisciplinary programs are often the first ones to get cut.

45:11 Discussion of the UD Hemispheric Dialogues Research Cluster and how it supports her work. Common preoccupation with social justice in the America. Is an important intellectually rejuvenating space.

48:07 Asked interviewer about why students declare the major. Mixed reaction among different students, related to her experiences. Providing them an opportunity to make sense of their lives. Discussion of her own experiences and opportunities with different faculty. The particularities of Women's Studies at UD are very different than at Santa Cruz.

51:15 End