Mara Viveros Vigoya

6/6/2015

00:00:04

CTM: We're talking today to Mara Viveros Vigoya. It's June 6th in New York City. So, Mara, it's really wonderful to have you here and to talk with us about your feminist journey. So, we have a few questions about what brought you to the kind of feminist work—to begin—what brought you to the kind of feminist work that you're involved in? And it can be work at all levels, right—scholarship, activism, teaching, whatever you want to—but really what—both, personal, political and intellectual—all of those things—

LEC: Everything—community—

MVV: I began talking about my mother. And it's not unusual for many feminists, because for us our first learnings were in our own homes. My mother, a white mestiza woman, decided to marry a black man in 1947 in Colombia and it was a difficult moment. They met at university; my father was in her cohort, the only black man in this moment. And I think that for my mother—even though I don't speak with her in this way—this decision marked her life and she needed to become feminist because she was very independent and she needed to identify a movement to allow her decisions. And at the beginning, she worked as a feminist all her life, as a young woman in the Unión de Ciudadanas de Colombia. It was the movement for voting.

CTM: Voting rights.

MVV: Voting rights. And after, for example we participated at the same time at the first Colombian-Latin American feminist meeting in 1981. And it's very—it's not common, because my mother decided to begin her studies at forty years, after six sons.

CTM: Six sons—and where were you?

MVV: I'm the fifth.

CTM: You're the fifth.

MVV: Exactly. Then, for me it was the first step and afterwards, probably in high school when I read a book about the letters of Angela Davis and George Jackson, the letters of the prison, and I was very touched, as a young woman, not about the feminist but about this kind of love. I was so surprised and I remember some poetry, probably ones that they describe as I was in this time—tall, black, trying to identify myself as a woman who was different to my school partners**.** Because I studied in a French school in Cali and I was the only black girl in this school.

LEC: In the whole school?

MVV: Yes, I was the first. After me there were other black girls but I was the first. And in this moment in Colombia we didn't talk about blackness because we were all mestizos; I was colored but not black. And when I discovered this book, it was for me, fantastic.

CTM: So, it was a book that talked about identity in a way that was different.

MVV: Exactly, exactly. Identity, but at the same time, struggles.

00**:**05**:**00

And one thing, important—the relationship between a feminist and a black man—for me it was important. Because for me—after, for example, I worked on black masculinity in my work. And for me, I needed to understand my father probably—and the relationship between my mother and my father. Because my father didn't correspond to the stereotypes of the black man, in this sense I wanted to understand. It was the beginning. But afterwards, it was because I moved to Bogota and I lived alone and I met a fantastic woman that returned in this moment from Europe, the first feminist in Colombia. And some of them were lesbian women. In this moment, not re-vindicated the lesbian as a feminist thing, but for it was important because I knew, and I accepted them, but other people were shocked.

CTM: What was—what year would that be?

MVV: Excuse me?

CTM: When would that be—what year?

MVV: 1880.

LEC: 1980.

MVV: 1980, excuse me!

[Laughter]

CTM: 1880 would make you rather old!

[Laughter]

MVV: No, no, no. 1980.

LEC: So how would you say that that beginning, that real, strong beginning influenced you to think as a feminist and get into the work that you got into after that?

MVV: Exactly. I pointed this out in the beginning because I didn't begin, for example, through voting rights. I arrived through sexuality, through affection, through identity, the relationship to black masculinity, then, in this sense, I anticipated more of my own things because afterwards they became subjects of reflections, but in the beginning it was only the—I don't find—serían las palancas que me movieron.

Griselda Rodriguez: Like the impetus or the platform.

MVV: The platform is good, probably because they allowed me to jump. But it was a personal commitment…for many women it was. At the same time, I arrived at university in Cali, at the public university, in a moment where the Left was very active. And I saw some difficulties I tried to participate in the Communist Party but I was not totally comfortable with them. I passed through Trotskyism, as a student I participated in—I don't know—the student cell of the Trotskies and in this moment we decided to leave the Trotsky party as feminists.

CTM: So, interesting parallels between what happens in different parts of the world in terms of feminists coming out of Left parties, which are seen as really masculinist in some ways.

MVV: And my commitment to women was always very important. And even now, when I arrived at Princeton, I always describe it that in this moment all the time I talk about/with women. It's not evident because I—It's not to idealize women but it's to understand that they can probably share my own experience.

LEC: So, with that really interesting beginning, Mara. Tell us how you—reflecting on your work over the last number of years since then, how would you say that that work as a feminist has influenced women that you have worked with in Colombia?

00:10:02

MVV: The influence of my work in—

LEC: In the communities that you've worked in—

MVV: In the community—yes, yes.

CTM: And it doesn't have to be just Colombia, too. It could be also whatever spaces you have traveled…or even what you hope has been the impact.

MVV: One of the things that I…probably I'll pass to Spanish to be clear. Una de las cosas que me parece—no, I'll try to say in English. It's not easy to shift.

LEC & CTM: Just turn to her whenever. Anytime.

MVV: For example, I became in the national university—no, when I returned—I lived in France for seven years, studying for my PhD. When I returned, I returned with a project about social determinants in health because I was very interested in the anthropology of health and this first work was very interesting. It was a comparative research between Ecuador and Colombia and we organized a meeting in Quito and for this meeting I knew a lot of people from the Andean region talking about the health of Andean women. It was very interesting for me because I understood practically the difference between women. Then for me the category "woman" as singular didn't make sense and we wrote a book about the women of the Andes—with Didier Fassin and Anne-Claire Defossez. It's the memory of this congress—because for us it was important and we talked about the differences among women. And the differences, evidently, in this moment were not only about class but also about ethnicity, about cultures, about—in this moment we didn't talk about race. The category race arrived later, later in my work about masculinity. And I was one of the first persons that worked on what we call today intersectionality. Because for me it was so important to include ethnicity—in this moment I began to talk about regional culture, but underlying the links between regional culture and presence of racialized people, because in the history of Colombia, regions are very racialized. Then for example, in the mountains, the center, the Andes are mestizos, indigenous; on the coast are black and in the forest are indigenous people. Then I decided to work in a region in the Pacific coast with a black population and the construction of masculinity. I remember when I arrived in Quibdo, I met a lot of black leaders who

were upset by my interest in masculinity. They told me**:** but you are so intelligent—c'est dommage— es una lástima—

GR: It's a pity, it's a shame.

MVV: That you are so interested in this subject and not in the real problems in the region. And in Choco, the division lines are more about the internal regions and not about gender. For me, it was so revealing because they expressed that they were very uncomfortable to become the object of the reflection of other, of a black woman. Then, for example, when I did this work I met some people that I met recently and they told me**:** we were marked by your talks, your work.

00**:**15**:**01

And I was surprised because my work for me, at first it was a little research, no? But I met a lot of people and for them it was so different to the way that they are used to that I marked a path. In this sense, probably all the time I was a little—not—desfasada—desfasada en el sentido que después se trabajaron—I anticipated, in fact, some subjects that became themes of reflections afterwards. If you told me in which sense I marked, probably today…it's a very recent reflection—I realized, I am conscious I became aware that I anticipated some things and my colleague said to me, yes!

LEC: So, after you did it, it became so much clearer what you had done.

MVV: Exactly, exactly.

CTM: That makes sense, because you never know what your impact will be. Because you don't do the work because you have a goal of this is what I want to see happen.

MVV: Exactly.

CTM: And then, it travels in a certain way. So, when you talked about you know, you saw people—people came up to you and said the work has really meant something. So, were there both men and women who did that?

MVV: More women, but some men. I have a relationship with one of them; and we became close. And he told me he began to work on masculinities.

CTM: So, there weren't people working on masculinities at that time.

MVV: No. At that time, no. No, no, we were the first. It was in—we had the first

meeting in 1985 with a Peruvian woman, Norma Fuller, a Chilean woman, Teresa Valdez, and we were the first. It was very—it was different because in Latin America, men didn't work on masculinities. It was a subject for women.

CTM: It is very different. I was thinking that, too.

MVV: And it's very different. But, for example, after I read bell hooks talking about the importance of working with men on masculinity, I understood what I was doing. But I didn't have these words. She illuminated me, and I said yes, evidently! They are our partners, our friends, our colleagues, and why not? Everyday we are interacting with them and we are imaging that we live in a world without them. It's not true. Even if they are not our sexual partners, it's not a problem, but it exists as parents, as brothers. And I continued to influence some young students that made very interesting research right now. I am thinking about one recent research. She works on hip-hop in Medellín and she tries to show hip-hop as a resistance against the model of the warrior. Because the hegemonic masculinity in Medellín is the masculinidad guerrea.

GR: The warrior masculinity. The militant masculinity.

MVV: Exactly. And for them it was a way to obtain recognition. And then hip-hop became a possibility to obtain this recognition in another way. And it's interesting because in the beginning they dreamed about becoming stars and not about working in the community. And right now hip-hop is more about community work. It's not about singularity and the artist, but to create ties between them, to create other solidarity—solidarity is ties, no?

00:20:06

GR: Hmm!

LEC: That's interesting, because hip-hop started here as a culture of resistance also. So, it was resisting the kind of capitalism in the US that forces this marginalization through racialization. So, it started in the south Bronx and it was all about how people were treated there, how black people were treated there. And then of course white managers took over hip-hop and then it became this individual focus. So, the focus changed from the collective and the community to this individual thing about stardom. Same kind of thing. So this is interesting, that it has remained like that in Colombia. That's really good. I'm gonna look into that.

CTM: So, if you were to reflect on what kinds of challenges you have faced in doing the work you've been doing over all these decades, and how they've impacted your

own shifts or ways of engaging feminist praxis, right, how would you talk about that?

MVV: I think that—and it's very recent—I became so aware about my difference in working with my colleagues in the gender school, because I realized that I, in this moment, it was…we celebrated 10 years of the Gender School and I took advantage of the celebrations to do coming out, probably—because they didn't wait for my paper. And in this paper I said, no, it's the first time that I positioned myself as a woman of color. For them it was different because I became different. I took distance and I—it's an article "De Diferencia y Diferencias" and I discovered the literature—evidently, Combahee River, Audre Lorde, Bell Hooks and in this moment I said, it's not only about putting this kind of literature in one model, in one topic of the syllabus. It's evidently to transform and be aware about our work and it was the first time, when I became director of Gender Studies, I took advantage of this position and people told me the Colombia School of Gender se ennegreció.

GR: Blackened.

CTM: Oh yeah, it blackened. OK.

LEC: Wow.

MVV: And for example, when Angela Davis come to—she was invited to receive the new cohort of the Gender School. And in the same time we did attribute to Angela Davis talking about her legacy, but as an horizon and it was very interesting because many black women expressed explicitly that it was the first time that they were important in the Gender School. Not only the object of study, but the protagonist, the main characters.

LEC: Felt validated.

CTM: And this was very recent.

MVV: Very recent. It was 2010. And ten years ago was in 2004, my coming out. It's very recent, it's eleven years. But very quickly after that the school changed a lot. Afterwards, we received Ochy Curiel and Ochy put in the debate lesbian issues, the decolonial—

00**:**25**:**00

It's more recent, decolonial feminism, because she began talking about black feminists, pensamiento lesbico—

GR: Lesbian thinking.

CTM: She had that book—"Heterosexual—"

MVV: Exactly. "La Nación Heterosexual". "The Heterosexual Nation".

CTM: "Heterosexual Nation", that's right.

MVV: Her master's thesis that I directed.

CTM: Yeah, she gave me a copy. I can't read it but it's there.

[Laughter]

MVV: Yeah, yeah, yeah. And I remember when it was for me, the most important was that we—I was conscious that in this place I can do many things to put in the main curriculum marginalized subjects. And I used my place and my capital, because I was recognized as a researcher, for people at the beginning I was recognized as a rigorous researcher—and I was—I am very muy juiciosa *[Laughs]*—it's a joke—yes, I am a hard-worker una buena estudiante I was a good student. No, but it's a joke because to be a good student is not only a quality, it's a—

LEC: It is to be a conformist in your mind.

MVV: Exactly.

LEC: Then when you started to defy that you started to blacken the school.

MVV: Exactly, exactly.

LEC: And then sexuality—you're breaking down the school.

MVV: Exactly.

LEC: Incredible—incredible.

CTM: So, what do you think then are some of the major challenges in terms of bringing women of different nationalities, races, sexualities, etc.—bringing women and men together in terms of creating solidarities at a point where we are in an enormously neoliberal culture, which has affected all of our universities and institutions very deeply.

MVV: Very deeply.

CTM: Right—so, there's commodification, privatization, you know, kind of splintering of all of us into different spaces and so how would you envision the possibility of making those connections or building those solidarities?

MVV: It's a very interesting question and the way that you approach it, because right now we are talking more about care. I prefer your way to talk about connections and undermine the individualism promoted by neoliberalism. For me, it's different because caring and care situations can be in one way very subversive, but in another way reproduce status quo. I know that my colleagues who work on care try to challenge and to put in the middle, for example, another ethics, creating an alternative ethics in the work, because the academic field is very competitive and competition is the opposite of solidarity. You are always thinking about your publications, your recognition. It's not as a community. But we become aware about the necessity to challenge and…but I am finding, for example, your way is not that way that we work but it's very interesting.

MVV: Because I realize that we are putting together—evidently, for example, receiving a Dominican woman, it was important for us in the school because it's breaking the nationality boundaries. Evidently, to have someone who is in solidarity with us it means that masculinity is not a fate. Destino?

00**:**30**:**26

GR: Destined…pre-destined.

CTM: Right.

MVV: And it's very important effectively to create links between our struggles and the struggles against neoliberalism. It's very, very important. Very recently, for example, the Gender School participated una jornada.

GR: *Like a—colloquium.*

MVV: No, no it's not a colloquium. It's one day—it's about violence in Colombia and for example, some of our colleagues were threatened by paramilitary forces.

LEC: So you did a symposium on that. The whole day.

CTM: No, no they were organizing something—on violence—a daylong thing.

MVV: Exactly. Activities. And it was very interesting because during the violence

the name for the paramilitary forces was "birds"—pájaros—and we created scarecrows.

CTM: To scare away the birds! How nice.

MVV: Exactly. And we planted the scarecrows around the campus of the university. I imagine it que hubiera podido ser fantastico.

GR: It would have been fascinating.

MVV: In fact, the balance is not so good in the sense that only a few of the departments participated—because the university is very polarized. Right now the neoliberalist logro—one of the terrible achievements of neoliberalism is breaking possibilities…

CTM: Creating divisions.

MVV: Exactly. But at the same time, the Gender School and other departments—we are struggling. Waiting, for example, to pass the time building scarecrows, working with our hands and creating another space to meet us, and it was very nice. Then we need to resist and batucada—the batucada, it's a group of women percussionists. The feminist batucada then arrived with their rhythms, their drums, their songs and we were very patient. We were a few people but then we became—tenemos voz, tenemos—

GR: *Now we have a voice.*

MVV: Yeah, yeah, right. Y hacemos escuchar nuestras voces.

GR: Our voices are heard. We have our voices heard.

CTM: So, what's interesting about what you've described though is this mobilization of culture and activities that are activities that create visibility and solidarity at the same time, which is a different realm from—

LEC: From what you would see here. And this is created in resistance to the institutional structures that are trying to divide you all. And it sounds like there's a kind of corporatization that is being effective as part of the neoliberalism, of the vision that they're trying to create. And you are struggling to counter that through solidarity work. That's incredible.

MVV: And very recently in Brazil I was very surprised because one woman participated in a panel, singing for the first time. She sang and it was fantastic

because all the time it was the—

00:35:03

CTM: People reading papers.

MVV: Exactly. And imagining that, the only way to do is reading. In my case, I was the keynote speaker. I read.

[Laughter]

MVV: But I was able to dance with this singer. This woman sang, I woke up and I accompanied—at least I could do it.

CTM: So it's almost like disrupting the normative habits that people have in a certain space.

MVV: Exactly. It's very important for me.

CTM: And also, it's creating knowledges through different means rather than just a particular understanding of scholarship and textual analysis, etc., right?

LEC: As the only way.

CTM: As the only way. So, it's almost like disrupting business as usual at the university, right?

MVV: Exactly.

CTM: Which is so effective.

LEC: I was thinking, Mara, with what you just talked about—solidarity across different groups and sexualities—if you see that as…that model is so—not unique but the fact that it's so effective in your environment. How would you imagine that working beyond Colombia? How would we do that as feminists? How would you see that as a model to be effective? You know why I'm thinking this? I'm thinking, most of the world is Global South, it's not here. But so much of what we understand as feminism and how it's perceived to have started is here.

CTM: Yeah, the stories are—the origins are here.

LEC: And so these are seen as the models. And even in the Global South, sometimes

we see feminists emulating this model and it is completely ineffective. By model I mean that it's so woman-focused, we don't think of working with men and so in the Global South we hear—they tell us all the time—like you said, they are brothers…most of us will say, "Why will we struggle with them? They should start their own movement." You have made an incredible point about the solidarity factor and why this is necessary. And I am thinking this would be so effective in fighting the state. Because the state has a mechanism and a machinery that's already in place where they have the men, patriarchy is the force. They have everything to make it effective. Really effective. How do we counter that? And this model you're talking about seems really exciting. How would you imagine that work?

MVV: But I don't find only in Colombia. In fact, when I read about Bolivia, Nicaragua. Even in Colombia it is recent because we are shifting. The most important struggle right now is not—evidently, in the university it is only un espacio de amplificación.

GR: It is amplifying space.

MVV: Yes, the university is only a space to—

CTM: Amplify.

MVV: Amplify…it's not the site of the…

CTM: Of struggle.

MVV: Struggles. Exactly. But for example, for me, culture is a good resource even if it's not culturalism. I was evidently against culturalism because it's very essentialist, we know. But culture is a good resource, and for example, in Brazil, in Bahia, because I participated in this meeting Enlazando Sexualidades, and my colleagues from Brazil told me, "Don't imagine that Brazil is like this meeting. This is very special." Because you are allowed to talk for not only fifteen minutes, you can explore a subject during forty minutes, even if you are not the keynote speaker. And you need to listen to others. And it's another dynamic. And we are undermining the dynamics, for example, when you need to do in ten minutes or in fifteen minutes, you need to do the most important and it's a sort of—pasarela?

GR: It's like a panel.

MVV: And not a real dialogue. Then even—for me, culture is very important.

00**:**40**:**01

And the feminist comunitarista are talking about culture. And it's challenging for us because sometimes they—for example, I recently read an interview about an indigenous leader in Colombia and she is changing a lot. Before she was more Marxist and the model was Marxist. Right now she is talking about her life cycle and she said, "I became a mayora." Mayora is a sort of shaman, a woman shaman. And she tried to say, "I became wise." And she is changing. And for me it's very interesting because she is taking her distance from Marxism but she continues to conduct the struggles. She is the same person. Then, I can imagine that we can find resource in culture and it's very difficult because as academics or as intellectuals, the model is very masculine. And for example, my male-colleagues are not comfortable with singing, dancing, embracing, kissing. It's too much. The body is too present, for them. We l earned that mind and body are separate. Then, to link is important. In this sense, the relationship is so important.

CTM: See, one of the things that this brings to mind is there are so many feminists scholars and activists who cut their teeth in Left movements, on Marxist movements and then moved away from it but there aren't that many men who have done that. What that suggests to me is how the Left has reproduced all of the masculinity and patriarchy, globally, really. And unless…in some ways, your question—unless we talk about shifting masculinities in the Left—

LEC: That's the point, right? That's the point that I was trying to make. The point you just made, Chandra, is so important that they haven't, the men haven't done it. Those of us who—it was the Left that we came to. And so we have moved because the demands of feminism on us and our understanding of ourselves as women, and the significance of the body to understanding the material conditions that you know make life as it has been, as we have learned as wonderful Marxists, we have made that shift. Men, they have not had a movement. They have not had to challenge masculinity. Capitalism is still patriarchal. So it's been easy for them to stay there. And that is the challenge.

MVV: Exactly. Yeah, yeah, yeah, exactly.

CTM: Although the challenges have come from gay men. There have been challenges around sexuality and challenges around hegemonic masculinities, but they're not always also Left. They're not always anti-capitalist. So some of that is…and this is where the neoliberal space that we occupy comes in…is that one of the successes of neoliberal culture is to make us forget, actually, that we are living under enormously violent and oppressive conditions of disenfranchisement, impoverishment, all kinds of stuff. The discourse that is created is completely—is to make it invisible.

LEC: That is why it's so incredible what's happening there, because you see that point about the challenge—the movement, if we can call it that—that has been created in challenging some of that hegemonic masculinity stuff has come from gay men but not Left, as Chandra said.

00:45:04

And so, because they are not Left, then they still remain part of the problem. They still remain part of the problem. Because in some cases, like here in the US, we see them facilitating neoliberalism. With all its essences of racism and everything else.

CTM: And this is also racialized. Completely.

LEC: Yes, it's also racialized. Yeah, but what you all are doing is solidarity across borders and within Colombia, across those divides, that seem to be working, no? If you would say—

MVV: Yes, but I am concerned about the Left. Because in Colombia, for example, in the peace processes the Left is present but when the Left is being led by men, the body is absent. It is completely absent. Sexuality is only present when gay men talk. And it's a problem because heterosexual men don't realize body and sexuality matter for them—and it's a difficulty. And the Left have this model of the hero and the hero is straight and the patriarch.

LEC: And so, allowing—and this is it yeah—allowing gay men—it's not a recognition of any kind of need for broader understanding of what society can be—they're there, we have to accept them, I mean we have to acknowledge them but we have to accept them. Because if you have to accept then you are accepting the challenges to heterosexuality.

MVV: Exactly. But it is the model of multiculturalism. Because it is diversity and not the real difference, no?—more radical diversity.

LEC: It's like what we used to critique years ago about liberal feminism. Get more women! It's so discriminatory because we don't have women. If you get more women they're just like the male leaders and we had to go and re-do and re-analyze again because we've gotten more women, but, so what?

MVV: Exactly.

LEC: So in terms of hope for the future, in your imaginary, what do you see happening in Colombia?

CTM: And Latin America. I mean, however you want to put that.

MVV: One of my hopes is to shift between the individualized center to another sort of relationship. It's very important. But at the same time when we are talking about this shift we need to conserve individuality and the freedom, the expansion of your individuality. There is a tension. Then my hope, my real hope is all the time to arrive to work in both directions. To allow—and it's not easy—it's very, very difficult.

LEC: Huge challenge.

MVV: Yes, very challenging. And effectively, the Left needs to include in the core of their thinking the body subject, body matters, but in a stronger way, evidently, because it's not a case. And to surpass this model of multiculturalism. I am very tired of diversity.

LEC: It's dangerous because it's not anti-capitalist.

MVV: It's a celebration of diversity—so dangerous.

CTM: So, would you say then that one of the challenges for a larger Left movement is really thinking about the materiality of the body? And really thinking in terms of a feminist analysis of that? So, what would be—similarly, if you were thinking about feminist movements that you are aware of—where are we headed? Where are we going and what are the questions, that, you know—

MVV: For me, it's so important that academic feminists change and adopt the position of feminists that need to listen.

00:50:09

And not to speak all the time. It's so important. In a strong way, not as condescendence. And it's very important that the university arrives at other sorts of women that can place at the core their concerns, their commitments, their desires. In this sense, a real diversity, not the—

LEC: Not the window dressing diversity. But don't you see—in listening to that, Mara, don't you see part of what you referred to as academic feminism as part of the neoliberalism that's controlling the academy? Because it is what it rewards. So what we are trying to do in DK—when you came to SU you were familiar with this—is challenge those frames of knowledges, because that's what's understood. So, the woman you are describing, she has to be understood—I mean, the managers of that

frame, of these institutions have to understand the need for this kind of woman thinking. And those women who are those academic feminists themselves, have to get out of the competitive kind of vein you were talking about before that are rewarded and rewarded. In other words, there's a framing that has people lined up that way in the academy. And that is what is preventing them, I think, from moving to understanding what goes on outside. So that that woman can find a space there, so that they can see the need for that women to be having a space there. She doesn't need to be there but they need to see why she needs to be there. Because what you're talking about is a necessary transformation.

MVV: Yeah, yeah.

CTM: One other thing that I'm going to add to this, which is, do you see, generationally, changes that are hopeful?

LEC: Possibilities—

CTM: Possibilities?

MVV: The hope for me is to take advantage of some openings, for example, multiculturalism allows importance to culture, but you can use cultural resource to fight. Neoliberalism allows importance to creativity.

CTM: Entrepreneurship, is how they—

MVV: Entrepreneurship, exactly. You can subvert—probably in this sense, the young generation, if they are aware, can subvert and achieve these possibilities opened by neoliberalism and multiculturalism. It's my hope.

LEC: If they are aware.

MVV: Yeah, if they are aware. Exactly. And it's not about the age.

CTM: Yeah, it's not about the age.

MVV: But the situation is different. They are facing everyday multiculturalism and neoliberalism.

CTM: Yeah, which is very different from what, say, people of a different generation, or what we might have faced when we were at that age. What we faced was not exactly multiculturalism or neoliberalism—in the form that it is now. So, in some ways it's about really thinking about resistance in very contextual, historical way in terms of what is in front of you right now.

MVV: Exactly.

CTM: What would make the struggle more hopeful, and also—what is the word I'm looking for—more effective.

LEC: More effective. Because you're looking for transformation, so you're mapping something that is going to make permanent change.

LEC: But you're right, it's if they are aware. And so bringing that awareness—

MVV: But they can be aware, in our—

LEC: That's the work.

MVV: Exactly. Our work is about that.

LEC: Well, this was wonderful! We want to thank you.

CTM: Thank you.

MVV: No—*[Laughs]*

CTM: Thank you.

00:55:01

***

Feminist Freedom Warriors (FFW) is a first of its kind digital video archive and documentary project. Born out of an engagement in anti-capitalist, anti-racist struggles as women of color from the Global South, this project is about cross-generational histories of feminist activism addressing economic, anti-racist, social justice and anti-capitalist issues across national borders.