

Interviewee: Lisa Connelly Cook  
Interviewers: Carissa Couture and Chelsea Gamboa  
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**Abstract:**

Lisa Connelly Cook was born in Springfield, Massachusetts in 1961 and attended Wachusett High School in Holden. Lisa lives in Leominster now with her husband Nash Mbugua, who is her second husband, in a condominium. Her two daughters currently live in Boston; she was pregnant with one of them during her senior year of college and had to go on maternity leave. Before moving to Leominster, Lisa lived in Quinsigamond Village near the College of the Holy Cross for two years and for 19 years from 1987 to 2006 in Millbury. She watched the majority of Worcester's issues play out as she resided in Worcester during those years, like parking issues and developmental problems. Lisa thinks the history of Worcester makes it so distinctive because historically it is a very hardworking city. Lisa discusses how the legacy and successes of Worcester are still around today with the abilities to study in Worcester, do research, or find a job. Lisa thinks women played an important role in the Worcester community by organizing a community and trying to push things along the way women wanted, even though they didn't really have formal political options. Lisa is currently an Associate Professor of History and Political Science at Quinsigamond Community College. The combination of the teaching assistant work that Lisa did for four years plus the work she had done with the Worcester Women's History Project intertwined because both skills involved a lot of public speaking. Lisa elaborates on the importance of learning and education in order to develop your own knowledge and flaunt your successes in the workforce. Lisa also touches on her experiences as a young working mother and the changes she saw as she worked in the city of Worcester. "I think education for its own sake is really important. It's about developing an understanding in the world and it's about learning about yourself better, maybe studying other people, other languages or studying the past so you know more about yourself and that's really, really important."

**CG:** So do we have your permission to record this oral history?

**LCC:** Yes.

**CG:** Okay. So, what is your full maiden name? Or your married name?

**LCC:** Lisa Connelly Cook.

**CG:** So where were you born?

**LCC:** I was born in Springfield, Massachusetts.

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**CG:** That's good. Have you ever married?

**LCC:** Yes.

**CG:** And what's the name of your current husband?

**LCC:** My current husband is Nash Mbugua, and he's my second husband. I was married before to Steven Cook.

**CG:** Do you have any children?

**LCC:** I do. I have two daughters.

**CG:** Do they live around this area?

**LCC:** They're both in the Boston area right now.

**CG:** Do you have any grandchildren?

**LCC:** Nope. [Laughs]

**CG:** What cultures/ethnicities do you identify with your family background?

**LCC:** It's a mix of European, Irish, French Canadian, English and German.

**CG:** Okay. So tell me about your parents.

**LCC:** My mother was born in New York. Grew up in New York but came to Massachusetts for high school. She graduated from Westfield. My father was born in Springfield and went to school there. And they actually met at UMass Amherst.

**CG:** Oh. That's nice.

**LCC:** [Smiles and laughs]

**CG:** And it's kind of close to here.

**LCC:** [Laughs] Yeah.

**CG:** So where have you lived during your life?

**LCC:** I was born in Springfield, and lived in Springfield as a baby and then we moved to West Springfield and I grew up there until high school. And when my father had lost his

job in 1973 he then got a job in Worcester and we ended up moving to Holden in 1975. So I went to high school in Holden. I went to Wachusett.

**CG:** Is there any reason to why he had lost his job? Like, anything going on around that time?

**LCC:** Yeah. Good question. I mean I don't know what specifically happened with the job that he had, but it was definitely a down economy. 1973 was a pretty bad time actually economically, so I think a lot of people lost their job, and so he was just sort of part of that. It was just a really bad time.

**CG:** Okay. What neighborhood, what was the neighborhood like generally?

**LCC:** The neighborhood in Holden? Or?

**CG:** Yes.

**LCC:** The neighborhood in Holden was very suburban, ranch houses. [Pauses] Like a development kind of place which was actually different from the place where I had lived in West Springfield. It was more older houses, more a mix of, a mix of houses. But it was single-family houses and more of a, I don't know, a little more urban neighborhood. And Holden was more of a development ranch house kind of place.

**CG:** Okay. If you were not born in Worcester, when did you arrive here?

**LCC:** [Laughs] 1975.

**CG:** Where do you live, which city do you live in now?

**LCC:** I live in Leominster now. I've lived in Leominster for the last 5 years.

**CG:** Is that close to here?

**LCC:** It's, it's about 17 minutes away just on 190.

**CG:** Oh that's not bad.

**LCC:** Yeah, it's actually—it's a really easy commute. I think it's miles wise, I don't know, I think 20 miles or so. Yeah it's like an easy commute. [Rt.]190 is a really easy road to travel on. There [is] like no traffic on it. So ... [laughs].

**CG:** Which is good. Saves you time.

**LCC:** Yeah, and 'cause this school is in the northern part of Worcester, I don't ever have to travel through the city so it's amazing.

**CG:** So, what challenges do you think the city still faces and what would you change about the city?

**LCC:** Wow. Okay. So this I had to, had to think about this one a lot. I think, I guess I tend to want to think really optimistically, so I started to think about what are the problems of Worcester and then I wanted to say what I think are the really good things about Worcester [laughs]. I think that Worcester is like so many other cities like it. It was a walking city. And so I think one of the big problems of Worcester and so many other similar types of medium sized cities is that it's just not good for driving. It's terrible. I mean I'm sure being at Assumption [College], driving, sort of trying to get to Assumption and back, going east and west through the city, you know is just impossible.

[Phone Rings]

**LCC:** Oh sorry, do you just want to pause it for one second. [Conversation interrupted interview] [Answers phone].

**LCC:** Okay. Just the thing that I think jumps out at me is driving—driving and parking; it's just such a huge problem. I think it's a typical problem for this type of a city and I have no idea what the answer is. I mean I personally think that there should just be better public transportation. Its just a big huge issue. So, but, anyway, I think that's a big problem.

**CG:** We do have very small streets.

**LCC:** Yeah, it's just hard to park downtown, it's—I think if those problems can be solved, other kind of developmental issues, and development projects and ideas could really take off. They could somehow solve the problem. But it's more than just a Worcester thing.

**CC:** Yeah.

**CG:** So, is that all you have to say about Worcester?

**LCC:** As far as challenges?

**CG:** Yeah.

**LCC:** That was really what stood out at me. And just it's so spread out. And again, I mean, I don't know, there's a lot of interesting developmental ideas that are out there and projects that are going, and things that have actually been done. I mean St. Vincent's, downtown, and there's been a lot of things that happen. But it seems that they're so spread out; I think that driving and parking is just an ongoing problem.[laughs].

**CG:** So, you already answered this; but have you seen any other changes in Worcester over time?

**LCC:** Yeah, yeah, definitely. From like 1975. Yeah, I mean I was actually, I was trying to think of some; I know there's probably a lot more, but at one time, I lived in Quinsigamond Village, which I don't know if you know where that is. It's actually, on the other side of [College of the] Holy Cross. You know the hill that Holy Cross is on? Holy Cross College. But on the other side of it, is like a neighborhood they call Quinsig Village. At the bottom of that hill was the U.S. Steel. It was a huge industrial area for many years and when I lived there in the '80s it was still there. It was mostly rusted out, not used, but—so over these years all that stuff was torn down and now there's a WalMart there in the whole complex. So that was a huge change. And it took a long time, and just the whole [Rt] 146. There was a 146 but it didn't look anything like it looks now as a highway, and anyway, that, that's a big change. Worcester Airport has had its ups and downs. It seems more on the closed side than on the open side and then of course the whole St. Vincent's that whole project down town. And then of course, what we all call the Galleria which is now in the process of being completely torn down. It was the Worcester Common Fashion Outlets for a while behind City Hall. You know that—what's there now?

**CG:** Are you talking about the park that they have? Behind it?

**LCC:** Yeah, so City Hall has a big park, which is the Worcester Common. So then right behind it was this “L” shaped bunch of stores, like a mall, an indoor mall. And it had different names and different kinds of decorations over the years and now it's—I haven't driven down there in the last few weeks. It seems like every time I drive down there it looks completely different. But they're in the process of, like, putting in the road back right through it. So, that's been like this ongoing project that is a big change. The courthouse which is on Main Street, that was always Lincoln Square and now the last time I drove by there was a big for sale sign [laughs]. The Mass College of Pharmacy, that was a big hotel, and now it's—I mean lots of changes. And even the whole Medical School I think that was just getting started when we were here in the '70s and then it has just grown and grown and grown and the biotech and all that stuff on the hill by the lake, that's all changed. A lot of changes in Worcester.

**CG:** Which is beneficial to everyone. Are you glad they have that?

**LCC:** Yeah, yeah. I mean in theory, but I mean there's so many things in so many places. I don't know. A lot going on.

**CG:** What, oh wait you already answered that basically.

**LCC:** What?

**CG:** What distinct characteristics make Worcester the place that it is.

**LCC:** I would say, well the history. I think the history of Worcester makes it so distinctive. I mean I was trying to think of what really stands out. I mean I think Worcester is historically a working, hard-working town. It was a hard working city. It has the history of working people coming from—whether it's from the local people or people coming from outside the city, coming from outside the country, it's just been a place that has attracted entrepreneurs and workers and people with ideas, people with commitment to social justice. It's really had this very interesting history which people don't necessarily know about. But I think really the working, that hard-working people basically have made Worcester what it really is. And the social and cultural institutions I think also, and those things kind of go hand in hand, but I think that that really makes Worcester very distinctive. I mean many other cities also have an array of social institutions and cultural institutions, but Worcester has had great, good fortune in the past and wealth. And it has used it in lots of interesting ways. And the legacy of those initiatives and successes is still around in the community in a lot of ways.

**CG:** In what ways do you think that? What made you believe so?

**LCC:** Well, I guess having had the opportunity to study here and use the great resources here as a historian, as a researcher. There's so many different resources that I personally have been able to use so I've experienced them that way and then just from my own research and history of them and where some of these things came from, and who supported them; the ways in which people organize. I mean my focus has been on women. You know, women in Worcester, the history of feminism, and the way that women going way back organized themselves to solve social problems. They created, they created the Women's Club, which is still around, but it doesn't really have the profile that it once had. Or the Girls Club to try to provide for younger girls and there are just so many different initiatives in the city—it's very interesting. So I guess just from personal experience and then from research.

**CG:** What do you think women's experiences in Worcester have been generally?

**LCC:** [pauses] That's very hard for me to answer. I don't think I can answer that generally really, but women have come here as workers, they found all kinds of opportunities. As workers, they came here for education. There was a women's college here back in the 19th century, that was the precursor of Worcester State [University] which is the Normal School [for] teaching and teachers. Women worked here as teachers. So many, like I said, so many institutions that women started or women ran and women really played an important role in a lot of ways in the community in organizing a community and trying to push things along the way they wanted even though they didn't really have a lot of times formal political power or the vote, or they worked a lot of different ways. And to some degree were able to find path ways to do that and to some degree it depended on maybe their social class or maybe their communication levels, a lot of time social class and level of wealth kind of had an impact on something to do with

how much they were able to accomplish or what realms of fields they were really able to function and thrive, but I would say women have had a great impact on the community.

[Switch interviewers]

**CC:** Okay, so where did you attend school?

**LCC:** Well, West Springfield for elementary and middle school and then Holden for high school and then I went to college in Boston. I went to Simmons for two years and then Tufts for a year and then I dropped out of school when I was a senior because I was pregnant. And I went and had my first daughter and then I got married and was married for, well then, let's say ten years or so, almost ten years after I had left school. I had decided to go back and I went to Clark [University] and finished my bachelor's degree there while I was working part time and with two kids and married, and then continued to get my masters, and then decided to keep going, and I'm still a student [laughs]. I'm still working on my doctorate.

**CC:** Where are you doing that?

**LCC:** At Clark.

**CC:** Oh wow, very busy.

**LCC:** So yeah, [laughs] I'm still trying to finish that dissertation.

**CC:** What were your challenges in education?

**LCC:** You know, having children and working, it made it very slow, just going part time. At least at first, but it's just been—it was really slow because of that.

**CC:** Wow.

**LCC:** That would be the biggest,[laughs] and money.

**CC:** What support networks and mentoring have been important to you?

**LCC:** Definitely my mother has been really supportive. So, I'd say family and aunts. In the community, the networks of—just thinking about people who helped me and who I've worked with and planning this—basically creating this History Project, the Worcester Women's History Project. So Annette Rafferty at Abby's House, Angela Dorenkamp was a professor at Assumption, Linda C who is the executive director at the YWCA, those are just three and there are so many more that I've worked with them and they with me in creating the History Project, along with lots of other people. And I guess the point I'm trying to get at, is that my education after going back to school, my education and the founding development of this organization and the whole project were

very much intertwined. So, I don't know if that—so I mean going back to school led me to the question that led to the organization and this whole idea of celebrating the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the [Worcester] Women's Rights Convention and then out of that came more of a focus for my continuing education and the research and so the two absolutely went together. So, I really can't separate them in my mind. Although one is more the formal side which is the school and the classes and finishing the degree, but then on the outside, outside of school itself was the work that we were all doing that was just very much—each one fed the other.

**CC:** Wow. Do you work outside the home?

**LCC:** Yes, I work here [laughs]. Quinsigamond Community College.

**CC:** And how did you come to do this here?

**LCC:** Well, I was working as a teaching assistant as part of my graduate program at Clark [University] and so I've been a teaching assistant there, so I had that experience and then this job opened up and actually one of my professors at Clark had suggested applying for it. And so I think that with the combination of the teaching assistant work that I had been doing for four years plus the work that I had done with the history project—again, it's all intertwined because that involved a lot of public speaking actually. I went from having done no public speaking to just doing a ton of it, and sort of trial by fire and that actually gave me a lot of experience with working with audiences in a sense, educating, and so those things combined with—I think those were the primary reasons of experiences that led to this job.

**CC:** Cool! Wow! What has this work meant to you?

**LCC:** [Thinks out loud]. Now, did I get that far with this one. [Laughs], it's meant a lot. I mean it's been, it's meant that I have had a full time job. It has—I have worked with all kinds of students. I have learned so much about education, learning, it's been a great opportunity to just be able to learn in a sense myself from this job. It has been a good opportunity actually to develop my own knowledge about history and about the government and because I think that it's a cliché, but you learn so much when you have to teach something. Yeah, and when you do it like over and over and over again—ten years [laughs] I mean it's, it's been tremendous. Another part of the job has been being a part of a union. So were actually unionized here. So, being a part of the union has been very eye opening and interesting and I think very important. I learned a lot about the importance of—I guess I've learned a lot about relations between administration and workers through being a part of the union. So that, that's been interesting, that's been an ongoing thing.

**CC:** Okay. What are or were your primary responsibilities in terms of housework?

**LCC:** That is an interesting question. I guess I feel I have done all areas of housework [laughing] I learned about all kinds of, all aspects of housework from my mother and my grandmothers. And I think that I have in a sense taken pride in that knowledge as they did. So doing things like learning to cook, to sew, to clean, to organize the household, to doing the financial side of it, to just so many different aspects of housework. It was interesting I—when I saw that question I was just kind of found it hard to answer. I really hadn't thought too much about it. But, yeah I guess I feel like I learned from them.

**CG:** At what age did you start doing housework or work, like your parents and your grandmother telling you how to do housework?

**LCC:** Oh good question, ...

**CG:** Like teenage years?

**LCC:** No, younger... we—I think of my old, my brother and sister the three of us were the oldest. We were doing dishes from the time we were young kids. So, in those days before dishwashers, so we would each have a job, one wash one dry and one put the dishes away and then we would like trade the jobs every week and so we always did a job so, cleaning and things like that we did from a young age, I don't even remember.

**CC:** Okay. How would you characterize the personal and professional costs of your chosen path? How about the benefits?

**LCC:** Well, I guess the costs have to do with the, the slowness of it. That it's been—it's hard to I guess get to that question of juggling things. It's been a lot so I think it's been a slow path, but I this is what I want to do, this is what I feel like I should be doing and I need to be doing, so I'm just doing it at whatever pace I can do it. So, it's been sort of slow. Slower than I wish, but then again, it couldn't really be any other way as far as I can see. But yeah, the benefits of it, well it's just a great intellectual challenge and I'm pursuing questions that I want to be pursuing so I'm not getting rich at it [laughs]. Yeah, it's what I want to be doing and so that in and of itself is a great thing 'cause it's what I want to be doing.

**CC:** Wow. Do you consider yourself active politically?

**LCC:** Not really but I guess it's all relative. I mean I've donated to candidates, I've held signs for candidates, but not much more than that.

**CC:** Okay. Have you been involved in volunteer or community work?

**LCC:** Yes. Definitely. I mean I guess, I guess the main, or the biggest way would be with the Worcester Women's History Project and founding that organization and at least for the early years being very, very involved with that. And being a founding president and organizing this celebration of the 150<sup>th</sup> year anniversary and bringing that information to

the public and sort of working with other people who are interested in it too, Organize public awareness and do fundraising and organize not just that so called Women 2000 celebration, but the organization itself, and get it, bring it to life basically as part of the community. But there's just so many different aspects of that.

**CC:** And what led you to start all that?

**LCC:** Well, it was when I was in school, actually I was at Clark [University] and I was taking a class on women in the law, and we were reading a book by Eleanor Flexner called *A Century of Struggle* and I read this section about Worcester and the 1850 Convention and was surprised I had never heard of that before. And it had just occurred to me that—at that time it was like 1992—that 2000 would be the 150<sup>th</sup> year anniversary and it was only a few years away and wouldn't it be cool to do something about it! And that was sort of the beginning—thought of it, but I really didn't know anything about it. I didn't know anything about the women's movement from that time, or Worcester, or Abby Kelly, or any of these things. And so then I had seen that there was going to be a talk at Abby's House about Abby Kelly Foster and I went to that talk and met Annette Rafferty who runs Abby's House, and Elaine Lamoreaux who was also working with her in that, and Al Southwick who was a local historian. I proposed the idea to Annette Rafferty and she thought it was a good idea. And then I went to another event over there later and met Angela Dorenkamp and told her and she was really supportive and at that time I was working as a secretary and going to school and she, she was just so supportive. She just said, "Oh you can do that," and I said, "Thanks. Well, you know I'm a secretary," and she said, "Oh you know I think a secretary can do anything." [laughs] And she was really encouraging and she had actually written an article that was published in the newspaper about the Seneca Falls Convention and so I had read that and I was like, "Oh, you know I have read your article and I would really like to do something like that about the 1850 convention." So that's when she was like, "Oh do it! You can do that!" And then I ended up going over to the YWCA to look for a space to have a little meeting and from there met Linda Cavaioli who just was totally enthusiastic about it. And she had seen the article that I had published in the paper and from there we just started talking to people and just there was so much interest in it. Right away people were like, "I never heard of that! That sounds like a good idea! I want to do it." And it was almost like, almost like so many people just wanted to jump on and get involved. Yeah, it was like a lot of energy.

**CC:** Yeah.

**CG:** So, so what was the name of the article that you published in the newspaper?

**LC:** Oh boy, I don't remember

**CC:** That's okay [laughter]

**LC:** It was on November 1994—no 1993 because the article was in 1993 because we had

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our meeting in the spring of '94.

**CC:** Okay, and you mentioned the group's accomplishments but what would you say is the major accomplishment?

**LC:** Well, I think having called awareness to the history in Worcester and actually having this celebration commissioning a playwright to create the reenactment. We did this dramatization of the original event. Well, the original event was two days long, but Louisa Burns Bisogno did this dramatization where she pulled what was known with what had happened and what was said in the various newspaper articles and what was said in a 90-minute play and then we—which was then performed like three or four times. I think there was a dress rehearsal that was opened to Worcester public schools but there were three formal productions of it. And that was great, and that was great, and the script is still around and the History Project still has the right to perform it in Worcester. If it goes outside of Worcester then, you know then all these papers [laughs] but we can actually do it in Worcester and maybe one day we can do it in Worcester, maybe one day someone will do it. It's really cool, and then when so many actors and actresses—getting people who were professionals and some people who were able to use it to get their professional credentials to join the union. And people locally who didn't have speaking roles, but could dress up and be a part of it as a crowd and that was great, and that was great. There was so much with that.

**CC:** Wow, okay now that we are working with the fuller history with women that has been recorded in the past what should we include now?

**LC:** I think that in terms of Worcester, the many women who did take an active interest in the community, did give their time, and did try to make things better—make things better in their community and in their world—they did make an effort and so many women are forgotten. So, I don't think it can be just summed up in just a sentence or two. Another thing about the accomplishments of the History Project generally that are still visible in the Mechanics Hall was a project that a group of people organized and raised money for. Their wish was to get portraits of women in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to be in Mechanics Hall which [previously] had only men's portraits. Commissioning artists to do that was so cool. And so great to commission a playwright and to commission an artist to do that to write and get artists performing and everyone working, I think that's a great thing

**CC:** And just a bunch of random questions, but what was considered fashionable when you were a young woman?

**LC:** Earth Shoes! [laughs]

**CG:** What's that?

**LC:** Don't make me go to the fashions of the '70s.

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**CC:** We can skip that one

**LC:** Mini Skirts!

**CC:** Okay

**LC:** Earth Shoes! You don't know what Earth Shoes are? Earth shoes were like...

**CG:** Did they look like earth or something?

**LC:** No they I don't know why they were called Earth shoes, but the front of the shoe was up and the heel was down.

[Laughter]

**CG:** So, it's like the opposite of a high heel?

**LC:** Yeah yeah, let's look it up! Look up Earth shoes I'm sure we can find them, images of earth shoes. Yeah. Jeans and I remember when I was in elementary school there was a big deal when the teachers had their own little protest in order to wear pants. Pantsuits, Pantsuits.

**CC:** What were they supposed to wear before?

**LC:** Dresses and skirts

**CG:** As in ankle length? Or

**LC:** No, but ..

**CG:** So just long dresses?

**LC:** And skirts with nylons and one day, one day they all came in in pantsuits and it was like their own little elementary school protest and of course they were double knit and very nice, but pants suits and preppy clothes.

**CG:** Were you surprised?

**LC:** I remember it being a big deal, it was like a really big deal. So yeah and girls—I don't know or if it was just a mothers' rule but we were—girls were always supposed to wear dresses to school. You didn't wear pants to school until girls were like in the fourth grade or somewhere around there. This was in the early '70s.

**CC:** Wow, so after the protest were they allowed to wear pants?

**LC:** Yeah oh yeah! They wore pants, ever after! Or they could mix it up, I just remembered it being a big deal.

**CC:** Based on your life experience what advice would you give women today and in future generations?

**LC:** Mhm, I think education is really important. I know—I mean I have two daughters in their twenties and I know that it is really hard if you have to take out loans and that's a huge problem, like the cost of education is a huge problem, but I—and I don't know the answer to all of that, but I would hate to see us, the country or whatever, people in general, would go in the direction of the sort of not supporting education in one way or another. I think there has to be some kind of change. There has to be some way that we have to ensure that young people and even older people who want to finish school or go back to school, that there should be a way for them to do that and I think that that is just really important

**CC:** I agree!

**LC:** And I don't think that it has to be going to college for a particular job. That's fine, but I think education for its own sake is really important. It is about developing your mind or developing an understanding in the world and it's about learning about yourself better by maybe studying other people, other languages or studying the past. You learn more about yourself and that's really, really important and it's not about getting a particular job. I think if you are well educated maybe you can do better in whatever job you have and I think that's an important point also. Whatever job you have, take it to the fullest extent and learn, take it seriously. Work the hardest you can, learn everything you can from that job because that is the step to the next thing you do and who knows what that will be and in a way that is part of your education too, but education is just so important

**CG:** Okay, is there anything else? Besides education.

**LC:** As far as like practical, how to—I don't know. Not really. Maybe just be brave. Try things, try it—if you have a crazy idea try it and see what happens, tell other people and see if they can go on board or find other people who might agree with you and work together and I ...

**CC:** It sounds like you're experienced.

**LC:** No, I'm not saying because I am or I was feeling so brave ever, but just that looking back on something when you're really scared and thinking what am I doing and then you think well that was a really good thing that came out of it. You may be scared going into it, but coming out of it and what you learned and everything you got out of it can be really beneficial and you never know until you try and I think it's really important to try

it. You know, try it!

**CC:** Yeah definitely!

**LC:** See what happens, and if it doesn't work out and you're like, "Whoa, that wasn't what I was really expecting or hoping for."

**CC:** How do you feel about the choices you have made in your life, do you have any regrets?

**LC:** I guess I have to say no. I think that one thing leads to another so I wouldn't be where I am today, wherever that is, without the different choices I've had today. And I mean I had my first daughter when I was twenty two, and I was really young, and I dropped out of school. But I can't just say I regret that honestly, I mean I don't because that led to other things. It's not what somebody laid out as here as the perfect path for a young woman, you just deal with it. You never know where something's going to lead.

**CG:** Like what we've been learning in our class

**LC:** Like what?

**CG:** Like there are so many writings in our textbooks stating how women should be, how they should act, how they should look like back then.

**CC:** The size they should be

**LC:** And don't you just love it? How every ten or twenty years that changes! [Laughs] Like this is how you actually have to be, then later, no this is how you actually have to be.

**CG:** Yeah, We were talking about that last class on how a certain period in time where they had a certain model named Twiggy.

**LC:** Oh yeah!

**CG:** Then next thing you know they were talking about Marilyn Monroe and how she wasn't like, she wasn't skinny, but she was like ...

**LC:** Healthy looking?

**CG:** Yeah, she was.

**LC:** How Twiggy was so skinny and now how like Lady Gaga might have gained a couple pounds it's like wow.

**CG:** Like it's the end of the world

**LC:** [laughs] And it has to be endlessly talked about forever .

**CG:** It goes on for months actually!

**LC:** And then like Britney Spears shaved off her head! Like when I saw this I was like Yes! Do it! Shaved off her hair I'm sorry!

**CC:** I understand what you meant [laughs].

**CC:** Long interview [laughs]. Is that everything you've wanted to say?

**LC:** Thank you, I think the only thing I was thinking about with my parent's family, families, that they were very working class. My grandparents were pretty self-educated and my mother's father worked in paper mills and came from a farming background. And that he loved farming and they didn't make a lot of money, but he was a musician and he played the violin; he read a lot.

**CC:** Oh wow,

**LC:** Self-educated and my grandmother was really smart and she read a lot, you know they all read a lot. My father's father was a stonemason and did really that kind of labor, bricklaying, but he sang. He was very self-educated as well. His mother was a teacher for children in those days that would be two years and that would be thought of as Normal School or Teachers College. And they weren't highly educated, but in a sense they were really very pro education and self-educated and I think that had had an impact down through the generations. And education is important. It doesn't necessarily mean going to college. I think that's an excellent opportunity that a lot of people have now. There are ways to educate yourself and I think that in a way I would want to plug public libraries. And in terms of Worcester, that is a huge social and educational institution that had an enormous impact on the community and so many other communities. The public libraries are so important. One of my earliest memories included hanging out in the library. And ...

**CG:** Reading everything?

**LC:** Yeah and pulling books off the shelves. And, "What's this?" or "What's this?"—reading way over my head, you know, just like adult books. And I think libraries are important.

**CC:** Okay

**LC:** Thank you so much!