

Oral History Interview: Marcia Gallo

Interviewed by Keilina Heinz

Lyon Martin House Project

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SUMMARY KEYWORDS

women, lesbian, meeting, history, Del, DOB, feminist, Phyllis, pornography, partner, house, living room, lesbian community, San Francisco, activism, books.

ABSTRACT

Dr. Marcia Gallo, is an activist and professor of history. She met Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon when working for the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) to fight against state propositions to ban teaching about queer topics and also regulating pornography in the 1970s and '80s. Dr. Gallo discusses getting to know Martin and Lyon best when interviewing them for her book on the Daughters of Bilitis lesbian rights organization. She describes spending the most time in the living room and kitchen of their home. She also discusses Martin and Lyon's memories of earlier times in the home, including parties, closing the curtains of their picture window for protection, writing in the home office, etc. Dr. Gallo suggests that the home would make for an excellent writer's retreat for grant recipients. She concludes with a discussion of her different relationships with Martin and Lyon, and the ways those relationships evolved over time, particularly her relationship with Lyon after Martin passed away.

00:02

Keilina Heinz: Hello, Marcia

00:08

Marcia Gallo: Hi, hi there.

Keilina Heinz: Hi. How are you?

Marcia Gallo: I'm good. How is your name pronounced? Keilina?

Keilina Heinz: It's Keilina.

Marcia Gallo: Okay, beautiful name.

Keilina Heinz: Thank You!

06:24

Keilina Heinz: Well, how do you feel about getting started, does that work for you? Okay. Great. So I guess I'll just start with a question that's at the top of the list, which is, when did you first meet Del and Phyllis and how long after that did you first go to their home?

11:35

Marcia Gallo: Yeah, that's such a hard question. It should be very simple. Because they were they were mentors from a distance. I worked at the American Civil Liberties Union in San Francisco. When I first got to California from the East Coast. So that was about 1978. And the ACLU office was right in downtown San Francisco, and of course, they were in the middle of whatever was going on, in terms of civil rights and civil liberties, right. Including that year, the Proposition Six campaign, which would have banned you probably know this already would have banned even a discussion of gay anything in California public schools, right?

And we were very much of course against that proposition. And I started to know about Del and Phyllis, because of the activism that was happening around proposition six, right? So I didn't know them then, but I sort of knew of them, and kind of watched watch them in different public settings, right? We probably actually met in person also at the ACLU. About 1978? I would say in like, '83 Maybe when we were organizing around an effort by some feminists like Andrea Dworkin, to institute measures on city and state levels to ban pornography. So the ACLU, of course, was very nervous about giving the government power to decide what was pornographic and what wasn't what was acceptable and what lesson and Del and Phyllis came to a meeting at the ACLU that I as the organizer was calling as representatives of the LGBT community, lesbian community in particular, sort of understanding that one of the first things that would likely be banned under some sort of government definition of what was pornographic would be lesbian material. Because we've been through that in the '50s. Right?

Keilina Heinz: Right, right.

Marcia Gallo: They were there to sort of provide a really powerful and personal kind of like, "Hey, folks, we're with you on this. What can we do will mobilize the lesbian community. We know how dangerous this can be."

Keilina Heinz: Wow.

Marcia Gallo: That's how I first got to know them. And I was so intimidated because they were these legendary activists, and they were very demanding. So like, a day later, I get this phone call from Del saying, "I need every single piece of literature that you can find about these dials and get it to me right away", and I said, "okay, okay, okay"!

14:48

Keilina Heinz: Oh, wow.

Marcia Gallo: Yeah, because she was no nonsense. She was very businesslike and serious about her activism and she needed the material and I got it to her, I busted butt and made sure that she got what she needed. That first meeting, I don't think they really remembered it but I remember it vividly. It was very significant that they were willing to bring their clout at that time 1983-84 into a fight that had split the feminist community. When not all women agreed that that the government shouldn't be able to decide what was pornographic many women followed Andrea Dworkin, whom you might know about, who believe that pornography was harmful and certainly certain pornography did. So it was an interesting and tricky kind of moment, I think, for feminists to sort of come to terms but again, Del and Phyllis have always been civil rights and civil liberties people. They came out of that tradition and of that belief system. So for them, it was not a big leap, right. And they did bring their clout to the organizing of the lesbian community. And we were able to defeat the bills. Most of the bills in Sacramento at that time...At the same time, I was thinking about going to grad school.

Keilina Heinz: Oh okay.

16:23

Marcia Gallo: I was working full time. And so I'm going to San Francisco State to sort of finish up my BA which I had never finished up and I'm working with people there one of my most memorable classes was with Angela Davis, which was kind of phenomenal.

Keilina Heinz: Wow, yeah!

Marcia Gallo: And I thought, sort of thinking about grad school. And so I was sort of, not sure of a topic, but then my partner at the time, said, "Well, you know, nobody's really written about the Daughters of Bilitis". And I thought, okay, so now this is after a period where Del and Phil and I and my-then partner Carmen Vasquez had seen each other socially, right. So we had been at different events. We had been at different meetings, gatherings like that, but we weren't really close but she urged me to go to them and say, "I would like to write your history".... And it took everything I mean, I'm telling you, I practiced in the mirror. I was trying to approach and I finally did and I went over to their home, probably in about 19...Let's see, it was probably about 1990 by this time, when I went over and sat down and asked if they would work with me.

Marcia Gallo: And they said absolutely. And we sat in their living room, and I just remember being so nervous, and then they just relieved me of that nervousness almost instantly and said, "Yes, we'd love it. You know, the men haven't gotten it right. The men did not get it right. Could they have about the humble bio period? They don't understand. They don't get a claim. They don't understand that we were also fighting for women's liberation at the same time that we were activating lesbians", you know, and making "lesbian" not a dirty word. Right? So they were doing a dual and it was true. Most of the histories that had come out in the 80s really didn't understand the feminist aspects. What they were about, and let's say their feminism was deep rooted.

Keilina Heinz: Right, right.

Marcia Gallo: So that's how we first met.

Keilina Heinz: That is an amazing story, that's awesome!

Marcia Gallo: Yeah it was.

Keilina Heinz: So when you sat down in their living room and you said they kind of relieved you of your nervousness, was it just their words that relieved it for you? Or was the house itself and where you were sitting kind of a calming environment? Did they offer you a refreshment or anything?

19:22

Marcia Gallo: Um, I don't remember it being a calm environment. What I remember is sort of walls full of books. Of course, the wonderful, huge window which looked down, out, and over San Francisco were just stunning. So because it was a time I have you been there and--have you seen the house?

Keilina Heinz: I saw a virtual tour, but I haven't physically gone myself, but I know it's a tiny little place.

Marcia Gallo: Yeah, it's so small. It's like a cottage, right? But the biggest part of it is the living room. Right. So you walk in and you walk up and up and get to the front door and it's usually Phyllis who opens it, and you get out and come on in and you go in and the first thing you notice is this phenomenal view of the city and just how exquisite it is. The next thing I noticed was all the books and the artwork and the commendations and the letters from people. I mean, the house was full of memorabilia, so it was both books, view, and then their personal stuff. Their lives were on the walls. And so every time they got something from a friend or colleague whether they were famous or not, you know, a bit way and so you were surrounded sort of by their life, and by their connections and their interests. All around, and they had very, very, very rich interest.....So it was more stimulating than it was calm.

Keilina Heinz: Wow. Yeah, that would make sense then.

Marcia Gallo: Yeah. Yeah. And being in their presence was a little bit intimidating at that point. Because here I am asking, you know, "Will you will you do this with me", basically. And they had been very, sort of...I don't want to say turned off by historians, but as I said, they didn't think that people understood what it was they were really all about. So I think the fact that I was a woman, I think the fact that I was a lesbian, I think the fact that we had already had an experience of organizing and activism together probably made them more open than they might have been if I were just a stranger, right? So, that's when we met I remember being just excited and nervous and thrilled, and Phyllis got up and went up a few stairs to their little office, which was right outside their tiny little bathroom and

bedroom, which was right outside the kitchen and she pulled out an old school Rolodex file with all the names and addresses and phone numbers of the women that they had worked with over the years.

Keilina Heinz: Oh, wow. How organized!

Marcia Gallo: How organized and how generous. Yeah, “Here's who you have to talk to” she said. “It wasn't just us, it was never just us so you have to talk to all these women”. And I was like, “Okay”! And so we agreed that I would write a letter that would introduce myself and let people know that I had their okay.

Keilina Heinz: Mhm.

Marcia Gallo: So they wrote a letter also about that, you know, “please give Marcie, what she needs and...”

Keilina Heinz: Oh, that's so kind.

Marcia Gallo: Yeah, it was very kind and the trust that they....I mean they knew me a bit, they did. They had seen, they'd see me work. You know, they knew I wasn't a fly by night. They knew I came, and I was a serious person, but still, they really gave over to me a lot of their life's work.

Keilina Heinz: Yeah, they seem to have trusted you. Which must have been really flattering and wonderful for you, as well.

Marcia Gallo: And a huge, huge sort of reminder that I was taking on something really important, right? I couldn't not do it right. I had to do the best job I could. Yeah, and then they also they just kept...What I remember about that first meeting is them emphasizing that it was not just them, that too often they were the ones who were identified as the founders and they said “there were four couples that first very first meeting. Some of them are not here anymore, they're dead or others don't want to talk to anybody, but some will. But you can't just say it was us. It was a group that was always a collective effort”. And they were very serious about that, which framed my thinking. And I think I ended up doing about 35 or so, personal interviews.

Keilina Heinz: Wow.

Marcia Gallo: Yeah. Yeah, oral histories with women who had been part of the deal, the DOB from the very beginning when it started in 55 and then on up until you know, the mid 90s. Boston chapter, that kept going and going into the mid 90s.

Keilina Heinz: During our research, I thought you did a really good job. I read part of the DOB book.

Marcia Gallo: Oh good, good. I hope you liked it.

24:49

Keilina Heinz: Oh, it was lovely. And you did a wonderful job emphasizing the fact that there were other people that help start it and I didn't know that, prior to reading those chapters in your book.

Marcia Gallo: Thank you. Yeah. I am very glad it came through. That was very important to them and to me. Yeah, because it was such an interesting mix of women. The other thing they were very clear about was that there it wasn't perfect that there were there were problems. There were issues that arose, you know, in that, you know, like any organization and people bring their stuff.

Keilina Heinz: Totally, yeah.

Marcia Gallo: Yeah. So sometimes things didn't go the way that you wanted them to. Mostly, they had maintained connections with dozens and dozens of people. She was in tears and shared those with me. So, I was real privileged.

Keilina Heinz: Yeah, that's really lovely.

Marcia Gallo: Yeah, and that house you know, the house, so I was back into the house probably. Oh, God, dozens of times. I was in and out of there a lot.

Keilina Heinz: So did you socialize there? Because I know, they had a lot of, you know, socialization kind of parties and get togethers which is so, so crazy to think about considering the size of that home...But how wonderful that they had a place for people to feel safe to socialize and to dance and to just be themselves. Which is obviously what kick started this entire project— is just how enamored Don was, and you know, the, the foundation of the Lyon-Martin house. All of us were and are enamored by that. And so that's obviously the point of these interviews is to you know, get to know kind of how it was for you. And I guess Yeah, I guess really just for you, when you did socialize there. So do you have any special stories or memories?

Marcia Gallo: Well, one of the things about the house that was interesting, of course, as I mentioned, what were those huge picture windows? Right, right. So one of the things I remember them saying was that in the early years, and you may have heard this story already, they would cover the window so that the women who were coming to a meeting would be not so worried about exposure, right? That they were just going to visit a friend or going to a house party or whatever. But I never saw the windows covered because by the time well by the time I'm meeting with them, right? It's the 90's right? 2000's You know, it was it was not a thing anymore. So but what had kept happening is more and more and more sort of tributes, right. So it was like I would go over to have coffee or to sit and talk with them or

to take them out. I often in their later years, my partner, Anne and I would go over and we would take both of them out to lunch. Oh, yeah, they so they want to do get out of there! They were like, “We're here all the time!” But I also remember, you know, the living room, of course, is where you always began right? And sometimes we would make our way up into the kitchen because they loved their kitchen. The kitchen was this tiny little area that had this like breakfast nook and I assume it's still like this, that had sort of a semi-circle, kind of padded seats that were tucked in under windows right and outside was the garden. They love that space. The problem was when you would go in to sit down with them there. You couldn't find a spot to sit up because there were newspapers, and I had to kind of move out of the way.

Keilina Heinz: Mhm, okay.

Marcia Gallo: So we would have coffee, we would have lunch we would we would start at their place and then go out and I don't remember too many like parties where there were a lot of people there. I think I mostly was there with them, you know, with both me with both of them or me and my partner with them and hanging out and having a drink or having coffee or a meal and then just talking.

Keilina Heinz: Oh, that's nice. Yeah. So more intimate gatherings with them.

Marcia Gallo: Yeah.

Keilina Heinz: That's kind of even better, actually, for bonding purposes really.

Marcia Gallo: Right. I mean, they treated— and then when they came to our home as well. I have this wonderful photo of them in the backyard of the house, I lived in Berkeley before I moved to New York, and they came to a goodbye party. I can share that photo with you.

Keilina Heinz: Oh, I love that. Thank you, and thanks for offering to share those photos because we would love to see those!

Marcia Gallo: Of course.

Keilina Heinz: So I did want to ask about *The Ladder* [Magazine]. So I know you're a professor and when you teach other people about the origin of *The Ladder* magazine and the DOB and the book that you wrote, how do you paint the picture of the house? And Del and Phyllis? How do you describe all of this to your students?

Marcia Gallo: Well, as you already know, the house provided a safe space for women to come together and talk about whatever. Their lives, loves, fears, and their work. And so it became more than a home. Right? It was a home base. It was a home that enabled people to start a process of discovery and

coming to know and be more of who they wanted to be. It was the social space that was and you already know this. That they would have parties and dances and what always amazed me is that in the early issues of *The Ladder*, of course, they would put their address on there. What they didn't know, was who was reading that newspaper! I mean, they were really...I would always say to them, "You are so lucky some nut didn't..."

Keilina Heinz: Yeah!

Marcia Gallo: Right?! And maybe that's our 21st century sort of like mindset, right? But it was dangerous, what they were doing then, but they didn't... they felt like you know, we just we wanted people to come and to feel secure and safe and we knew that our home would provide that. You know, if you've been there, you know that you have to kind of scale the mountain to get there. That it's removed from... you have to really want to get into that house. Right? Especially in a San Francisco winter where it's pouring.

Keilina Heinz: Yeah.

Marcia Gallo: You gotta really want to get there. And so you know, that may have kept people away who were not good people but.. they really sold their home and in fact they wanted a home, I remember when they told me the story of when they were in an apartment in the Castro [District] before it became the gay Mecca. And they were looking for a home and they love that one because of the windows, because of the view from the living room. And as they started the DOB and started to bring people together, that was the natural place. Now later, it became they became aware that for some women, it was easier to go to a public meeting that was held in an office because then they could just say that they were going to business women's gathering. So they did both. They started to sort of use the house for kind of intimate gatherings for friends and parties and stuff like that. They would also start to either secure space with some of the other small gay groups at the time magazine, or they would rent space in a hotel or whatever, like a meeting. So they did both, which I always thought was kind of interesting. So they were really trying to provide space. And the idea that they were so conscious of space of course is directly connected to the fact that there were so few spaces for gay people to be sacred. Right to the bars were getting raided. If you were a woman you could lose your kids, you could do that again, you could lose your job. So safety, and yet the need for coming together, that was what they were always trying to figure out. And so I think that, especially in the first, I'd say five years or so of the DOB, that was essential. Then in 1960 they started having conferences in public spaces, right.

Keilina Heinz: Right, that's what I was reading.

Marcia Gallo: Yeah, right, which is also really bold! Advertising it, I just think they blew my mind. When I lived in New York, I walked by in Herald Square, there's a hotel that they had that they wanted to have

a conference in, in 1964 and they weren't allowed to because the FBI had gotten a tip from an anti-deal saying, "These women are subversive don't rent to them". And the FBI got in touch with the hotel and told them that. So I mean, they went through all kinds of crazy stuff, but it was interesting their thing around private public space, and how they balanced the time and the purpose for the gathering. So when they went public, it was both to encourage women who felt sacred in that setting, but it was also the start to publicize that they existed and that they were forced to change.

Keilina Heinz: Yeah, I which I know some of the other DOB members weren't necessarily on board with that, per your book.

Marcia Gallo: Yeah, yeah. But others were and it helped them recruit too which was amazing.

Keilina Heinz: Which I'm glad, because you know, look at the legacy that they've left behind.

Marcia Gallo: Talking about their use of space right and as being the primary, initial and ongoing location for their both private and public lives. Because it was also a very private space, right. So I never was in the bedroom. I was in the kitchen a lot. So after the living room, I would say that I was probably more often in the kitchen. And then you walked through the study to get to the kitchen so and then the study of course is where Phyllis did her famous, you know, here's my rolodex with the names and addresses of you know, 50 people that I've known since 1955. And here you go and it was like, "Oh, my god". So, but they still it was it was both-the other thing it was of course was an office. There was this workspace. They got a book there they wrote numerous, numerous articles and did interviews and you know, organized for different, beyond the DOB right. So for political parties for candidates for different feminist gatherings and activities. I mean, so they never stopped and you know, it's interesting that they both were journalists and saw themselves that way. So writing was really significant and, and it makes sense to me and made sense then, and it makes even more sense now that the first thing that they would do is start a newsletter. Because that was a way to communicate.

Keilina Heinz: Right.

Marcia Gallo: They sent it to every kind of liberal to left organization that they could come up with. Yeah, and some of them then passed it on or made it available to people that they knew or saw. So, but the house was the center of their lives, no question about it.....And I was thinking about, I flipped over the questions, and I was thinking about the last question, because...

Keilina Heinz: That's exactly what I was about to ask.

Marcia Gallo: Yes, no, it really gave me pause and I was talking to my partner Anne, who got to know both of them very, very well. She and I both were like, "Well, we know that the house is landmarked, right? So good."

Keilina Heinz: Thankfully.

42:09

Marcia Gallo: But we also know that the person who purchased the property because there's the house and then there's the land next to them, right. And the person who purchased the property has been fairly agreeable to leaving the house but is building on the other property. That's my understanding. Is that correct?

Keilina Heinz: Yes, that's correct.

Marcia Gallo: Okay. So that kind of makes me think, realistically. I don't... I wonder, like my first thought was a museum and then I thought, well, it does, would it lend itself to having a lot of people in and out all the time? Yeah, maybe not. So then I started thinking about it as a retreat center.

Keilina Heinz: Oh!

Marcia Gallo: Because they were writers and they insisted on in addition to being very public and very people oriented and loving to have people around them. They also knew how to carve time out to do their work. And that meant quiet. Right. And so, I started thinking about the house as a place where people could be could apply to go to do projects, writing.

Keilina Heinz: That is a really great idea.

Marcia Gallo: And that way, it was not, you know, upset, potentially the folks next door, right? Because it wouldn't be a steady stream of people in and out it would be one, one or maybe two people at a time. Who would stay for a while and they grow and they just like me, there are so few retreat centers in and it's a beautiful location. It's kind of perfect for one or two people. It's not great for a whole big crowd of folks.

Keilina Heinz: Right.

Marcia Gallo: So that's, that was that's my answer to your last question.

Keilina Heinz: I really like that. I didn't even, I never would have thought of that. And I guess also being you know, if your idea were to end up becoming what this would turn in to, I think it would kind of preserve the house a bit better, right? If there wasn't so much foot traffic right.

Marcia Gallo: Yeah, exactly.

Keilina Heinz: So that's preservation friendly, too. Right?

Marcia Gallo: Exactly. Yeah. Great point. That's a great point. And it wouldn't have to change much right? It wouldn't because they never really did much to make it modernized. I mean it kind of was what it was. Yeah. The other thing is that Del--well they both loved the garden, but Del really love the garden. And they spent time there--and she and I shared a love of gardening. And so that was the other thing I thought about in terms of not having a lot of people in and out, but it would be wonderful to also be able to create like a memorial garden area as well. So those are my thoughts.

Keilina Heinz: What a great answer. I can't wait to hear what Don thinks of that.

45:20

Marcia Gallo: I have no idea. What are their plans in your work?

Keilina Heinz: No, no. So that's kind of the point of the project. Don, you know, shared with us is that they're unsure of what it's going to be preserved for and what it's going to turn into or become. And since it's such a historical landmark for not only San Francisco in general, but for the LGBTQ community, you know, it deserves more than a landmark. It deserves something else and so we're kind of helping out. These interviews are supposed to kind of hopefully, find a direction for that.

Marcia Gallo: Yeah. great. Good, good.

46:05

Keilina Heinz: Yeah, and let's see. So we kind of...I see you've answered most of these questions all on your own, which is just great, it went nice and organic, because...

Marcia Gallo: I was laughing out loud at question number 8: "What furniture changed?" Not much! [laughing]

Keilina Heinz: Yeah, I kind of figured that because, you know, Don's like, "This house looks the same and I'm like, Well, I'm sure nothing really has changed. But yeah, that is funny.

Marcia Gallo: Really funny when and only when, like when something broke, they replaced it. ... and you asked about the last time I went [to the house].

Keilina Heinz: Yes.

Marcia Gallo: It's kind of bittersweet. Yeah, It was a few years after Del died and I was still keeping up with Phyllis. And by that point, she had folks coming in and sort of caring for her.

Keilina Heinz: That's what I've read.

Marcia Gallo: Yeah. Which I know, you know, and, and so, you know, it was this delicate dance around, not making her feel infantilized or like she wasn't still the force that she always was. But also recognizing that you know, she really needed help. So I would call one of the caretakers and ask about making a date and they would say okay, now the calendar is clear now call Phyllis and ask about the day the jungle didn't do. And they would say when you arrive, let us know call from the street. And before you come up, I would do that and then we would come to the door and Phyllis would answer and she would have probably no knowledge that they had already been notified that someone was coming in really, right?

Keilina Heinz: Right.

Marcia Gallo: Now I must have I can't--untold numbers of hours right in that in that house in that living room, in particular. Interviewing them double checking, looking at photographs, scanning photographs, and then after the book came out, sitting with them and just sort of hanging out and having fun and talking politics and all of those times whether they were for work or for you know play or just relaxation continued even after Del passed away. But Phyllis was much more delicate, I guess is the best way to put it and no one ever would have referred to her as delicate, but that's how I saw her and then she is however, she was still you know spunky and sprightly etc. So I would usually take her out. So I would go to the house. We would talk for a little bit and then I'd say let's go down and go get a bite, and it never failed. That no matter how many conversations we had had, no matter how many interviews I had done there, that she would always— and I remember this clearly driving in my car, and she looked out the window and started to recount this story about her work at Glide Church. Never heard before. And I said, “Phyllis! Why didn't you tell me that story before when I was writing the book?! [Laughing] I can't believe you never, you never told me this great story about how you were the lesbian. You had a lesbian in charge on your desk and Glide church back in, you know, 80s! What! Why didn't you tell me that before?” So that's what she would do. Her memory would get triggered by our ride through San Francisco. Or whether we're at lunch, she would get a memory and just start to tell these wonderful stories. So they were delightful, but also a little frustrating because she could have shared it eight years earlier, but yeah. But that was one of my memories. And you asked me Oh, the last time I went to the house.

Keilina Heinz: Yes.

50:39

Marcia Gallo: It was one of those times. Because I was on the East Coast. I didn't get there as often as I did when I lived in San Francisco and Berkeley, right. So I had gotten a call. I think it was probably about 2000, I think it was probably 2009 or 10. Might have been the last time that I went over to pick her up. Wow...yeah. So I haven't been back since. And, yeah, but um, I was part of the, sort of lent my name to

the efforts to keep it [the house] and I'm really grateful. But what I loved about that last time, it said it was full of young people were taking care of her wonderful, loving her and whom she adored and it was so cool that the kind of work that she had done her whole life. She was still carrying on because you know, they were hearing her stories. They were caring for her and she was educating them now. It's just so cool to see that the cross-generational stuff, that is really cool.

Keilina Heinz: And we listened to a podcast that some of her caretakers were a part of and they said the same thing. That they didn't look at it as a job. They looked at it as a bonding experience and as an educational experience, because that's what it was. And that was an emotional podcast it made all of us dewy eyed, so to speak, but she sounded like a lovely woman. And my last question, I guess about this, which Yeah, I guess it works with the last question. I don't know If you'll have an answer to this, I don't know if anyone I interview will, but did you had a specific or stronger connection or bond to either Del or Phyllis? Or did you connect with both of them equally for different reasons?

52:58

Marcia Gallo: Well, you know, in a way, it's hard to answer that because it was Phyllis who lived longer. Right?

Keilina Heinz: And you were just sharing all those wonderful stories with me that you that time you guys had together.

Marcia Gallo: Yeah. Yeah, it was it was. But I think I would have to say that they individually and as a couple they really balanced each other in an amazing way. And they were so different. So they get they get sort of typed I think is this sort of duo, but they were they were very singular as well. Right? So they were individuals who had this phenomenal bond. But some of my you know, they would like, contradict one another and that would be in the middle of an interview and the tape would be running and I'd be asking some important question, I thought, and Del would land launch into some story about it and Phyllis was like, "That's not right, that's not the way it went!" And then you think, "Oh who am I gonna believe what's going to happen here?!" And I'm like, "okay, okay, okay". Let's come back to them. And so they were also people and they were a long-term couple and, you know, they had their stuff. I could never get them to talk about sex. That was that was not even like, I tried once, and they both glared at me. And I thought, all right, yeah. Okay. Just seems like a natural question to me! Yeah. So I think I probably bonded with Phyllis a little bit more because she lived longer, right. So she felt she reminded me a lot of my mother. They had a birthday, maybe even the same birthday. They were very close in terms of their birth dates, in November and they both were very sharp and funny and very charming. And also could be very difficult. Del could be a little bit more rough, and was sometimes more business-like, right? And sort of, this is what we're here for. Let's get it done. But we always had a good time going out with them. And then there was the sort of work selves and then their fun selves, right? And the two didn't always connect, you know, they would be one way, and then we would go out to dinner

and of course be a different way when I'd be interviewing them for the book or for an article, right. So the other interesting thing, of course, is their family and I know you know about Kendra?

Keilina Heinz: Yes.

Marcia Gallo: And Eugene and the grandkids. So they also had this kind of normal life. It was interesting sort of, you know, when I first was dealing with them, I was so intimidated because they were icons right, right. Yeah. And then over the years and as the years went on, they were also just kind of regular folks. And yeah, they built this phenomenal movement, but they also you know, had heartaches and all that, and troubles and everything. I guess, if I really had to, I think probably Phyllis, in part because she felt so familiar in many ways and she, they met my parents, when my parents came to visit, and my folks had a hard time accepting my lesbianism. And I purposely invited Del and Phyllis over to meet my folks.

Keilina Heinz: Wow.

57:13

Marcia Gallo: And they came knowing they had a job to do. I Phyl and my mom kind of bonded, and Del sort of took my dad and it kind of worked it.

Keilina Heinz: Wow.

Marcia Gallo: Yeah, so they were also willing to do that.

Keilina Heinz: That's amazing. What an incredible story.

57:38

Marcia Gallo: My father was like, "So those two they're like a couple?" And I was like "For like, decades, kind of like you and Mom!" My dad was a working-class Italian guy who just could not wrap his head around a lot of this stuff, especially when it came to me, but got there.

Keilina Heinz: I'm so glad. How amazing, so they truly were a significant part of your life. Not only professionally, but personally.

Marcia Gallo: Yes, absolutely.

Keilina Heinz: That's wonderful. Gosh, I am so happy with this interview. I'm so glad you're my first one too. So glad I hope the rest are a little bit. I'm so all over the windows. Again. This is exactly how I wanted it to go. I didn't want it to be scripty and, you know, I wanted it to be exactly this and again, being an oral historian yourself, you. You know what you're doing. So thank you.

58:35

Marcia Gallo: And anything that needs clarity or you want to come back around to you know, I'm here for you.

Keilina Heinz: Thank you so much, Professor Gallo. This has been a true pleasure.

Marcia Gallo: Please, call me Marcy.

Keilina Heinz: Thank you, Marcy. This has truly, truly been a pleasure. I'm really enjoying all of these stories.

Marcia Gallo: Me too. I've loved talking with you.

58:55

Keilina Heinz: Awe, really? Oh, thank you. Thank you so much.

Marcia Gallo: You're excellent at it and your questions are wonderful. And I've just loved your whole feel, you have made this easy. Thank you.

Keilina Heinz: Thank you very much. So did you. This was again such a pleasure and I will definitely follow up if I have any questions you know about the interview. Otherwise, I will send you the official transcript of our interview.

Marcia Gallo: Great.

Keilina Heinz: Well, thank you so much, Marcy, and I hope you have a great rest of the day and a good travel day tomorrow.

Marcia Gallo: Thank you, and don't hesitate to get back in touch! Bye bye.