Luca C.: My name is Luca Caminati and I am Associate Professor of Film Studies at the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema at Concordia University in Montreal. Today's Friday, March 16th, 2018; and I am here at the Sheraton Hotel in Toronto as part of the SCMS annual conference to talk to professor Emerita Marcia Landy. Marcia is Distinguished Professor Emerita in Film Studies and English at Pittsburgh University with a secondary affiliation in Italian and Film Studies.

Thank you Marcia for being here and for talking to us. This project has been collecting stories, memories, thoughts from scholars who have done a lot for the film of film and media, so I'm very happy to be here and talking to you today.

So, should we start from the end? Do you want to tell us how you got an honorary PhD, Doctorate honorous causa from the University of Stockholm?

Marcia L.: I'd love to tell it to you; I'll tell you why. It started all with an invitation to Turku. A young man who ultimately, is very interested in Pasolini and also Deleuze, I should add that, but, you see because of you and Pasolini. And he came to visit with us. His name was Jukka Sivonen and for some reason...he sat in my classes and he became attached. You know, intellectually. And he stayed for a while and that was fine. And I said goodbye as I do to students and so forth.

And then I had an invitation to go and spend a week lecturing in Turku. And that was the period of time when I was still working on the theories and writings of Gramsci. Which I've never left. But I don't want to be unfair to Deleuze, but Gramsci was always there as a very basis.

And so I did work for a week with different people from around, not just you know how they do up there, Finns and Swedes and Danes. And developing some kind of thinking around the way in which, I don't think I was that influenced by Mouffe and LeClau. I was still interested in Gramsci and how to read that.

And also because a dear friend of mine, Joseph Budichitich, was really a mentor of mine and had been working himself on the Gramsci. And I also became a member of the editorial board for Joseph Fronchese.

So what happened was, that lead to my getting invited in scores of places. Like just suddenly became...me, a poor little girl from Cleveland, Ohio. And loving film. And going to the movies and actually not being able to see many Italian films, but I had studied Italian.

So the next step was to be invited to Stockholm. And I did seminars there. I became sort of the Madre Mia of Stockholm. I loved it. I'm still friendly with them. I think the award, the honor, which was done in the same hall as the Nobel Prize is, was as much for my contributions, which is good, as a teacher, as the work. Maybe more for those contributions than the work. So there I am and I got a ring for it. I should advertise my ring to you.

Luca C.: So you're married now.

Marcia L.: I'm married.

Luca C.: To the University of Stockholm.

Marcia L.: I've taken an academic marriage to the university. A poor bourgeois who got lost. Anyway, so that's how...that was somewhere… that happened late in my career, the honorary degree, because I continued to lecture there. But, I had a long road, so...

Luca C.: Well let start. I want to ask you how... because I'm looking at your CV. And you had a very sound literary education. You wrote your MA thesis on *Tess of the d'Ubervilles*.

Marcia L.: Right.

Luca C.: I think even before the film came out. The Polanski film.

Marcia L.: Oh yes I go far back into a nameless era.

Luca C.: And you wrote your PhD dissertation on Milton, *Samson Agonistes*.

Marcia L.: Yes.

Luca C.: So you went from sort of this very traditional education in English Literature to Film. So we want to know how that happened.

Marcia L.: I think I have to say something in behalf of my poet friend John Milton. Even more than *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. It was...I was just taken with the various ways - and I later got involved in British cinema which helped because I worked with the culture - but as far as the way I saw Milton, I never realized it at the time but I was always, you know, just posturing. Because I'm a great melodramatist. And posturing, I think, as a radical. I did a lot of stuff. I mean, you know, I was involved in Marxist groups.

Luca C.: So this is Rochester 1962 when you got your PhD?

Marcia L.: Yes. I spent I think four years there. I wrote it quickly. I worked a lot at the Colgate Rochester Divinity School because I was very interested in the notion of convergence, conversion and Milton was ideal for that. And I tried to link him in a more populous way with a lot of the other Puritans. Because people liked to turn him into a great English poet. Or else they don't want to see him at all. So when I finished there, I applied for...I won't go into my period in the south, that's interesting too.

Luca C.: What did you do in the south? Just briefly.

Marcia L.: I was there teaching government.

Luca C.: Okay.

Marcia L.: That was...cause I was married to a man who was a social worker, and he got a job there and I went. They needed somebody to teach. So I taught government. I taught German, which is one of my languages. I taught every other week. One week for the workers who were in the mills. Then the next week for the others.

Luca C.: Where were you?

Marcia L.: In Spartanburg, South Carolina. One of the favorite seats of the Ku Klux Klan. I had some dealings with that. They used to see me as I would get off the bus and give me leaflets and so forth. Life in Spartanburg in those years, cause we're going back to that year of...was really kind of scary. I started work with the American Friends Society. I was doing a lot of work against testing, nuclear testing.

Luca C.: Right. Yeah.

Marcia L.: I also...part of it was self interest. I was fearing the strontium-90. I had a child. I thought I should do something. There wasn't anyone around there who was political, the way, like I wanted.

Luca C.: Right. Where you part of any group? Any political groups at the time?

Marcia L.: Not down in Spartanburg, South... The American Friends Service Committee, yes. But that was, no. That was when we up, actually I'm turned around cause that was when we went up to Rochester. And I remember going to a Commie group. The Socialist Workers Party. And I went there and I thought, oh goodie, until I went to the meeting and I decided, I don't think I have a good background for this.

Either they wanted to do something. But only recently I did read biographies about that so I discovered again, I'm...I have this split personality where...and probably why I've written about the history and why I've written about melodrama. And the split is between, what I call autodidactacism. Going into areas and wanting to learn something. And I've tried to center things around questions of history. That's the link to Milton, to Gramsci and I think to some of this work on the left.

I never joined the party. Because I never met anyone who was interesting enough. I was friendly with a lot of folks. And I lived...I grew up...I might as well...I think I've said this in Allen O'Leary's interview that he asked me. I grew up in a children's home. And while I was there the people, the head resident there, I was very fortunate, he was a...we won't call it immigrant, he was an exile.

Luca C.: Right.

Marcia L.: From Germany. And he was a Marxist. And I was a nasty girl. I was kind of dirty and feisty.

Luca C.: Feisty.

Marcia L.: And he used to invite me over and listen to the Spanish Civil War records and give me books to read. So that was when I decided I'd cut school sometimes and go downtown and read the kind of books I liked and listen to music.

Luca C.: So do you think your movement from literature to film was also because of the politics. Because film at that time spoke more politics.

Marcia L.: Absolutely. But you see I was hired at the University of Pittsburgh to teach 17th Century. And I did for a while. I didn't object except when I discovered that the students weren't that interested in it and that no...but that actually I'm not blaming Milton. I was blaming myself. Cause my colleague McCabe, I used to substitute when he wasn't there. And there is a certain way that you can teach Milton. They may not like to read it cause its hard. Just as with Shakespeare but yes, so...It was a time of ferment at that period.

Luca C.: Right. This is sixty-

Marcia L.: Sixties, yeah-

Luca C.: Eight.

Marcia L.: Yeah went there in sixty seven, that's sixty eight. Yeah, the fateful year. I got very involved in the Peace and Freedom Center. And I met some wonderful colleagues who were in the history department and that was a good outreach for me too because it got me together between the intellectual treatments of history and the politic uses. Like David Montgomery who now is deceased but he was a major labor historian colleague.

So I started talking with people. I had an Italian friend, Mariolena Salvatore, who was...she was a graduate student first and got a PhD. And I discovered I wasn't really exploiting my sense that I lived in the world with film.

Luca C.: Right, right.

Marcia L.: And she was interested in film. And we had hired Bill Judson and the Carnegie Museum and there was that whole riches of avant garde film, American film. I used to go religiously. And he did the best retrospectives, ever.

Luca C.: Where they at the University of Pittsburgh or-

Marcia L.: No, they were at the Carnegie Museum.

Luca C.: Oh okay. Of course.

Marcia L.: But he was the other joined appointment between the two.

Luca C.: Right. So how do you get from Milton, then you start getting interested in film, also because of the politics that were around-

Marcia L.: So that's the connection with Milton. That I was not in a fundamen...well he was never a fundamentalist. I was very interested always in religion, not purely from the ideological but from...I used to read a lot about Jesuits. And so it seemed to me an intellectual tradition that was alien to me but I wanted to learn how people thought that way.

And then I discovered I could see biopics, I could see experiments. I started reading in film. And I talked, I met Bill Judson and also there was a man by the name of Bruce Goldstein, who did a lot in film and psychology.

Luca C.: Oh okay.

Marcia L.: So we got together and said, why don't we establish some courses in film. So I taught contemporary European cinema cause I think I was always more interested in that. Hollywood, like salt of the Earth, yes. Or...you know I do like Hollywood. I'm not knocking it. But we got together to think about what that course would be, Mariolena and I. And we taught it a couple of years and it was good. It was purely...it, but then the question of my getting very interested in Italian film and culture came up. I knew about Gramsci.

But I was invited to be...to write essays for Boundary Two. Which you know is Paul Bové's balliwick, and Jo Buttigieg and the others the core.

So they invited me in and I started to write on Gramsci because I wanted to know more. And they allowed me to... because it didn't seem... it was egregious and I had good editors who were quite intellectual about that. And I needed, not needed as a defenseless person, but I thought to help what I was doing. So I did that. And I also got very act...I don't know how I did all this, I'm sure I must seem like a liar, but I also helped organize a women's studies program and a film studies program. But the one my heart was really in was the study in comparative literature. And I did that with people in the Spanish department and in the German department and French. And that didn't last very long. Complex programs either go or they-

Luca C.: Yeah. Explode.

Marcia L.: Explode. And so...-

Luca C.: So when you started teaching, you didn't have any training in teaching film? You were a total autodidact.

Marcia L.: Yeah.

Luca C.: Okay. And so how did you get to...your first book came out, I have it written right there.

Marcia L.: Oh we're gonna get to the fascism.

Luca C.: Yeah. So you write your first book not on any of the things that you have studied at this point. Cause the first book is called Fascism in Italy: The Italian Commercial Cinema.

Marcia L.: Yeah.

Luca C.: 1930, 1943-

Marcia L.: Fascism in Film, yeah.

Luca C.: And it was 18...1986. So its a big jump.

Marcia L.: It is.

Luca C.: So how did you get there?

Marcia L.: Hard work I guess. I wrote a lot of papers. And I did a lot of writing. When I say I'm an autodidact, I was like I think like a lot of people at that point. Because there weren't many film studies programs and so what I did was read the fundamentals. Of course I read my Benjamin. I read my Munsterberg. I read my Kracauer.

I then discovered, I knew there were Soviet films for goodness sakes way back when. And I don't guess I never, I've ever been, had done any work with that that I can remember but I think that I got very interested, more interested recently in contemporary Russian cinema. Which now appears in my most recent book. But I was able to work into the wee hours. I was a workaholic. And in between, I didn't really do administration. I was never an administrator. But I was pretty good at writing programs. So I wrote up a good study of, a good program for women's studies. And the film studies, Bill, Bruce and I wrote it together. And it took us only a couple of years. And as a consequence of it, we hired two people, which was a great victory. We hired Lucy Fischer who you know.

Luca C.: Right.

Marcia L.: And as been a great asset and great comrade, intellectual so forth. And Dana Polan. So we had a core then. And I had people to learn and talk to and I think one of the nice things, and I also I did some film making with my partner. What I felt was that in those early days of film. Both academically and also in film making, people were marvelous. I think a brave new world with such people in it. And of course to go back to the point that you made, what was important to me I think was, I was very interested in political film making.

Luca C.: Right. What interests me about this book is that you decide not to write about the auteurs that at the time were shown in cinematheques, but you decide to write about commercial cinema.

Marcia L.: Yeah.

Luca C.: So how, why did you decide to do that?

Marcia L.: Well because that was where my expertise was, largely. Over the years from the time I lived in the children's home and went to see films to, ad infinitum. And also because I think that I was kind of a, not a person of the streets, I don't have to worry about that. But I was kind of identified with people of my class.

Luca C.: Okay.

Marcia L.: I knew about class, you know. You know I started learning from Fritz Mayer at the children's home. My eyes were open. I read my Marx. So I think the, it was the same with the British. I know there are all the British classics. But one of the things I enjoyed very much about British cinema, which is the other book I published at the same time with Princeton, was that nobody liked British cinema, really. Now its exploded. Although I talked with a woman yesterday in I.B. Tauris and she said they're not publishing so many. When I started it was like oh, again, that's been my life, you know.

This area... because I remembered... can I take one second on this because I do remember my movie experience. Which is why I'm interested in the politics and in the relation between the viewer, and the text as best as I can, and the history.

My father took me... He used to pick me up, you know because I had no mother. And he would see me once a week. And he too me to my first movie. Now he was a...he's a Russian. A Russian speaker so he didn't have much track with films. So he left me in the movies. And it was a film called, I'll never forget, *Three Sisters*. And oh melodrama. I sat through the first one, my father came in and tapped and it was, no i can't go! I sat through three sittings of that. And I think I felt you know that people now who begin... and when I started to talk about it, I understood where that excess came from. In that, I felt an intimate attachment to that kind. But you see it conflicted with the ideological stuff. You know there's the real thing between the intellectuals and tension about feeling. But yeah, that's...

Luca C.: So you would say that this is the film that did it for you? Or if it...can you maybe name-

Marcia L.: No I'll you another thing that did it for me. This is again, I'm not going to come out as very glamorous and nice, but that's alright. I had an Italian teacher and we had a good attendance in the class. I took it for several years. And he was very mean. Not to me, because I wasn't from Sicily. And he used to walk around the room and point his finger at people about that, that's not language, that's not language. What are you here for? And I thought, wow, that's really interesting. Because I had studied French for many years. I studied Latin and I had good teachers. And what was great about Latin, it was just the teacher and me after a while. But why did that... the question was not very clear to me cause you see I had never been to Italy. The people I knew...but then I think, it was the reading in Gramsci.

Luca C.: Okay.

Marcia L.: That really solidified for me. Which is to say it wasn't drum beating. It was an intellectual who was interested in intellectuals. Who was interested in this division between, not

that he wanted that to exist, but between traditional and organic. And there was a place...my mind... I mean I didn't become ...what would you call it? A camp follower of Gramsci? I became aware that I was very interested in philosophy because he was a philosopher.

Luca C.: Okay.

Marcia L.: So that's...the book comes out of that.

Luca C.: Okay. So interesting enough, the book on fascism came out of Gramsci rather than out of films maybe about...

Marcia L.: I think so, yes.

Luca C.: That's interesting.

Marcia L.: Yeah that book was great. It also was payoff for working with Boundary Two cause Paul was, Paul Bouvet was willing to do the introduction. And I was very uncertain about all I was doing cause I felt everybody said, well I've gone to such and such a college and I've gotten such and such a degree and a film degree. And you? What have you done? I've gone to movies. But no...I...that's why film was exciting at the beginning too. Because there was some people who wanted to learn.

Luca C.: So I was you know, in order to prepare for this, I was look back at all the books that, some of them I know very well, some less. For example the book on English cinema, I've never looked at it, so it was great to take it out of the library and finally read it. So tell me a little about your engagement with historiography because it seems to me this is the line that runs through all your books. Even the books that don't look like they're about history and historiography-

Marcia L.: They are. Even too right now. Today I'm going to talk about life writing. Which is a form of history which comes out of the work I did on Il Divo for that anthology.

Luca C.: Right. Exactly. And even your last book which is called Counter History, right? *Cinema and Counter History.* So tell me a little bit, how you got interested in historiography and how do you conceive historiography for film studies?

Marcia L.: Oh, wow. I think we'll spend a while here.

Luca C.: Go for it.

Marcia L.: Make yourself comfortable. I think what I've been saying to you is that it is almost an allegory. Because I started really not knowing anything. My father couldn't speak English, I couldn't speak Russian. When he saw me, I mean somehow we managed to communicate. I never asked him about why he left me some of his artifacts when he died. Like he was a kosher butcher.

Luca C.: Oh really?

Marcia L.: In Russia, yes. And he, but he was a little bit of a womanizer. I think he had several wives. I'm the daughter of the second wife. So there's a great deal, I mean a lot of people, maybe most of us are interested to certain extent in their parents. But I knew nothing about him except that he would take me once a week to visit my grandma Pearl. Who was like a goddess. He took care of her like somebody should take care of somebody. But it never dawned on me that I never knew what the hell, where they were from, who my mother...my mother died before I could... I mean she used to visit me when I was an infant. So history was sort of, its not even an absence signifier. It didn't really signify. And I think that it was the children's home and this German intellectual who introduced me to reading. And then I began to understand that he had a history and they history was of Fascism. So that's one link to that.

Also because I'm not a great, since I now think I know a little about film, I'm not a great formalist. I mean I like to think I've seen... I remember Peter Bondenella said to me once, about the book of fascism and film. He said what I like about it is, he said, you've seen the films. Well come on. You take it where you get it.

Luca C.: Well I guess before the age of VHS, a lot of books on film where written without having seen all the films so it wasn't uncommon.

Marcia L.: That's right. So somebody got to see. And especially films that had been in closet like Lino Micciché this was the skeleton in the closet. And I went to Italy. I was able to get a grant. So that element of history was there. I've never been a historian because that's one discipline and I'm a very undisciplined person. To a certain extent. Now I suppose film, I'm there to a certain degree.

And so as my trajectory around...I really want to make it tidier than it is, cause it is pretty jagged. It is this personal dimension. It's my life experiences after... I love libraries. I love archives. So you know when I get engrossed in something, that's where I want to go and have my, you know a tactile and mental sense of what I'm doing. I've spent a lot of time at the Library of Congress. I've spent a lot of time in Rome at the...

And while there I'm always meeting people, to me that's very important. Reading their book. Like your book. And talking to you. Which is why I like to talk to you after, but and it seems to me that one of the things that I'm not mentioning, but I was just talking to a young woman about her work on the Holocaust and film. And I had written, I delivered a talk at Notre Dame on Holocaust film. And its also something that though I had family, a mother whose family was destroyed, nonetheless I really developed a kind of bad girl reaction to it. I say the pictures of the camps. I don't reject the Holocaust. I became almost maybe because its a reaction formation, nobody cared the hell about me. So, not that I... I do care about the Holocaust, but I feel, who are all these people who are suddenly constructing a history of the Holocaust.

I think some of its necessary. But I think it forgets there were a lot of other, and are, a lot.

Luca C.: So do you see the role, I mean you have been working on the relationship between cinema and history for a while now.

Marcia L.: Yes.

Luca C.: Am I right to say that you see ultimately a progressive relationship between these two mediums? That even your book on Fascist cinema. I mean you do see, in a very Gramscian way, the building of the national popular cinema as the ultimate product of the national power.

Marcia L.: I do think about it, yes. And I think you're right I'm not an auteurist. Though I know there are directors of this and I find to make arguments for their contributions even more so since people kind of take a theory and then trash it, but we came back to it.

So I don't know how to answer the question except that I think everybody is a historian now. Truly. Romance novels, films, biographies, celebrities, and selfies. I've seen people with selfies and I'm so curious about what it is in relation...which I am about these other things because it does have some relation to material history, to the technology, to the moment at which its done, to the person's lack of or over valuing of self image.

And that there's always the question, Gramsci wasn't, he didn't hammer about ideology. And the thing I hung on to, and it is historical, is that common sense is ahistorical, but its not anti-historical. And that's what I'm interested in that, the treatment of history when it gets to be ponderous. I don't mean the size, cause they're very good with the...but gets to like in the case of the Holocaust or collective memory and national imaginaries. It seems to me somehow the pop...a popular view, not populous, that gets lost.

Luca C.: Right. Yeah, yeah. So since you introduced it, let's talk a bit about Italian cinema which is one of the things. One of the many thing you've been doing. But with, you have a constant relationship with it. So you told me that basically your engagement with Italian cinema started at Pittsburgh. When you had a chance to think about European cinema.

Marcia L.: Yes.

Luca C.: Am I right?

Marcia L.: I think you're right. Well part of it was teaching with Mariolena.

Luca C.: Right.

Marcia L.: And I had her work up my Italian that had become a little bit rusty. And I think that...-

Luca C.: So what kind of films did you like at that...what where the... cause you know there's always a couple of films that really...

Marcia L.: To be very truthful that when I went to study the film in the archives in Cinecittà. Of course I knew the neo-realist film. At that point reading, having courses in that, I don't

think I've ever actually, I've written stuff on neo realism but I've never considered myself an aficionado of that particularly. But I saw a retrospective that Bill had done of Antonioni. And I thought oh brave new world. This was the most exciting thing to see the subtly of it. And my other great favorite that I've taught so many times and written about is Luchino Visconti.

Luca C.: Of course.

Marcia L.: He's much closer to me in many ways than the way in which Antonioni works though I respect, but I find it very difficult to handle delicately.

Luca C.: Absolutely. So the other thing I want to ask you is about melodrama which is another thing that you like to write about.

Marcia L.: Yes I do.

Luca C.: So you want to tell me how your engagement with melodrama and how you conceive melodrama in relation to history for example, in history of cinema.

Marcia L.: Well, I'll pick up something you said earlier which is kind of a cue to me. That we recognize that it's not an anti-history, but melodrama for me, at least how I've written about it in the book, and in Italian, in the Italian books too, is that its a common sense configuration. That it is has, and I know it went well with what people were doing against the grain. But it isn't just against the grain. And I don't like words like, I don't use a lot, like resisting because I feel the world, and of course, this is where the French has came to save me like Deleuze and Guattari because I felt that they taught me something about complexity. They taught me something about time. They taught me a great deal about film form. And I feel that I don't have to go to the barricade in that way. I mean I'll go if I have to go. And I might be convinced, we might have to soon.

I think that I begin to keep moving backward and backwards, not to Lacanian necessarily, not to a Freudian, but I'm taken by the idea of the work that's being done around the sensorium.

Luca C.: Okay.

Marcia L.: And the relation of sensation. And as it relates both to common sense as a mode of release.

Luca C.: Right.

Marcia L.: An opening. Or on the other hand whether it becomes a dead end like in some examinations of affect. They think its sentiment rather than...

Luca C.: I must tell you I was very surprised when your latest book you start talking about Deleuze and Guattari 'cause I wasn't expecting a Gramscian with a PhD in English Literature to-

Marcia L.: Now you understand that.

Luca C.: Talk about Deleuze. So I think that's what I'm trying to get at. So you want to, do you think there is a relationship then between Gramsci and Deleuze and Guattari or you're building this relationship-

Marcia L.: What I wanted, and I had to be very careful and I don't think it was that I was a time server. But I wanted, it was to have, I remember talking the editor, I wanted subtitle that was, that included Delueze and Guattari. Because most of is in dialogue with them. So I think your question I could refine a little and try to find out what I've extrapolated from them.

I was impressed. Have a person who started with epic. The epic work of anti-Oedipus which is every layer of the culture. The ability, you see its played too, a lot people because they don't, their threatened by this and they say they don't understand. But its more a heuristic. I mean its the challenge of heuristics and it seemed to me that one of the things that connected me to my work on Gramsci was the sense in which he was in time. And time moved.

I don't know if that makes it clearer. But I think also, I know that Brunetta and other of the Gramsci didn't have much with film. But he did write and said and he said well it was taking over from the theater. And there's something about Italian culture when things get more… when they go on to something else.

Luca C.: Right, right.

Marcia L.: But I think that Deleuze had a very, I think salubrious, that's the right word. Salubrious attitude of thinking even about philosophy. Cause when I was an undergraduate I was going to be a philosophy major. Cause you see I had this overarching belief in philosophers. Still I saw them in work with each other. Gramsci to Deleuze is also about the way in which philosophy can be something different. That it really has something to do with a dynamic of thinking and being creative.

Luca C.: Okay. Alright. Can we talk about books a little bit?

Marcia L.: Sure.

Luca C.: So one of the thing that field notes ask us to do is to identify three groups, people, text and films that were important for you. So maybe you want to start with books a little bit, with text. So if you had to mention two, three, four, five texts.

Marcia L.: I'll mention one right off the bat because you're never gonna get me to do it to three. But I think *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*. I think that-

Luca C.: Let the dead bury the dead.

Marcia L.: Yes. But I was going to say in relation to Gramsci I was trying to think cause you wouldn't think I'm so hubristic as to say I've read all of Gramsci. But I have read a great deal of Gramsci's work. And I think not just the prison notebooks but his writings on the Southern question. Which became, again to me, oh that's what Italy was going on in relation to my classroom. And that's where I probably had all the prejudices others had about, but I began to realize how...so that was certainly related to it.

I think that a person who's work was related to Gramsci, and I admire very much, was Stuart Hall.

Luca C.: Yeah.

Marcia L.: I think Stuart really understood Gramsci and was able to do a period that's now… I wish he were around because he certainly handled Thatcher's era and thinking backwards to Fascism.

Luca C.: So in a why we can say that there was a cultural status turn at a certain point in your...I mean you-

Marcia L.: Well I don't like the term, I don't know what cultural studies is. When I talk about intellectuals I think that they, I mean I think Gramsci, you know people like to... I can't even say them. LaClauan move. I mean the turn toward, turning to culturalism seemed to me a way of again, if not aestheticising certainly reducing, I think the potential.

Luca C.: Okay. Did you the Stuart Hall project? The film that just came out?

Marcia L.: Yes, yes. And I also saw, I was, where was I? I think in Washington. I saw it.

Luca C.: Alright. People. People who were important for you in your life as a scholar.

Marcia L.: You should have known by now, my dear, I am an enthusiast. I fall in love with intellectuals and my friend, my colleague Stan who you know we've been together for a long time. And I think he both admires it and he thinks I'm a wild lady. But I think that all these people I mentioned starting with the head resident of my nurse...of my children's home. I would say that Lucy had something to do with this. I think Lucy, while I was often treating her like a bad mommy, I thought I respected what she had. And we wrote some papers together, Lucy Fischer. And also my colleague Dana Polan and yes the Boundary Two people. Bouvier and Joe, especially Joe Buttigieg, yeah.

Luca C.: Okay. Well then films. You talked about Italian cinema but you started watching a lot of films very early. Not so, going from avant-garde to commercial cinema. You are a kind of an omnivorous watcher, at least from the books you've written. So do you want to identify a couple of films that still stand out for you. That you think are important for you as a scholar.

Marcia L.: Yeah, yeah. I was trying to think if there were any women's films. I tell you when I just recently did a paper to kind of focus on recent Italian cinema. And I think Lena Verde

Miller was very important. I wrote some thing in an Italian journal about Lena. And also Liliana Cavani whose work has been neglected. I feel that there's a big spirit there and an intellect functioning that's kind of scary. But her films are very important. And I'm going beyond *The Night Porter* to the...you know her biopics, I've looked at all of them.

Luca C.: Absolutely.

Marcia L.: I've got very taken with Mario Martone. Cause I think you know he kind of exemplified, I was enthusiastic with, about Alex Marlo Man's book on the Neapolitans. And then Roberta Tobanelli did something. And I looked at a whole bunch of these films and I realized.

Oh I'll tell you one that really excited me. It was based on a Greek tragedy. I can't remember the title because I'm having an aging moment and getting a little tired. But it was by prisoners.

Luca C.: Oh yeah of course its the Taviani Brothers on the murder of Julius Caesar I think its called. Yeah, yeah absolutely.

Marcia L.: Yes. Those are very influential because they gave birth to a political movement around cinema. And I actual met an Israeli filmmaker who was doing documentary films who had talked with the people who had make the films on Martone making some, who had done that and because there were so many Ethiopian and African refugees in Israel.

Luca C.: Yeah, absolutely. What about American cinema. Did you have any engagement?-

Marcia L.: Oh come on I told you it stared with melodramas, my god.

Luca C.: But I want to hear a couple of your favorites.

Marcia L.: I want to tell you one filmmaker though that is Louis Bunuel. I think that I, every time I taught I had to find space for him. But of American filmmakers, its interesting of course I love *Gone With The Wind*. I would be anti-patriotic not to love it. But I like Westerns. And some of the ones whose tied, I mean… Clint Eastwood. I'm sorry is this… I think the films he did for Sergio Leone were great. And it made me appreciate too that while I fulfilled a stereotype of women who watch melodramas, I began to see that I enjoyed...

And I have to thank Dana Polan too because he took me, Bill Judson had some that series on them. And he took me to a Sergio Leone and I was overwhelmed by the plethora of the color, the shape, the world. And the other one I have to tell you... oh this isn't the... yeah he's partially American so ... Dario Argento. He's been, I've met him, he's been to the states and actually I think he came to Dana's house when he was working on some of the films.

Yeah I sort of like horror films.

Luca C.: Oh really?

Marcia L.: Yeah.

Luca C.: But you don't write about it. Am I right? Did you write about horror? I don't think so.

Marcia L.: I think I did in The Counter History. I was working that. Of course that's interesting they were, there was a Mexican film and I'm sure they're many more but I'm losing it.

Luca C.: Do you want to talk about teaching a little bit?

Marcia L.: Yeah, I will.

Luca C.: So you started teaching very young. And your first position-

Marcia L.: I don't remember young, go on.

Luca C.: And your first position was at The University of Pittsburgh right? Where you never left. Am I right?

Marcia L.: No I actually, while I was doing my PhD, you had...this was before they had a film program, but you had to have a whole term in which you were mentored by someone. And for that I was very grateful. It was even before the time when that became codified. And then there was the experience at Spartanburg Junior College. And then there was Pittsburgh.

Luca C.: Right. Do you want to tell me something, is there something that attracted you to teaching? What is the thing that you like the most about teaching and being in a classroom, working with students?

Marcia L.: I wish I could give you a platitude like saying I want to extend my ideas. Of course I do. But I'm not a, I don't think, I said maybe some students might feel that way, I don't know all their responses. I'm not dogmatic. I like people. I like to talk. But I think what you can perceive in my talking to you, I like to talk to people whom I can talk to. Not just about, not about me. You know I don't think I'm a selfie but I am a product of the creation of a self. I think have one. I hope I do.

Luca C.: So did you, you taught at different levels. You taught undergraduates, graduates, right right.

Marcia L.: Absolutely. I taught in the prison one time. I've taught, several times, actually its not really teaching its lectures in this OSURE program to teach people who are mature.

Luca C.: Right. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Absolutely. So is there a class that you remember? Is there a group?

Marcia L.: No its graduate students I remember. I had like I went to a party last night and people were saying things like, I remember when you did this and that and I remember when

you threw the second volume of Deleuze at me. And I said where is it now? And he said, its on my shelf. I remember it. No they do-

Luca C.: Where you throwing books at the graduate students?

Marcia L.: No he had a hard time with me to begin with and I give no names here. But I just want to tell you that I have, I always had parties with them to celebrate the end of the course. It got a little harder I think cause I think I was getting to be an old lady. In my mind. So my choice was really to write and not stay on. I had stayed on well beyond my... I went into the seventies. Oh maybe eighties yes.

Luca C.: Want to give me the title of one graduate class that you taught? Something that made you popular or unpopular with graduate students.

Marcia L.: I taught a lot of courses that were on, what they called theory at that time. So I always thought it was important, whether it was melodrama, whether it was horror. Which I did, I team taught with my colleague Lowenstein. Who wrote a very nice book on horror and film. But, I'm trying to think, the Deleuze course I did a couple of times. But I actually had a directed study with several people on that.

And also I did a lot, and they never reimbursed me, and my friend would say what's the matter with you? You know you get paid for this, you should get paid for that. I just enjoyed it.

I've done courses on Kant, you know in directed studies. And my courses would be partially thematic. Like a particular problematic. Not as a reduction but to really open it out. I don't have my list but if you want to see I can send you it's...

Luca C.: I've seen your list but I just wanted to know if there was something that stood out. Is there a class that you hated to teach that you had to?

Marcia L.: Yes.

Luca C.: Go on.

Marcia L.: It was an undergraduate class. And I had three women sitting in the back, in the middle.

Luca C.: What was the title? Do you remember of the class?

Marcia L.: It was a general course on, no but you see in the, we don't have an Italian department. It's French and Italian. So the courses were all, I had to kind of cheat a little and allow them to do different things in an introductory course.

And so this course, I remember, involved contemporary filmmakers. I've done history some but that, they weren't that interested. But I remember teaching a course, a class on Fellini. And you'll help me with the title. It was with an American actor. About a gangster. And it really a Dante-esque film.

Luca C.: Okay I know what you're talking about but I have a-

Marcia L.: You too. Yeah we all have our aging moments. But is a brilliant film. Broderick Crawford is the one in it. And really is kind of the view, I don't think I was wanting to teach Fellini as a Christian, which he was not. But he was another intellectual but again of a kind of organic variety. So I was trying to get at the point, that he wasn't merely a gangster. He was a symptom of something. And it had something to do with what happens in Italian. We use allegory and you use religion and you use Dante. And what person do you not think of who's done something, that doesn't in some what get imbibed with Dante. And of course I learned my lesson. That that's the important thing. I mean that you have to know what these text are.

So the capstone of the story was the young women were sitting there and writing. So I didn't say anything, I just well nothing much more to say now so let's leave. Then I saw the evaluation. They said, Doctor Landy was the most dogmatic, most incomprehensible, most unlikeable teacher I ever had. But it was the class was divided, I have to say, I made some good students.

Luca C.: What did you take out of that? What did you do with that?

Marcia L.: What I learned is that as several, the way I always, I neither do mea culpa alone or somebody else's fault. What I tend to think is that if you're not aware of history again and of who's there with you and how you're doing. I was being much too intellectual in relation. Maybe the film wasn't a good one cause they might have rather enjoyed *Amarcord* which I've taught in other classes. So that's the problem there.

Luca C.: We're getting close to the end so I'm going to ask you what are you doing now? I know the book just came out, The Counter History right?

Marcia L.: Yes it did.

Luca C.: *Cinema and Counter History*. So tell me what you're working on right now. What are you presenting today at SCMS.

Marcia L.: Oh well what I'm working on is, as suggested, a version of what it means to write a life. To film a life. And I want to work with the notion, which is not unique to me, but what it means to think about something as auto-slash-biography. So I want to know where the self is, I guess but you know, a lot of people wanted to do that by finding actual historic, well so and so did or read such and so. Not I wouldn't denigrate that. But how is there a method available to be able to understand how, not just the filmmaker, but whether its a work of art, like Caravaggio or whatever, how the paintings themselves come to have blurry lines between who is doing it and what's being done.

And further because there was a lot of work done on spectatorship. And I taught that in some course, we tried, but I thought that too became non-dynamic. But I was interested in how do you recognize, not nec...i don't want to bad mouth rhetoric so let me say, if

there's a rhetoric there, what is the...how does one envision the viewer? What mechanism is there? So that's what I'm talking about.

Luca C.: Okay. You think it's going to be in your book? Out of this?

Marcia L.: Yes.

Luca C.: Okay. An autobiography life form. Okay, that's wonderful.

Marcia L.: Maybe. I mean, I'm still young.

Luca C.: Yeah. I can see that. Listen is there something that I didn't ask you that I should have asked you?

Marcia L.: No I think you did very well.

Luca C.: Oh thank you very much.

Marcia L.: I'm glad I wasn't the person you had to ask the question.

Luca C.: Are you going to write a review that says Caminati asked the worst question possible and they shouldn't allow-

Marcia L.: You're in the culture where whether you go to the dentist-

Luca C.: I know.

Marcia L.: Or you have a corn on your toe, somebody immediately sends you what your evaluation is. Or the bank. Bad check or whatever. No I'm delighted. I should say this in return. Its a nice, gracious gift. I was delighted. I had a choice of other people but I wanted to meet you.

Luca C.: Oh there you go.

Marcia L.: I was, well I'm very interested, I think you would be a very interesting subject to interview. No I think you're a good interviewer. You both allow space, and I can feel you trying to shape what can be an unruly...

Luca C.: You're doing a film analysis of the interview on camera. That's the future of videographic interview.

Marcia L.: That's right, it is. Its another selfie.

Luca C.: Alright, well.

Marcia L.: Thank you.

Luca C.: I want to thank Marcia Landy for have given us time. And I'll see you pretty soon I think. Thank you.

Marcia L.: Thank you.