

Erin Solaro

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Interviewed by Leah Cohen

Transcribed by Olivia Palid

Edited by Olivia Palid

Web biography by Olivia Palid

Production by Brad Guidera & Angel Melendez

Cohen: Today is March 22nd [2019]. I'm at the Pritzker Military Museum & Library with First

Lieutenant—

Solaro: Former.

Cohen: Former.

Solaro: Not retired, I don't hold retired rank.

Cohen: Okay, so with former First Lieutenant Erin Elizabeth Solaro. She's also the author of *Women in the Line of Fire*, having been an embedded reporter in Iraq and Afghanistan. My name is Leah Cohen and I have the pleasure of conducting the interview.

Solaro: I'm very pleased to be here, so thank you for having me.

Cohen: Thank you very much for coming and for agreeing to do the interview. Well, we'll start off with the beginning. Where and when were you born?

Solaro: October the 11th, 1966. Bloomington, Indiana.

Cohen: And what was it like growing up in Bloomington?

Solaro: Well, my parents moved from Bloomington to Quincy, Illinois when I was two. What was it like? Never fit in as a girl, tried to fit in... My interests tended to not be stereotypically feminine... and I was kind of resistant to them being shaped in that direction. I was also physically very active and very strong from a young age. Was this intrauterine testosterone? I don't know. I've

been curious about that. I think I'm fundamentally heterosexual: been married twice, never had a passionate love affair with a woman. I also don't seem to have a lot of the physical indicators that indicate exposure to high levels of in-utero testosterone. So for me, I guess, the question is how much do children pick up on these codes? And I've heard two or three years. They pick up on social coding by the time they're two to three years. And I seem to have just simply and instinctively rejected it.

Cohen: How has the physical strength and activity manifested as a young child? What did it do?

Solaro: [speaking at the same time] I was on Ritalin. Not Ritalin, I was on whatever drug they then gave, which may have been Ritalin. My mother eventually threw it away because she said it made me stupid. I basically ran before I could walk. One of the only things that slowed me down was running into the stove handle and acquiring a gash across my forehead that required stitches to close. That was the thing that got me to rate my speed. By the time I was ten years old, I could pick my father up and carry him, which he didn't like. [both laugh] I think it kinda disturbed him. I would give my brother and my sister little horsey rides, and I remember Saturdays, my parents tried to get some peace [and] tried locking our bedroom doors. I could drag furniture over to the doors and figure out how to unlock mine [Cohen laughs] and then I would go and drag this particular chair across the landing to my sister's room, climb on the arm onto the top, and lift the hook and eye there. [Cohen laughs] I must have been a delight! [both laugh] Bikes... it took me a while to learn to balance. Once I learned to balance, I was practically grafted to a bike. Watched what I now realize were the Olympic time trials. Nearly got myself killed riding in front of a car coming out of an alley. [both laugh] My parents got divorced, Mom

moved back to Bloomington, Indiana to get a PhD. And my sister always wanted to be driven everywhere, I always wanted to walk everywhere in almost all weather... Okay.

Cohen: Yeah. Yeah. It sounds like you had an unusual robustness.

Solaro: [speaking at the same time] I have a very pronounced physical drive. I still have it. I still have it.
Um...

Cohen: The other thing that struck me when reading either the survey or the book is that you had, like, a very strong interest—

Solaro: Yes.

Cohen: —in military from early on.

Solaro: [speaking at the same time] Yes.

Cohen: I believe you mentioned as early as two years old watching the fighting at Huế in Vietnam from the Tet Offensive. And I think you mentioned your parents were very much of a different world. So, do you wanna talk about that?

Solaro: So, there's that. I wanted a G.I. Joe doll and got it... had a great interest in these, just natural, I didn't do this to piss my parents off. Although anything I would have done, any strong interest I would've had, would've pissed them off. I realize that now. That's another story. Okay. Um...
Sorry for all the uhs, I should know better.

Cohen: That's okay, they edit...

Solaro: They edit, okay. [whispering] Let's see what else. Interested in the cavalry. I always wanted Breyer horse figures and I had this articulated horse, cavalry horse—I wanna say Comanche?

Cohen: [whispering] I don't know.

Solaro: I don't know, I'm rummaging pretty deep. It was just always there. It was just always there, and... it's like, why was Cristóbal Balenciaga designing dresses, and selling to society women, by the time he was thirteen? Not that I was nearly so precocious. It's just... something catches your spirit, your imagination, your heart.

Cohen: Early on, yeah.

Solaro: [speaking at the same time] Yeah.

Cohen: You also mentioned riding horses or raising horses—

Solaro: No! No, not raising. My first job was in the stables when I was thirteen. Okay. Which made me very strong. They're big, hairy, muddy needy animals, a bale of hay weighs easily fifty pounds, grain bags weigh eighty. And, you know, most of the labor in the stables is manual. Yeah, you use wheelbarrows, but that's about it. Most stables run on woman power. So I probably laid down significant muscle during adolescence when most young women are having that natural desire to be active beaten out of them. I do joke I was raised in the stables by horses. [Cohen laughs] It's not quite true, but it's true enough. [Cohen laughs] I remember a number of those horses—they weren't mine—but we had a horse named Thunder who made a big impression on me. There was a lot of talk about the ERA [Equal Rights Amendment] then. Thunder was what we call "proud-cut;" he was gelded when he was about five. In many ways, he was functionally a stallion. I never saw him do anything unkind to anyone of any species. He was particularly good with scared children. When we had a kid who was afraid of horses—Thunder would lock on to that kid and just get all kind of tender and protective and the kid would pick up on that. I've seen that in other stallions too, the ones who haven't been really jerked around. I mean a stallion's a stallion, but a lot, you know, a stallion's job is also to be a family man.

Cohen: A true soldier.

Solaro: Something like that. So, you know—yeah, I'll come back to that theme. Thunder made a big impression on me, and I'm like, Yeah. You know all this crap about how men are naturally violent, that's a criminal making excuses. And... we've now come to see a lot of stallion management is taking a perfectly nice, young stud colt and systematically driving him crazy. Which is not to say—especially in Thoroughbreds—there aren't bloodlines that are not particularly dangerous, because there are. But that's the whole bloodline. The mares [laughs] in those families typically are no nicer than the stallions.

Cohen: Uh-huh. Uh-huh. So, you're saying even if they are, let's say, normal stallions... they're being worked with in such a way that they're being driven crazy.

Solaro: [speaking at the same time] Yeah. A lot of them they are so valuable, they're taken, they're separated very young, they don't get social feedback from their peers, they get too much [high-octane feed], not enough exercise, no social life, and they don't get the feedback from mares in season. You know, they're taken to the breeding shed, that's their job. American Pharaoh is an interesting stallion: he insists on sweet talking every mare until she says, "Yes please!" [both laugh] You know, I suspect what happened was someone may have turned him out with pregnant mares because if you've got a nice stud colt and you want him to have good mare manners, turn him out with pregnant mares. Sheila Varian, who had raised beautiful, beautiful working Arabians – that's what she did with her stud colts. [Mares can and will bite and kick stallions, even unto death, for misbehaving] ...And most of them learn, "Ow, that hurts! I should leave you—" They learn!

Cohen: They learn. They learn.

Solaro: My life is my teacher! [Cohen laughs] So there's a feedback loop. Humans have eliminated that feedback loop.

Cohen: [softly] Yeah! It's a good question: how to put it back in, you know?

Solaro: We're trying to.

Cohen: [softly] Yeah.

Solaro: We're trying to. That's what #MeToo is about. This is what radical feminists like Andrea Dworkin, Catharine MacKinnon, Julia [Julie] Bindel have been trying to do...Because there need to be consequences. [Even though] ...there are always people who are, for whatever reason—they need very little feedback. They're very empathetic. And testosterone levels have very little to do with that, fundamentally.

Cohen: [pause] So, going—

Solaro: Sure.

Cohen: —back a little bit, if that's okay. Were your parents supportive—

Solaro: No.

Cohen: —of you working with the horses?

Solaro: No. No. No. I was not a wanted child. In me and her second daughter, my mother saw all the refusal...of her society to permit her to live the life... that she deserved as a human being.

Cohen: In other words, that you and your sister had more opportunities? [someone speaking in background]

Solaro: That was part of it—

Cohen: [speaking at the same time] Than her generation.

Solaro: –but it was also part in us as girls. She saw all the restrictions she herself had faced... She was much more sympathetic to our younger brother. Much more. My father had no real interest in his children. He liked begetting them, but as for being a father... And they divorced. You know, I've been thinking about this and I look back and I say, I see now all this promise in myself. And I was looking back, and I saw all the things I wanted to do, but somehow, I couldn't break through to actually, really do them and fulfill this. And I was like, Why? And then I remembered one, two memories, both from very young. Maybe I'm not perfect. If I'm only perfect, if I'm just perfect, maybe Mommy will love me... And then I won't say I'd consciously repressed it; I knew it was always there. I couldn't look at it, you know. We have these compartments in our mind where we keep pain, and at best we can only go...

Cohen: [softly] Yeah.

Solaro: You know, just kinda glance at it. Very briefly. And the other was she would tell me from very young, and I'm sure she told my sister the same, "Don't ever have children, you'll be a bad mother."

Cohen: [clicks tongue] [softly] Well!

Solaro: Projection! [both laugh] Now in her defense, I met her father once when I was about twelve or thirteen. At least, this is the one meeting I remember, I may have seen him before... She was a zillion times better than him. Because...he had just a horrible, violent temper. And I remember, oh, this is when the Shah of Iran was in the news, the hostage crisis...saying, "Well you know I don't think that the Shah should be able to do whatever wants!" And my grandfather said, "It's his country, he can damn well do whatever he pleases." Now I realize he was talking about also how he ran his household. You know I've a kinda joke, my family has so little of the family

bonding gene, it's a wonder these people were able to reproduce. [Cohen laughs] Neither of my parents kept in much contact with their families.

Cohen: [softly] Interesting, yeah.

Solaro: Yeah. I mean I'm just really surprised that they reproduced three times. [both laugh]

Cohen: And it seems that your mother, for better or for worse, like, was a committed parent in a certain way.

Solaro: She didn't have a choice. I was born in '66. Griswold v. Connecticut—which [gives] married couples, not a woman herself—the right to contraception was what, '67? '69? '67, I think. [blows nose] You know, if a woman wanted to have sex, she was totally at a man's mercy. Totally. If she did not want to be pregnant, again, she was totally at his mercy. And if he got her pregnant and for whatever reason, she ran the risk of being tortured to death in an illegal abortion. I mean I cannot soft-pedal this.

Cohen: [softly] No.

Solaro: This is one reason why I am a radical feminist. There's too much unnecessary pain... There's just too much unnecessary pain and we need to stop hurting people like this.

Cohen: [whispers] Yeah. Yeah. What did you do after high school?

Solaro: Went to college. Couldn't find my way, really didn't know. Went into ROTC. Got my commission. This was the end of the Cold War. Said, "Okay. I've found a man to marry me. A Marine." Because fundamentally I didn't believe I was worthy of what I wanted.

Cohen: What were your hopes at the time? [Solaro sighs] To yourself.

Solaro: I just wanted to sit inside a house 'til I died... You know, I talked about wanting to write and this, that, and I did, but really, I could see... you know, what I would have really liked to be—but I

didn't believe I was worthy of it—was make a career in the military. I would have liked to go into the combat arms. You know, certainly I had the physical drive and hardiness for it...

Cohen: Yeah.

Solaro: But as it was, I was so damaged as a young woman, I just could not make what I wanted for myself even half real. And my ex-husband was not a particularly good man, but you should not marry a man for the—I mean... that's a wretched thing to do to yourself and it's a wretched thing to involve anyone else in.

Cohen: How long were you married for?

Solaro: I wanna say ten years. I've got the exact dates somewhere. I suspect that this is more of a common story than we know with young women.

Cohen: The marrying somebody—

Solaro: Yeah.

Cohen: —just to get married and...

Solaro: Yeah. Because you fundamentally do not believe you're worthy... of what you want. And...my very deeply embedded belief in my unworthiness as a woman was reinforced by...being sexually attacked, in public, at a reserve unit... That...is just [such a profound betrayal] ... Colonel Jennifer [Pritzker] sent me an... article that ran in the New York Times about interviews with servicewomen, and I had to stop after reading about one young woman who found an officer, a fellow officer, had been filming her in her stateroom. That guy should never have made it off the ship in one piece... What the hell is—? And people watched it! What? How can you do that? Yeah, that's when I had to stop. [sighs]

Cohen: So, you're in ROTC.

Solaro: Yeah.

Cohen: [coughs] You're getting married and you join the Army.

Solaro: [speaking at the same time] Yeah. Well, that's not quite in sequence. I went through enlisted Basic Training and got into ROTC, got a scholarship. Got a partial scholarship if I recall properly... Can't remember. Possibly not. No, got G.I. Bill. Got commissioned. When I went in, it was the late Cold War, [the Soviet Union was] the Evil Empire. When I graduated, they didn't need anybody. So I said, Fine, I'll just be a name in a unit. A name in a computer somewhere.

Cohen: If I may ask, what were the attitudes to women like? I mean, prior to the molestations or the attempted molestations, what were the attitudes like and was it a bit how you described with the Tailhook Convention [i.e., Navy and Marine Corps officers were alleged to have sexually assaulted women at the 35th Annual Tailhook Association Symposium in Las Vegas Hilton, 1991] where—?

Solaro: He was sober. These guys were fucking stone-cold sober. I once had a guy who was sweet on me who'd had a lot to drink, or more than he should have, who gently shoved me out of his room because he was afraid of disinhibition. And I want to make it very clear that he was very gentle and kind about it. It wasn't, "Get out."

Cohen: Right. It's more like—

Solaro: [speaking at the same time] "Please." Yeah. You know, alcohol does not take away the concept of right and wrong. Alcohol is only a disinhibitor. If you do not wanna do bad things... I mean, you may dance on the table wearing a lampshade and tell corny puns... but you're not gonna rape somebody. The attitudes towards women in the military are often what they still are now:

you're weak, you're inferior, you have no place here. We want to use you [for your ability to do good work], but you have no place in the core of the profession of arms.

Cohen: [clears throat] Do you think that that was part of the reason?

Solaro: Oh, of course!

Cohen: [speaking at the same time] For the attacks? That they [coughs]–

Solaro: These things all come together. You do not sexually attack someone... whom you regard as a human and a civic equal. Okay, you just don't do that.

Cohen: Do you think there was a connection between the attacks, the private one and then the one in the tent?

Solaro: I don't know. [Cohen coughs] You know, I have shied away from asking that question... of myself... Found an infantry unit closer to home where they took me in! Which is interesting, again. Now here's the thing: the [company commander, whom I asked to commission me, and did], did not believe that women should be in the military at all, let alone in the infantry, but at the same time, he didn't tolerate that kind of shit. People who know they can't get away with that kind of shit, pardon my coarseness, they rarely...commit these crimes. And they certainly don't commit 'em in public.

Cohen: I think this is something that struck me a lot from your writing, that you speak and write a lot about honorable men who... have like an ambivalent attitude toward women, such as I think General Warner, who wrote the foreword. He was against the integration of women, it was gonna be a bureaucratic and budgetary headache [laughs] for him, but he's tremendously proud of his granddaughters who enlisted and there seems to be a recognition of that.

Solaro: There's also [Cohen coughs] I don't know how much you've dealt with the whole issue of maternal mortality... 'Kay. First, I'm opposed to a draft in general.

Cohen: Oh, you are opposed to a draft—

Solaro: Yes.

Cohen: —in general? What, why?

Solaro: 'Cause it gives people who don't exercise good judgement more bodies to play with... Okay?

[both laugh] I mean, look, since World War II, you have to ask ourselves: who's done more damage in the world? Okay, excuse me, since Stalin's death, who's done more damage in the world with military adventures? Us or the Soviet Union? That's not a comfortable question to ask.

Cohen: [speaking at the same time] [softly] No, it's not.

Solaro: No. I think there are a lot of good people in the military, I know there are a lot of good people in the military, but... in some ways, I see our adventurism abroad as fundamentally a deliberate distraction from the things we need to do at home. And I'm not someone who believes that the world is a nice place at two A.M. 'Cause it ain't. So lemme come back. So, I'm opposed to a draft. I'm particularly opposed to drafting women and I'll tell you why. Women bear all the physical consequences of reproduction. And you could say, "Well, women don't die in childbirth these years." Generally speaking, that's true. [However], pregnancy is still the most difficult and dangerous thing most humans will ever do outside of...[exceptionally] elite military training. I'm talking well past the selection phase, [such as Ranger School]; significant injuries occur in about thirty percent of all pregnancies. The women who bear these risks to literally create society should also not have to bear the risks of defending society, of defending their creation, when

those who have not borne those risks and endured those hardships are available. This is not to say I think that women who wish to bear those risks should be forbidden.

Cohen: I see. I had misunderstood your point. I thought you supported the idea that women should be drafted to give women and men an equal playing field, but you're saying no, they should have the mobility as a male would have should they enlist to the army.

Solaro: [speaking at the same time] If men want to have an equal playing field with us, why then, let them bear all risks of reproduction! Let them bear all the risks of rape, which is fundamentally legal, it's only regulated. Okay? We do not need to bear risks to be equal to them. We create them from nothing but our blood and our bones and give them life at risk of our own. Always in danger, usually in agony. Sometimes the price is permanent, mutilating injury. You know, when you are a radical feminist, people will tell you, "You don't understand biology." I think I understand biology [Cohen laughs] one heck of a lot better [both laugh] than the people presuming to lecture me, 'cause we've been talking about biology... all throughout this. If you think about that.

Cohen: Although I think you do point out that it's improved, like, the mortality rates of women—

Solaro: Yeah.

Cohen: —at childbirth, thank God [laughs]—

Solaro: Historically—

Cohen: —has improved.

Solaro: Historically, I've seen estimates. My own estimate is modern Afghanistan in which the average woman doesn't survive menarche, excuse me, until menopause. She doesn't survive her childbearing years. About fifty percent of Afghan women die of reproductive causes... is close to

the historical average. I've read anthropologists saying, "No, it's seventy percent." We don't have a seventy percent maternal mortality rate. But... ninety percent of women bear children. Ninety percent of women do something much more difficult, arduous, demanding, and dangerous than...most male soldiers, most male military personnel, never do it.

Cohen: So, in your view, what would be the ideal... I don't know, the ideal legislation regarding women and the U.S. Armed Forces?

Solaro: So, I would start with the Militia Act 10 U.S. Code § 246. I wouldn't even touch the draft until we've talked about the [composition and classes] of the Militia Act. The universal or unorganized militia—and I be may be making some technical mistakes here in terminology 'cause it's been a while since I've read it—but the universal unorganized militia is all citizen males and males who have indicated their intention... to naturalize, to become citizens, between the ages of 17 and 45. I would open that up and say all citizens and aliens, male and female... Currently, only women in the organized militia, which is the [U.S. National] Guard, the [U.S. Armed Forces] Reserves...are regarded as members of the organized militia, along with their male counterparts. 'Kay. I believe that the draft is a necessary tool of statecraft, but I would say a precedent, such as...a draft in times of extremis such as World War II, does not constitute a precedent for ordinary times such as we live in. I do think that as [the impending] climate...[catastrophe] drives refugee movements and population migration... and natural disasters, we need robust guard capacities at the state level, and women should be fully involved in those as citizens...as members of the community to be defended, taking up arms in defense of themselves and their communities. And not just arms but having the first responder skills and everything else! But I do not believe that you should willy-nilly draft people to send

abroad, male or female. I do believe women should be allowed to... all specialties should be as open to women as they are to men. If you can do the work and you're crazy enough to be here, welcome aboard. [both laugh] You know, if you're crazy enough to shove your head in this meat grinder, come on! [both laugh]

Cohen: What is your view of women in the Israeli army? 'Cause that's—

Solaro: They're very segregated.

Cohen: [speaking at the same time] —changed a lot within the last twenty years, where women...

Solaro: They're very segregated. They're very segregated, they wear long hair, which just baffles me...

You know, I can't imagine wearing long hair in the summer heat. [both laugh] I don't have much contact with them. Most of them are not particularly impressive. There are some. There are some. But many of them just are not half as impressive as the young men; they're not wanted to be. Which I think is insane and almost suicidal for a country that has Israel's strategic position.

Cohen: It's my understanding that [in] the last ten, twenty years that women can join combat forces, but—

Solaro: There are a few units, specifically the [33rd] Caracal Battalion. The men typically hate being assigned there because they regard it as beneath their dignity to serve with female combat soldiers... Apparently, it shrinks their dicks.

Cohen: [Cohen laughs] The other role that I know of is women who do training—they may not actually be out there, but who train—

Solaro: Yes.

Cohen: —men which is interesting. [laughs]

Solaro: Yeah! [Cohn laughs] It's like, "Hey, I've never actually been a sniper in combat but I'm gonna teach you how to do this." Apparently, it's the notion of, "If a lowly woman can hit this target... then you guys can too." And I believe that that's the subconscious logic they use when you're putting women in those roles.

Cohen: Yeah. Or I wonder is this the only degree of [sighs] experience men are used to, like having a teacher in school, you know.

Solaro: That's part of it...There is worldwide...across history and throughout time, there is an enormous taboo against women bearing weapons. Why? Because if we did, again, it provides that feedback loop. It provides that feedback. You know, how do you cope? The only real way you can cope with a seventy percent death rate due to reproduction is by completely dehumanizing women. Both men and women... What does it say in the Bible? "And in pain you will bear your children, and your husband will rule over you, and you will long for him to rule over you." Once you have that subordination, and you define men as... the women as dying in childbirth, the women as being fuckable... and the men as killing them. There's a whole lot you could do. We ignored rape, we ignored marital battery in no small part, I believe, because we had to ignore maternal mortality, we couldn't look at it. It's too painful. And these are long, drawn-out deaths. These are very painful, very humiliating deaths under the best of circumstances. Once you have a class subordinate based on sex, there are enormous economic benefits that attend this. And this is what we're struggling to unpack today.

Cohen: But would you not say that advances in medicine were aimed in part towards safer delivery?

Solaro: Blood transfusions were in fact... basically developed to cope with post-partum hemorrhage...

You know, and this is what I come back to, these men lived with this! These men grew up in an

era – I was talking with my friend Carl Bernard [<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/03/10/AR2008031003058.html>] Silver Star in Korea. Helped create the Special Forces Q [Qualification] Course. And we were talking about all this. He was the guy who said, "You gotta write this." [sighs] And we were talking, and he said, "I still hate the idea of women in combat. I just viscerally hate the idea." And I said, "Well, you know, you grew up in a time where, look around your church congregation. One in forty of those women was gonna die having a kid. Of course, it's not right to ask them to bear the burden of combat when they're already bearing that burden." And he's like, "I got it." Carl and I had a lot of really frank conversations about sex and [gender roles].

Cohen: And why in particular did you want to follow and observe American soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan?

Solaro: Because those were the wars of our time and I knew that the combat exclusion rule was a lie. And so I wanted to see what people were doing! I wanted to see what the women were doing, I wanted to see what the men were doing. It's not hard to behave yourself if you have good leadership. And it's not difficult to provide good leadership. You know, there's an enormous amount of tolerance by men of this kind of behavior, of men hurting and degrading other women. But I think that in many ways, there is—I like to think deep down—many men do not want to be part of that. I would like to think that many men are looking for men to show them other ways of being— I may be wrong. I watch the defensiveness about the #MeToo movement which is simply women saying, "We wanna be human. We want you to treat us as if we are as human as you are. If you wouldn't want a man doing this to you, don't do it to me."

Cohen: The whole question of the bystander.

Solaro: Yeah. [sighs] Um... I like to think that. So that's what I wanted to see... That's what I wanted to see and mostly I did see it. Where I have been tremendously disappointed is the military's institutional leadership refusing to back up a lot of the people at the lower levels who are making this work.

Cohen: Erin, would you like to describe what you did see in terms of women and then the risks—?

Solaro: [speaking at the same time] And I was also gonna say men which is people sharing barracks together... people training together, people going out on patrols together. Women doing stuff that the standards said they shouldn't be able to do. I mean, one of the things that I was very struck by very young was the gross disparity between I knew what I did in the stables and the physical standards for women in the Army. And—oh, shit... I think the minimum at that time was three push-ups for a woman and the minimum for a man was forty. [Cohen laughs] You're shitting me. [Cohen laughs] I'll tell you a story. We had a guy, a young boy, who was going for his Eagle Scout in the barn where I worked. "I don't think women should have equal rights 'cause they're not as strong as men." [clicks tongue] Okay, boy.

Cohen: [laughs] He was in for a little surprise. [laughs]

Solaro: We broke him... We broke him hard. We made him keep up with us. We were not nice about it. You say that someone is not a citizen and a human being, that someone is chattel, and you expect to be treated nicely? You should be afraid of the consequences. So... I saw that I understood... that there was—very early on—a vast disparity between what women could do and what the military said we could do. And you saw women actually showing that again and again and again in Iraq and Afghanistan. You saw men behaving the way they should behave, as decent human beings, again and again and again in Iraq and Afghanistan, in ways that the social

conservatives said they couldn't be. One of the interesting things about being a radical feminist is when you say, "Rape and sexual abuse are moral choices men make and [that other men] ... do not make." You say, "These are choices, this is not something men are biologically [coughs] driven." [And then men tell you], "You hate men." You know, when we say, "Men are not rapists by nature," [men say] ... "You hate men."

Cohen: Oh, oh [both laugh] I see, I see, I see, right.

Solaro: I'm like... [laughs]

Cohen: Right, right, let's disconnect your [unintelligible] with the [????].

Solaro: Yeah, sorry about that.

Cohen: No, no, no, no, I get it.

Solaro: You know, I've heard this again and again and I will hear social conservatives say, "Fundamentally men are rapists by nature. What can you expect when you put men and women together?"

Cohen: Okay, this one I wanna go back to a little bit if I may.

Solaro: Sure.

Cohen: Like, here you are, you're in basic training, Fort Dix.

Solaro: Segregated basic training.

Cohen: So, how did the training of the women compare to the training of the parallel group of the men of the Military Police [Corps]?

Solaro: Okay, this was just basic training.

Cohen: Oh, oh, before you were assigned, okay.

Solaro: Yeah.

Cohen: Okay.

Solaro: This was just basic training and you know, again, you're asking women to do more than ninety percent less for the PFT [Physical Fitness Test] I mean, we were pushed but I don't think we were pushed nearly that hard.

Cohen: And what about the use of ammunition and arms?

Solaro: We did qualify with rifles, we probably had the same range time, but the expectations were lower and the expectations at a place like Dix are never gonna be the same as...the expectations of a place like [Fort] Benning.

Cohen: [softly] Okay.

Solaro: 'Kay? And places like Benning really are gonna set the standard for the expectations for the young men.

Cohen: And what were the other women like? Did it tend to attract people who like you were saying who were very fit or [unintelligible]? Yeah.

Solaro: [speaking at the same time] I think generally, it was a long time ago, but I think generally, you know, it did not attract women who were particularly content... with the conventional standards for women. I mean...

Cohen: [softly] Yeah.

Solaro: This was one problem you saw in the service academies where the men tended to have very conventional views of sex roles and the women tended to have very unconventional views of sex roles. So they were really at the opposite ends of the spectrum.

Cohen: So, it was already a disconnect.

Solaro: Yeah.

Cohen: Yeah. So after basic training, did you do the AIT [Advanced Individual Training]?

Solaro: No. No, I came back and went into ROTC.

Cohen: Oh, oh, I see and then you—

Solaro: Yeah.

Cohen: —continued your studies.

Solaro: Yeah, and that was a way to do that. That was a recognized way to do it.

Cohen: Oh yeah, I believe it, I just don't always get these things straight.

Solaro: Yeah.

Cohen: But the other thing that I have to say I'm a little bit puzzled about is, like, wouldn't having the segregated training be one way to prevent a certain degree of sexual abuse?

Solaro: [speaking at the same time] Get rid of the guys who do this. Get rid of the guys who do this — the problem's not the women, the problem's not the guys who don't do this, the problem is the guys who do this. Get rid of 'em. No one who preys upon their fellow citizens is fit to bear arms in defense of the republic. They have disqualified themselves.

Cohen: So, what are the laws regarding it and why were they not applied after—?

Solaro: Why do we not apply laws against rape? Why is Brett Kavanaugh on the Supreme Court? Why are hundreds of thousands of rape kits sitting untested all over the country? You know, when I was at Indiana University, Kavanaugh's fraternity—and not all fraternities had this reputation! — but DKE [Delta Kappa Epsilon] was one of those fraternities with the reputation of a pack of rapists! Nobody did nothing. You know, I know he was at Yale [University] but he was DKE! You don't pledge a fraternity without knowing what they are. There were fraternities that had the reputation as a bunch of nice young guys living together... you know, forming a very close social

relationship, but... you could go there as a woman and not have to worry about your safety.

Drunk or not. They had good reputations. DKE wasn't one of 'em. SAE [Sigma Alpha Epsilon] was another. Why do we tolerate this behavior? People will say, "Oh, well, if you don't wanna be raped, don't go into a fraternity! Don't get drunk at a fraternity." I'm thinking, Wait, if your expectation is that these guys will rape a woman who gets drunk... [softly] shouldn't you bust up the place?

Cohen: Yeah. Yeah.

Solaro: Shouldn't you bust up the place?

Cohen: [pause] No, I hear what you're saying, you're saying—

Solaro: No.

Cohen: — it's part of a whole—

Solaro: Yeah.

Cohen: —society problem, not only military.

Solaro: [speaking at the same time] Yeah. The only reason I think basic training should maybe be segregated... is to deal with the aftermath of significant social acculturation to physical weakness that women endure. That's the only reason I think basic training should be segregated, and if you told me, "But we get even better results despite that by integrating." I'd be like, Okay, fine. You've shown me the data...I don't have a philosophical position on that, my only position's practical.

Cohen: Yeah, yeah. Like how to achieve the best results.

Solaro: Yeah!

Cohen: Yeah.

Solaro: Again, the notion that if you put men and women together, men will automatically rape and beat and brutalize and abuse women? You know, the conservative position? Wait a minute, I'm a radical feminist, I thought I was supposed to [Cohen laughs] hate men, have a low opinion of them! [both laugh] I'll tell you, you know, we've talked about horses, I knew a woman who had... Russian Wolfhounds that she kept in packs. And she had this fabulous dog named Halbert [his name was Halbert, and sometimes Prince Halbert] who ran one of her packs. The adjective I and a number of people used to describe Halbert was "noble." He would break up dog fights. I mean he'd [slapping noise] beat skulls if he had to! But Halbert was a lovely, lovely dog and he was not a bully and he was not a thug and that's not unusual. This behavior's not unusual. Not in humans, not in dogs, not in horses. We're not merely chimps with clothes.

Cohen: You had a wonderful quotation—of course I can't remember it—from the letter basically saying to the effect that the good soldier is the person who's not a [laughs] coward and not trying to victimize and has a good decision making and there really is no room for people who are...

Solaro: "There's no room for guys like that, for men who mistreat their sisters in this band of brothers" or something like that. Interestingly, that quote was picked up—I wanna say Lieutenant General David Morrison, Chief of the Australian Army, he issued a PSA in I wanna say 2013, and I'm like... How? I think that's my quote. [both laugh] I think...

Cohen: On the other hand, it's a good message that bears—

Solaro: Yeah!

Cohen: —repeating.

Solaro: Yeah, no. I mean, I'm thinking, either you [General Morrison] or one of your aides read my book 'cause I wrote that line. So, yeah, I mean, you could take that attitude. Hypermasculinity does

not have to denigrate women. Hypermasculinity could be—and ...a great deal more biologically accurate-- instead of calling a weak man a pussy, you...[praised] a really strong, tough, stoic man as a pussy, saying, "Yep! He's worthy of his mom!" You know, hypermasculinity does not have to be cruel or unkind. The same way being, you know, feminine and enjoying makeup and does not have to be and in fact rarely is about trapping a man. Sometimes you just like to wear pretty purple eyeshadow and the guy who thinks that your natural lid color [Cohen laughs] maybe he's missing that all important...[second] digit of his IQ! [both laugh]

Cohen: Or is blinded by love or something.

Solaro: I'm sorry?

Cohen: Or blinded by love, [laughs] you know.

Solaro: Oh! [both laugh]

Cohen: How did you get transferred from the MP [Military Police], you know, to the Infantry in Bloomington which you mentioned you had wanted all along?

Solaro: I just asked. I asked and because it was a reserve unit, they said, "Sure." I mean, you know, we were... you know. And the company commander, a guy named Captain Stum he'd been a Marine in Corps [I Corps along the DMZ with north Vietnam]. And so, he had a more intense attitude towards training than a number of the other company commanders.

Cohen: So, you were able to —?

Solaro: [speaking at the same time] I was pretty comfortable in there and I was not messed with. I was not messed with.

Cohen: I think you also mentioned that you were in effect his XO [Executive Officer] because—

Solaro: [speaking at the same time] Yes.

Cohen: Do you wanna—?

Solaro: He had an official XO who was also a former Marine, and for reasons I don't understand that man was absolutely useless. So I just did his job! [both laugh]

Cohen: Were you satisfied?

Solaro: Yeah! But, you know, I also knew it wasn't something I could push further and again, deep down, I felt a great sense of unworthiness. You know, I mean it's really taken me a long time to shake that sense of unworthiness and that fundamentally, I'm a fuck-up. And that really didn't begin to fade until, I would say, about the past five years... How we perceive ourselves is not always how others perceive us.

Cohen: So, it seems it's like two things going gone. On the one hand, the Army has that glass ceiling that you're...

Solaro: But I was very damaged and even with the best will in the world... You know, I did a lot of self-sabotage in many different areas of my life because I just believed, you know, again this deep sense of unworthiness and that goes very far back to childhood. Very, very, very far back to childhood. And that was a very painful thing to come to grips with in preparation for this. So! You know, this is just life. This is just life.

Cohen: Recently, I got a phone call by a professor of psychology who's teaching a class on PTSD [Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder] to veterans, I think in connection with the VA [U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs] at Sheridan, Wyoming. And he wanted to encourage [sighs] his students to do interviews 'cause he viewed it as kind of iterative, like you take a look at the trauma and you put it back on the shelf and then trauma moves on and you take another look. And I found it

interesting because whether the trauma was in a military setting or not, it does seem like a way that we can deal with our demons—if we have demons.

Solaro: Yeah. I think most of us do but it takes a long time to do that. And, you know, frankly we live in too much of a market society that sees our human worth pegged to our income. A market economy's one thing, but [a market] society is something else. And there's no invisible hand in the marketplace: the market, the economy is formed by how we view human beings and their...[inherent human worth] or [lack thereof]. And so, you know, this is why we have all this talk about people selling themselves and so on and so forth. That's very hard for me to do.

Cohen: May I ask if you're a spiritual person?

Solaro: Sure... I don't know... I don't know, you know. I'm the product of two failed baptisms: one Protestant, one Catholic. [both laugh] Could be why I married a Jewish guy who didn't have much use for organized Judaism either. I had a Catholic father, Protestant mother and they each baptized me once. [both laugh]

Cohen: They cover their bases, sort of.

Solaro: Yeah!

Cohen: Yeah. [both laugh] 'Cause it seems to me like, well, that and you seem to have a very, sort of known who you were very early on. So, what also struck me—it seems you had a very sense early on as to what is honor and what a person should give to the state a bit like, you know, Colonel Pritzker's idea of the Citizen Soldier. But it seems to me it was, like, in your mind and your heart much earlier and I kind of wonder how you came to that.

Solaro: I would say, not so much the state, but, you know, human beings are obviously one of the most social critters out there. Ants... although it feels wrong to compare us to ants. Or honeybees, how's that?

Cohen: I like ants though.

Solaro: Yeah, I understand, but I'm thinking of that Henry David Thoreau essay on ants.

Cohen: I'm not familiar with it.

Solaro: I think it's Thoreau. Okay. It just seems wrong to compare us to any insect we consider mindless.

Cohen: [softly] I see, okay.

Solaro: Yeah. And I don't wanna choose that kind of inflammatory rhetoric. But we're incredibly social. We're incredibly social and civilization is inherently a social, collective, communal... pick, your adverb... endeavor where people... pool their resources and their strengths to cover others when they are weak and in turn, others cover for them and provide for them when they need it. I don't see society as homogenized steel or a stew that's been simmered well past the point of... I see it as... individuals united together by a web of responsibility, obligation, love, affection, desire—all these different motives—to make something, create something together at a variety of different levels. And I think it is a shame that so much of that creative energy that's inherent in being human is often wasted. I don't think that most people are living lives of... well, sometimes I do think people are living lives of frustration, you know, that too many people are so worried about making a living that they don't have the time to... [sighs] be part of something larger, spend time with more people than just outside their families. That's something of an inchoate answer.

Cohen: Something of a—?

Solaro: An inchoate answer.

Cohen: [softly] Oh, oh, I don't know...

Solaro: You know, I will say one of the things that's always touched me about Colonel Pritzker is that generosity and that sensitive... That's not common in anyone.

Cohen: [softly] No... No... Yeah, that's true... I'm jumping around here, so don't mind me, but in your book, "*Women in the Line of Fire*," you had mentioned that it was found that it was more comfortable for the Muslim women to be searched by other women, the American servicewomen. And would you like to describe a little bit about what you had seen?

Solaro: [pause] I think it's always comfortable for us to be searched by someone of our own sex. You know, Islam in many ways only takes very common, ancient... and... intensifies them. [sighs] You know, what I did see—I had a situation of an Afghan woman saying, you know, to me, "Oh, does she speak English?" "Yeah." "I have to talk to her!" She was an Afghan woman, but it was just very interesting, you know. And the servicewomen tended to be very respectful of them. But they opened up to us.

Cohen: They opened up to women?

Solaro: Yes, they would not be allowed to speak with men. And women do have... a different relationship to force and violence than men do. Men, if you want to get a man to do stupid things, just taunt him with being a woman... The women are the ones who raise these young men, they keep society going, even in the most segregated of societies women will then do all the scut work and dirty work of keeping that society going at the most basic level. Or not all, but they will do a lot of it. Yes, they have to live in their societies and with their men, but they

also have a natural disinclination to... unnecessary violence. They wanna be protected by their men from other men...Although, [sighs] is any level of violence *necessary*? But... we tend to want to see things ramped down. And we know across cultures when women are involved in the peace process—that process is going to be more stable; the outcome is going to be more stable, and more durable than if only men are involved. They are apparently only involving men in the negotiations with the Taliban in Afghanistan. You know who's gonna get it in the neck! A lot of women are now going to be starved to death—once the Taliban come back to power, a lot of women are going to be starved to death by the families they've “dishonored”, and their daughters will be treated like dogs and worse... The word was put out about U.S. servicewomen that they're all prostitutes... [sighs] [Cohen laughs] ...and yet, I remember one time... we were passing a number of Afghan women, fully veiled, burqas, everything. These women made a point of coming up to each of us—and just one by one—and taking our hands. Which, of course, you do not do—a “decent” woman doesn't do to a prostitute woman. Because prostitute women are the designated targets of male sexual violence.

Cohen: So, it's very moving because it sounds like the American servicewomen were almost providing another role model of what can be.

Solaro: We were showing a different way of being. You know, my take is we should have gone in—and of course, you would've had the whole country in arms—drafted the women. [Cohen laughs] Drafted the women, taught them literacy, taught them armed and unarmed combat... But you know, that is a total inversion of quote-unquote “the natural social order.” If you think about it, think about what would happen if you took Billy [Braxton] Bragg's name off Fort Bragg—home of the American Special Forces community—and renamed it Fort Tubman. Billy Bragg was a bad

general. Harriet Tubman was an outstanding soldier and low-level commander for whose daring and hardihood and courage and determination America has very few peers. But what would it be like, how would it change your conception... of that branch, of yourself? Not just that branch, but that [entire] specialty and yourself as a male soldier if it was Fort Tubman. And your patron saint was not Billy Bragg, white, confederate general, but Harriet Tubman, this little, petite, dainty black woman. [softly] She was petite, and she was dainty.

Cohen: [pause] Did you read *Quiet*—of course I forgot the name of the author [i.e. Susan Cain], it just came to me right now—where I think he's trying to fight against the corporate push in America that everybody has to be an extrovert all the time and keep pushing all the time. I don't know if she sees a divide between men and women, but she certainly makes the [laughs] argument for quiet, you know. Like yes, we need Martin Luther King, but yes, we need Rosa Parks. Because she was a modest, quiet woman, you know.

Solaro: She was also an anti-rape activist.

Cohen: No, I didn't know that, so that's interesting.

Solaro: [speaking at the same time] Yeah. We don't often talk about this, but rape was a significant weapon in the arsenal of segregation. Have you read Catharine MacKinnon's book of essays, *Are Women Human?*

Cohen: No.

Solaro: 'Kay. I strongly suggest you read it, especially, I wanna say, the last essay or two are really good.

The first couple essays are clustered when she's working the problem of Bosnian war crimes and the use of rape as a method of ethnic cleansing and as a weapon of war and weapon of

genocide. Then I think she takes a step back of a year or two to really reflect, and the last essays are brilliant. I really recommend you read them.

Cohen: I'm gonna write it down after—

Solaro: Okay.

Cohen: —the interview.

Solaro: Okay. I will warn you, reading Catharine MacKinnon's like reading Andrea Dworkin. They change your perspective forever.

Cohen: One thing that I noted is that you feel that the feminists of the eighties—maybe seventies and eighties—missed the boat completely regarding women and the army?

Solaro: [Speaking at the same time] I think they became more interested in success. I think a lot of feminists became more interested in success and getting the toys the boys had... as opposed to, I believe, a necessary and fundamental reordering of society to include breaking the male monopoly on force [and violence]. Which I believe is incredibly important.

Cohen: Can you say the last sentence again?

Solaro: [speaking at the same time] The male monopoly on force [and violence] ... I do not believe equality consists of doing to men what men have done to us. I believe equality means no more rape. I believe equality means no more undervaluing anyone's work and allowing people to pick and choose the work that suits them. But you have to have the means to enforce this. Law without enforcement power is only a matter of opinion. You know, men should be damned afraid to beat women, to rape women, to argue—as men are doing now—that women should be stripped of the right to vote. You shouldn't be able to say this about anyone or do this to anyone without fear of retaliation. Men fear retaliation when they mistreat other men, and

they should! That's part of what the criminal justice system is set up to do—the other part is to protect property interests—but part of it is, you know, we're gonna remove the motive for revenge. That doesn't exist for women. Or as I say, it's only vigilantism when you know you can expect justice from the system. But if the system doesn't work for you... if the system is set up not to work for you...

Cohen: There's no system, there's no justice.

Solaro: No.

Cohen: [softly] No.

Solaro: No, and it's very troubling. It's very troubling for me to say these things because I'm not an anarchist by nature, quote-unquote... I dread the concept of revolutionary violence. I dread that because that opens the gateway to violence without limits, and I'm someone who sees a lot of unnecessary pain and suffering—which is to say violence—and I would like people to be able to live a more fully human life.

Cohen: Are you heartened by the #MeToo movement, in terms of consequences for rape?

Solaro: I'm waiting for...[men] to go to jail... I'm waiting for...[men] to go to jail. One of the things that does hearten me: there's a woman named Dawn Wilcox who runs a project called Women Count USA. And she is counting femicides, honor killings, here in the United States. She posts regularly on Facebook. It's a very difficult work for her. I need to start donating to her, just a little [sighs] 'cause that's what I've got. But she posts regularly. These guys have track records. Almost all of 'em.

Cohen: Yeah, no, no [unintelligible].

Solaro: [speaking at the same time, loudly] And we're not talking minor!

Cohen: [laughs] No, no, no. No.

Solaro: These aren't parking tickets.

Cohen: [laughs] No. What was the situation of women in Iran—excuse me, in Iraq— when you were, you know, following the [US] forces there?

Solaro: The situation in Iraq got worse after the invasion. Saddam Hussain made it worse [to whip up religious-nationalist sentiment and we made it worse still]. And you see this worldwide, you're seeing it now. Whenever men want to assert their authority... they almost always begin by making things more difficult for women. And I believe one of the reasons why is not only this very ancient use of women's unpaid labor—sexual, reproductive, economic, uncompensated and appropriated, not just unpaid. But also, because it is such a violent perversion of nature that... it frightens many men... I mean think about it, it's one thing if a guy, after due provocation, beats the crap out of somebody his own size... in something that is fundamentally self-defense or really gross, offensive provocation that maybe he's tried to walk away from. It's another thing if that person brutalizes someone who's no physical threat to him—and who loves him! That's a really terrifying thing to contemplate... and I think that in some ways it sends the message of: "I did this to my wife, I did this to my sister, my daughter—[softly] you might be next."

Cohen: [pause] Person can't look at himself, for having... these things.

Solaro: [speaking at the same time] No, it's also, "It might be you next."

Cohen: [speaking at the same time] Next, right. [softly] Yeah.

Solaro: If I can do this to someone that close to me who's no threat to me, imagine what I can to do you for crossing me... I also think that it also serves—these crackdowns on women—also serve to

tell men, "This is the appropriate target for your frustration." Authoritarians rarely make things better for the average Joe.

Cohen: This reminds me a bit on the article that you sent me afterwards on Rommel, "*Now You Know: The Last Day of Field Marshal Erwin Rommel*".

Like, would you say his appearance in your dreams is a bellwether to caution people against tyranny and being seduced by a tyrant or by tyranny?

Solaro: As he was. Yeah! Yeah, that was a really potent dream. Over over the decades, I've had two or three very powerful dreams involving him. And James Comey, former FBI director, was not my favorite citizen. He meddled in the election. I want to say, "Shut up, Comey, you didn't run your field office the way a director of the FBI was supposed to do! And you probably wouldn't have done it had Hilary—who's also not my favorite citizen—not been a woman." I mean, c'mon. A little honesty is important here. But... that doesn't change the fact that when Trump asked him for fealty, that is not one of a number of very dangerous moments in the American republic's history. And to Comey's credit, he refused... You know. And that's when I'm like, Okay, I gotta start writing this. And then Charlottesville happened. When I first got the news, I wanted three things, which was an M60 heavy machine gun, lots of ammunition, and a good assistant gunner. Nazis parading armed in American streets.

Cohen: [pause] Well, this is my worry too, that if you don't respect your own country's laws and democratic processes, the way of doing things...

Solaro: You know, we are dealing now with people who respect nothing. You know... they're angry, they're hurt, [sighs] and they are lashing out at people who have not hurt them because they're... a soft target, and they are encouraged to [attack them]. I have no problems with

people making money with a good product and taking care of their people. God knows, Howard Hughes had his sins... but apparently, his people made him rich and he treated them like gold. All of them, and including the kids sweeping the shop floor, you know, who looked sharp. "Hey kid, wanna get an engineering degree on my dime?"

Cohen: [softly] Wow.

Solaro: Yeah, I mean, he would walk his shop floors and if he saw somebody—

Cohen: Smart.

Solaro: —you know, doing more than they needed to or what have you, it's: "Hey kid, wanna go to engineering school on my dime?" My understanding is, Christmas and Thanksgiving—boxcars full of Christmas and Thanksgiving baskets for families. He took care of the widows of his employees. He took them to Disney—you know, just these little perks of saying, "I value you. You are..." I have no problem with that. What a lot of people have a problem with is, as you know, something of a remorseless economy. And my great fear is if this is not stopped by peaceful means, it will be stopped by revolutionary means. And I dread revolutionary violence, but I see there's been over the past, I would say, forty to fifty years enormous amount of money going into encouraging these right-wing movements. And I dread the consequences of that... of these growing right-wing movements when combined with mechanization and climate change. I see Trump as a harbinger... I do not want the American... experiment to fail. There's a woman in my hotel where I'm staying, lovely lady, she came here from Syria... which is a civil war in part over water. Am I anti-immigration in policy? Yes. Am I anti-immigration in people? No. I'm an immigrant myself and I want people like this to come here and find nothing but work, happiness, peace, love. You know, regardless of what I think policy should be, I want the

people who are here to be valued and honored citizens of the Republic. And even if you must turn people away, by God, you don't separate families... There's necessity and then there's using necessity as a cover for barbarism.

Cohen: I agree [laughs] actually. [softly] Yeah.

Solaro: You know, one of the interesting things about Erwin Rommel is on a personal basis, no matter what his government is doing...no matter how [violently] crazy everyone around him is going, he is somehow always trying to deradicalize the situation. And this is...a constant theme in his life. Very interesting man. [The Desert Fox], That Guy in the Tank, is not nearly so interesting...

Cohen: [softly] Yeah... You know, it was interesting your point that he might have preferred to be in North Africa farther away where he could have more control—

Solaro: Yes.

Cohen: —over how to run things. [softly] Yeah.

Solaro: Yeah. I think that... let's say it was just simply less morally fraught. He had more control. You don't know what he would have done had he been assigned to the Russian front. But the fact that he tolerated somebody like Stauffenberg [who openly avowed his desire to kill Hitler] who was practically the least discreet man on the planet?

Cohen: [pause] [laughs] Yeah. Yeah.

Solaro: What can I—? [both laugh] I mean, you know what your divisional commanders, chiefs of staffs, are saying, okay?

Cohen: [softly] Yeah... Well, it seems to me like you'd found in your partner Philip Gold —and I'm sorry he passed away—

Solaro: It was very hard.

Cohen: [speaking at the same time]—just a few months ago.

Solaro: It was very hard.

Cohen: [softly] Right.

Solaro: And he was my husband, we were married.

Cohen: Right, husband. Like it seemed that you found a true partner—somebody who's taking the military and the politics and the—

Solaro: [speaking at the same time] The cultural issues, yeah.

Cohen: The cultural issues--like you had a real partner in that. And you had mentioned in one of the e-mails that your views had influenced him. I'm curious, on the one hand, to hear about that and the other hand, you dedicate your book to him for making everything possible. So, I guess my question is how did you two influence each other?

Solaro: Well, I suffered from severely academic writing. [both laugh]

Cohen: It's a disease. It was curable!

Solaro: Yes! Yes! And he just, you know, he would not let me get away with that. And then I took that to the next level when I started writing a lot of marketing copy. And that kind of shows with “Now You Know”, except, you know—I wouldn't write marketing copy like that, I deliberately went with a slightly longer sentence structure to reflect a Germanic sentence structure. As in, ...there might be a verb in here, somewhere, [Cohen laughs] possibly at the end. [both laugh] So my voice benefited greatly from him. And he had a background in studying advertising, which he introduced me to and again I took to the next level by actually doing marketing writing myself. Where you want maybe a seventh-grade sentence structure—but —you can do a lot of

really complicated stuff while writing at a seventh-grade level. [However], you have to respect your reader to do that... You're not dumbing it down, you're making it easy for them to digest.

Cohen: No, I agree. How do you make something accessible, especially if the topic—

Solaro: [softly] Yeah.

Cohen: —is not a familiar one?

Solaro: Yeah. So, and he just pushed me and pushed me and pushed me to try and get beyond this very deep sense of worthlessness. And he had his own issues. On the other hand, he came out of the conservative movement. He was a conservative for many years. He was never at home there—ever, ever, ever. And when he met me, he became unable to delude himself about what the conservative movement was.

Cohen: What did he think he liked about it?

Solaro: What he wanted was an aristocratic and humane regard for excellence in human beings and their endeavors. [both laugh]

Cohen: But would you think that it reflected like Republicans of a much earlier generation, like the grandfather of Bush [i.e. Senator Prescott Bush, 1895-1972], like that generation?

Solaro: Well, and even then, it was very sugarcoated too because it excluded so many people. He wanted an aristocratic excellence that was open to everyone and could be achieved by anyone... He... [both laugh]

Cohen: Mirrored all the way. [laughs]

Solaro: And he wanted everyone to be able to seek that and find that. He wanted a society structured in such a way that encouraged people to be everything they could be, and valued for that... In other words, an encouraging people to stretch up, not a levelling down. And that's my

definition of equality: an encouragement of people to stretch up and make it possible... Not everybody can be a Rembrandt. Not everybody can be an Akhmatova or an O'Keeffe or... But... but... the openness to talent is not what's wanted. You know, I told you we waste so much of people. So that's what he wanted, and he wasn't finding it, and he was watching his hopes and ideals slip further away. And he met me. And he'd had a series of silent strokes—he was increasingly unable to keep from expressing his discontent with conservatism.

Cohen: You mentioned he'd been part of a think-tank?

Solaro: Discovery Institute in Seattle. He moved out to Seattle because he and his ex-wife had a boy, and she—she was an engineer—got very lucrative work in the oil fields. [both laugh] Very, very lucrative work. [both laugh]

Cohen: Okay so he was part of this think-tank and—?

Solaro: And they got taken over by the religious right. He'd say, "I could practically smell the Inquisition on these guys." Before that...he was at another think-tank, I forget which one it was—I'll remember in a while. I'll remember in a while. But said, , "We would open our days by praying God's guidance for the privatization of Amtrak." [Cohen laughs] And Social Security. [both laugh] So he meets me, and I am just—and he blew up his career trying to stop the Iraq War.

Cohen: So, I think you had said that you had a post.

Solaro: Yes.

Cohen: And I'm wondering why and how you helped reinforce or influence Philip?

Solaro: We could both read a map, a troop basis, and a budget ledger. We suffered from an inability to ignore reality. By the way, [Cohen laughs] what are our actual goals in Iraq? Oh, great, we're going to overthrow Saddam Hussain. Well, what replaces him? How long are we gonna do this

occupation thing? [pause] And oh, by the way, our biggest concern in that region is Iran. The Iraqi army checkmated the Iranian army for years and years and years. Are U.S. strategic goals really—do they really benefit by destroying the Iraqi army that blocked Iran's ambitions? Because Iran is the once and future Persian empire, the same way China's the once and future Middle Kingdom. You don't have to like Saddam Hussain to say [breathes in] checks and balances.

Cohen: [laughs] The least of the evils. Yeah.

Solaro: Yeah. I mean, alas, he was the best Iraqi society could do for itself... And this is fundamentally a conservative take: you can't change people. People can change themselves and societies can change themselves, [when they decide]: "This is not how we wanna be. We'd like to be better." But foreigners—infidels—cannot come in from the outside and say, "Guess what?" [both laugh]

Cohen: Yeah.

Solaro: You know, I mean. So, and he was right and years later people would tell him he was right and he's like, "Can I have my think-tank job back?" "Uh, no..." He paid a very high price because I, as a feminist who wanted to end the combat exclusion rule, I was the enemy. I made, I turned him into a traitor.

Cohen: Oh, oh, I see, I see. [laughs] Like, okay, right, okay, you're the source of, yeah.

Solaro: I, yeah. [Cohen laughs]

Cohen: [pause] Well! [both laugh] Well, when did you get married and when did you decide to move to Israel, to Karmiel in particular?

Solaro: So, we got married on, I wanna say, December the 24th, 2007. And the publishing industry was dying. We ended up leaving with \$87 between us. That was it. No Social Security, no pension,

no nothing. Because Israel paid a resettlement allowance and we liked the idea of citizen medicine. I'd had a really good exposure to what American medicine was becoming. At that point, the only work I could get was selling Medicare Advantage, which has a bad name, but was an outstanding plan in rural Washington state—niche product but really, really good. And you'd get agents coming in, they're like, "Oh, we're free-market capitalists, we're sales managers, salesman, etcetera, etcetera." And after about six weeks, it just—all of them, socialized medicine, socialized medicine, socialized medicine. We saw people who had been crippled by treatable injuries, we saw people going without health insurance, I mean... just unforgivable.

Cohen: It is unforgivable.

Solaro: I covered four remote, rural northern counties in Washington state, and I what saw there still haunts me... Really, really intense poverty. Here, you get it concentrated, there it's in isolation and it's really hard to help people 'cause things are so remote... You know, I saw one old woman coming out who lived in such insecure circumstances, she came out to my car with a .44 [Magnum] to escort me into her trailer... and took me back out to my car. You know, and she told me, "When you come here, call me. I will come get you." I told my boss, "I ain't going back in there." [Because] I had a really bad feeling about going back... So we liked the idea of citizen medicine. We lived in an absorption center in Be'er Sheva for about a year. Very shell-shocked. We'd gone through near-death experience. When you leave with \$87 and that's it? 'Kay. And for sure I was not gonna prostitute myself. I woulda taken my own life... We lived an absorption center in Be'er Sheva. By the way, social services in the United States did nothing for us, could not, would not help. Couldn't help us. Didn't have the budget.

Cohen: And you had no Veteran...

Solaro: No.

Cohen: Benefits, nothing? Yeah.

Solaro: Nope... So Israel has an absorption basket, and I thought, "Well, that's at least a place to start."

[both laugh] They put us up in an absorption center for about a year. We got a grant through the Go North program. I found work... The Go North program's how we ended up in Karmiel.

Cohen: [softly] Okay, yeah.

Solaro: So... I found work. Now I'm a tiny partner at a little medical device company.

Cohen: [pause] Would you like to stay or would like to—?

Solaro: I'm open.

Cohen: [speaking at the same time] —come back to the U.S.? Yeah.

Solaro: I'm open. I have to tell you, I really like citizen medicine. You pay into it with your taxes, there's no cap on your taxes like with FICA [Federal Insurance Contributions Act] here. You just pay into it according to how much you make, and it's there whenever you need it...On the one hand the price of coffee is a little expensive, on the other hand...all the chemotherapy you want is free...
[both laugh] I mean, I can also tell you, rabies shots are also free.

Cohen: Oh, no kidding, like. [both laughs]

Solaro: ...Philip used to say, "Well, but what about —" 'Cause he came from this free-market thing of, "Well, what about... people wanting to run up the bill with all these exotic treatments." [laughs]
And then, he goes through chemotherapy, he's like, "I really [laughs] don't want any more!"
[both laugh] We went through, I believe, five or six rounds... I've got all the records. And part of the problem with our situation was, I know now, he had silent strokes, he almost certainly had

silent strokes while we were living together. And I simply could not get him to comprehend the danger we were in. I simply could not get him.

Cohen: Do you mean physical danger or the isolation —

Solaro: Both.

Cohen: —from the previous—

Solaro: Both.

Cohen: —conservative groups?

Solaro: Yeah, both. I simply could not get him to comprehend that when you have X number of dollars, your lives are at grave risk. And I had quit my job because I was having intense suicidal ideation... I mean, really intense like thinking about driving in front of fully loaded logging trucks or driving off... you know. And I should have been eligible for unemployment, but my company screwed me over.

Cohen: [softly] Oh... Was it partly prompted by seeing all this, like, severe misery that could've been rectified?

Solaro: Yeah. Yeah. You know... I'm totally opposed to outsourcing. Automation be should be used to make work less tedious and...less dangerous, not to increase profits. Perhaps you're familiar with Nick Hanauer who's like, "You know, people like me make money when people have money to spend..." Or Henry Ford, who had lots of problems—he wasn't a saint—but he understood, "I could sell more cars if more people can buy them!" [pause] There's so much work that needs to be done. There's infrastructure, there's education, there's all kinds of stuff that we need that's not market based... But we could make it happen. We've solved, pretty

much, the problems of production and you don't need to consume, consume, consume to keep the economy going. That may sound heresy in these walls.

Cohen: Well no, I was just thinking it sounds like that you have a lot of faith in the human potential and how to make it happen. And not only in the military, but I think altogether in our society. And as a former Canadian, it is a little scary moving to a society with no healthcare or no—

Solaro: Yeah.

Cohen: —social med, not that it's not [laughs] great there either, but you know, but just as an idea. Yeah.

Solaro: It is very frightening. You know, I got fired in Israel for telling a man to keep his hands to himself. Also, his gut. Was trying to rub his gut against me. [sighs] But I didn't have to worry about COBRA [both laugh] My husband was on chemo at that time. [both laugh] You know?

Cohen: Yeah.

Solaro: When you work part time, you still keep your social benefits!

Cohen: Yeah...

Solaro: ...It's not hard to do. We pretend it's hard.

Cohen: What are your plans for the future?

Solaro: I have to say I love my company. I'm open to what I find. I'm not looking, I'm open to what I find. I think I told you, we're in the business of making particularly limb surgery safer, less painful for the patients. Better experience for the surgeon so it's easier for the surgeon to do a good job. Simplify supply chain and life cycle cost we're about a thousand to fifteen hundred dollars less than the technology we're replacing. You know? [Cohen laughs] It's win-win, for everybody except for we're replacing fundamentally a large blood pressure cuff for a pneumatic

tourniquet, which is technology that's over a century old. Plus the Esmarch bandage to drain the blood before you apply the tourniquet—and that dates back to the Franco-Prussian War.

Cohen: It's time to move on.

Solaro: Yeah. Yeah. [Cohen laughs] Yeah, I mean it's tried and true and it was the best alternative until about ten years ago.

Cohen: [softly] Wow.

Solaro: So now we're trying to replace that. So I like what I'm doing, I'm in the position of making people's lives a little better every day and that's a great position to be in. But there's some writing I'd like to do: I'd like to do a book called *The Woman Citizen* that covers a lot of these issues... because we are now dealing with a resurgent, right-wing, fascist to be honest movement that has as its fundamental premise the control of women. To strip us of any right to control our bodies, any ability to control our bodies, that says women should not have the vote, that says we should not work. And women should be a lot angrier—and I don't mean wearing pink pussy hats... and a lot more resolute than they are... Because violence against women, the standards by which women are treated, establish the acceptability of violence in the society. Not just for us, but also the men in our lives, including our sons and our husbands. We're the bellwethers... If you can do that to a woman, you are implicitly telling men you can do that to them. And one of the things I like to say is, as dim as Hitler's opinions of German womanhood were, he was an absolute moral and physical catastrophe for German manhood... and I believe those two are fundamentally related. You know, again, the radical feminist is saying, "Men are not rapists by nature." And you've got people who claim to respect manly men saying, "Yes they are! You hate men..." [Cohen laughs] And men who are violent to women are often very

violent to men as well. We're the training ground... And we can do better because we are more than chimpanzees in pretty clothing and make-up. [both laugh] Chimpanzees are nasty.

Bonobos aren't saints, but they're a little nicer to each other.

Cohen: [laughs] Yeah. Yeah in general, how do we cultivate morality and a will in people and, you know, control over their worst instincts, etcetera etcetera?

Solaro: You start off by treating people kindly and establishing guidelines and standards that are fair, transparent, and enforced. There are consequences. Life is much easier and nicer if you don't go around brutalizing people. And you take the people who are a little more aggressive and a little more energetic and you turn them into guardians... You know, you can encourage people to put their strength and courage to good use. One of the kindest, gentlest people I've ever met, I mentioned him, Carl Bernard [<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/03/10/AR2008031003058.html>]: Silver Star, helped found the Special Forces Q Course. He chose as his obituary photo, there's a picture of him with—I think she's Hmong but who knows—Vietnamese girl. She's sitting on his lap, she's probably the daughter of friends, and she's got this look on his face of, [clicks tongue] "I don't know if I like sitting on your lap but I'm sure not afraid to tell you so!" [Cohen laughs] And Carl's like, "I got a little kid on my lap. Life is good!" [both laugh] ...

Cohen: Yeah.

Solaro: Which is what makes it so interesting. And another guy I talked about this with was a guy named Jon Rider, [<https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/name/jon-rider-obituary?pid=178412649> ; <https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/name/jon-rider->

obituary?pid=144852876]whom I interviewed for "*Women in the Line of Fire*". His last command was West Coast Infantry School for the Marine Corps.

Cohen: Oh!

Solaro: That's one of those positions where you don't want someone who wants to be a general. You want someone's who's just really, really good and they wanna do a good job and if they step on somebodies' toes, they don't really care. "I've been at my terminal rank since I qualified [laughs] for my pension." [both laugh] And Jon, in fact, when he retired went back into education in nuclear non-proliferation. But we talked about this, and he himself was a big trim guy, not muscular but tall and trim. He'd been a rower and he had that physique. And he looked on the one hand like you would expect a Marine infantry officer to, but there was this very gentle courtesy to him. There's a sense of—and it wasn't compensatory, it just was. And I mentioned this, and he said, "You know, now that you're articulating this, I've picked up on that too... You're putting into words something I've noticed a lot: of the people I know who've done amazing things in combat, they're generally pretty nice people..." Like once you—

Cohen: [speaking at the same time] These are our models. Sorry, I didn't mean to hit you.

Solaro: No, it's like once you've done that, once you've seen that, why would you ever wanna be cruel again? [pause] And that line I think was—I remember when legal recognition of same-sex marriages was a hot issue. And there was this old, old guy, talking about his granddaughter, and he's like, "I was in World War II..." I think he was a navigator on bombers. He's like, "I've been through a war. I don't get why anybody who's been through a war would ever wanna hurt anybody again. For any reason."

Cohen: [unintelligible] Yeah.

Solaro: "Course I support my grandkids gettin' married. You know? [pause] Why would I wanna hurt anybody?" Guy from, you know, rural, upstate Maine, salty looking old guy! [laughs]

Cohen: And right, they [i.e. we] wouldn't expect maybe, like condoning, right, the same-sex marriage... [laughs].

Solaro: Yeah, not who you'd expect!

Cohen: [Cohen laughs] Is there something that you would like to talk about that we have not talked about? Or some things that... I didn't ask that you would like to--?

Solaro: [speaking at the same time] No, you know, I didn't come in with an idea of what I wanted to cover. I just figured I would flow with it, but as I said, I did some introspection. I don't think we've talked that much about my husband.

Cohen: What, would you like to?

Solaro: Do we want to?

Cohen: Well, I think on the one hand, it's not an interview about him, but maybe if you want to talk a little bit more about, you know, how he affected your life or...?

Solaro: It was... He was an Intelligence officer for many years. He came from a horrific background... You know, yeah, I'm gonna talk about this because this all goes together.

Cohen: Okay.

Solaro: His father was a small-town thug... And even by that standards, a very violent man... Physical, emotional, sexual abuse—he prostituted both my husband and his brother... Somehow, they both got out. Philip got into Yale. They both, interestingly, joined the Marine Corps... Looking for a better way to be a man, I suppose... or in Philip's case, he was looking for someone to toughen him up. I don't know. I know very little about his service in the Marine Corps... He was

an intelligence officer for eleven years. I know he signed several lifetime nondisclosure agreements... I believe most of them... are tied to Henry Kissinger. As in, Henry Kissinger's death plus ten years. Lot of this stuff, he said was probably destroyed in the St. Louis fire. Doesn't surprise me. That was, for sure, pretty convenient... He rarely discussed Vietnam. I know that he was there, I talked to people...

Cohen: Who had seen him?

Solaro: No, he was there... I suspect some of his operations there were external to the Corps, what's called external to the Corps... [sighs] I believe based on his writings—and I showed them to friend of ours, Korean vet who'd been in the ASA [United States Army Security Agency], the Army intelligence agency, so another intelligence type. I believe he saw a massacre, was present at a massacre in which a woman was brutally killed. I believe he never forgave himself for being unable, for lacking the courage to stop that. Philip had an unusual affinity for radical feminism... At the very end, we talked over a lot this and he would always get unusually defensive. He left clues as breadcrumbs, so I had to pull a lot of this stuff together and confirm it with the few people he told anything to... But I remember at the end, we were watching the Kavanaugh hearings and he was like, "I used to be a Keynesian feminist, as in the supply of angry women greatly exceeds the male demand for them." [both laugh] And he said, "I was wrong. Y'all should just be killing us..." And I said, "Well... [sighs] Maybe. [But we would like to avoid that]." [both laugh] But I mean, what is rape but the deliberate destruction of another human being? [pause] And with less dignity... which is what he meant... He understood that. And a couple days later, he says, "Well, you're sounding a lot like Andrea Dworkin today." And isn't there a passage in Proverbs that talks about the war horse whose neck is clothed with

thunder and when he hears the sound of trumpets, stamps and snorts? I look at him like that horse and I say, "Did she ever write anything...?" And he said, "That wasn't self-evidently true? No." "Didn't you tell me you read her and thought she was crazy?" "I did. I was young and running with a bad crowd." Who included Jim Webb, who wrote *Women Can't Fight...*"

All his life —not all his life, but within a few years after he came back from Vietnam, was in grad school and writing, Phillip was tormented by a novel he was unable to finish... called *Change of Command*. And... it began with a massacre in Vietnam, was bookended by a massacre by women Marines—by the murder by torture by women Marines of an Okinawan prostitute... And this was going to be his conservative defense of the Marine Corps and why women... [Cohen laughs] And he eventually worked it so it was going to be a condemnation of the Marine Corps. And I brought him one hundred and eighty degrees. I helped him go on. The reason it tormented him—artistically tormented him was because he could not be honest with the fact that in fact this was the murder and torture of an Okinawan woman by male Marines. Which happens! Which they do from time to time, and this is an argument against the conflation of arms and masculinity, of the military and manhood, of grouping these things together... I'd read the full version, which he destroyed [to rewrite it, but he saved the first half, upon which he planned to base the rewrite] ... [After his death, I found...that first half]. And I thought, "No wonder it wouldn't come true to you, because you weren't ready to face the truth you knew."

Cohen: [softly] Oh yeah, yeah.

Solaro: And because there was so much personal pain and shame and being unable... to stop that massacre and that murder and that rape... Uh, I don't know if I'm gonna be able to finish that. I

wanna...write *THE WOMAN CITIZEN* and then I'd like to finish *A Change of Command*, but his voice is so different from mine and it's fused with anger and shame and grief.

Cohen: [softly] Oh, his writing? Yeah.

Solaro: [speaking at the same time] Yeah. You know, this is not something I would have dared confront him about when he was alive because it was always—it was clear that there was a lot of pain there. He didn't lie, and he dropped breadcrumbs, but he just didn't—and I asked him if he would like to do an oral history for the Pritzker Library. "Would you like to do it, say around Yom Kippur?" And he said, "No." And I said, "Well, you know... I've got a lotta questions I'd like to answer, too." And he started to get testy with me, and I looked at him. He said, "Don't push me!" Really testy. I just kept looking at him and he said, "There is so much I just want to forget." One of the lines from the original *Change of Command* was "Oblivion should have its share."

Cohen: [softly] Yeah, yeah. Oh.

Solaro: [smacks lips] [pause] He was determined, and he did... He was determined, and he did die destitute because...I realize that money was something he could never bear to have, because the original lesson is money was something men paid to your father, to to rape you. There's other stuff layered on top of it, but that was the—and that's why he walked away from what could have been a very, very promising government career. That's why he torpedoed... 'Cause if he had a dime—you know, he wasn't profligate, he wasn't a spendthrift, but we had to open three different cans of cat food and throw most of them away every day. [both laugh] You see what I'm saying? It's that kinda stuff...And then I just put it all together after he died, all this and ... I knew it was all there, but it was so painful to come to grips with... These are the damages

we do to each other that echo through generations and this, you know... I don't know if this sorta thing comes up very often in this world...

Cohen: I think one hears a lot. I'm also in a position to be a little bit modest that I've been interviewing people for about a year and different generations will speak about—

Solaro: Um-hm.

Cohen: —different things, so... And I'm also myself, to be honest, trying to understand [sighs] the strength of oral histories—

Solaro: Um-hm.

Cohen: —and how to go with them. I've found it intriguing that woman who applied for the job [as an intern] is working at a university where they leave the interviewee like in a room with the equipment. They feel like [there should be] very little intervention. So, all I can say what you were saying is fine, and I myself am trying to understand... [laughs]

Solaro: Yeah.

Cohen: What's the rest best role of—

Solaro: Yeah.

Cohn: —oral history. Yeah.

Solaro: But I suspect this is much more personal in some ways, this covers much more personal territory. But I feel like it's enormously important to pull some of this stuff into a deeper perspective than we commonly think of military issues being.

Cohen: Yes. Yes. Yes. Yeah. Yeah, I agree.

Solaro: You know, women and war are the secret DNA of the world. The relationship of women to war...

Cohen: And I will say that it is part of the scope of the Pritzker Military—

Solaro: Um-hm.

Cohen: —Museum and Library. You know, I mean, I'm not saying it's quite as broad as that, but you know what I'm saying: there are veterans information center within the library both—

Solaro: Uh-hm.

Cohen: —here and online that deal with—

Solaro: Yeah.

Cohen: —some of these issues.

Solaro: Yeah, you know, I think we don't take it as seriously [as we should]. This is one of the reasons why you probably ought to read MacKinnon's *Are You [Women] Human?* because she asks about ethnic cleansing and the use of rape in war, she asks, "Is this in fact how nations are formed?" I think that's a really important question to ask. This is part of what I mean when I say...this is the secret DNA of the world...

Cohen: [breathes in] Yeah. It's not only tangentially related what you were saying about, mentioning, anyhow. We did have an interview by Gunter Nitsch who was a child in Prussia and was escaping with his family under the Soviet control and that his own mother, and her – was definitely raped different—

Solaro: [speaking at the same time] Yes.

Cohen: —times by Soviet soldiers, and you know, and it does, as you were saying raise the question: was this part of the idea of a conquest? So. [softly] Yeah, yeah.

Solaro: To my knowledge, it was not formal. But this is very deeply embedded in our understanding of what men at war do... You know, and it's not talked about, but the Germans did very much the

same thing. It's just most of their victims didn't survive... [sighs] Aw, man! [both laugh] So, look, it's only one o'clock but after that, yeah, I think that we could use some beer.

Cohen: I think so too. Well, in the meantime would you like a Hamantash [baked pastry, associated with the Jewish holiday of Purim]? [both laugh].

Solaro: I gotta ask: what's the red thing?

Cohen: Oh! [Solaro laughs] The red thing? Okay, I baked these over here, but this was given to me yesterday by a woman who somehow seems to be baking us little challah rolls. So, I think it's a mixture of dough and nuts but I guess, obviously, some food [laughs] dye as well. [both laugh]

Solaro: I was gonna say. [both laugh]

Cohen: And yeah. [laughs] And I really thank you for your time and for being willing to look at not the happiest [laughs] issues in our life, you know what I'm saying, both personally and broadly.

Solaro: In some ways it's been very, very... healing to come to grips with this, especially to look at my childhood like that...

Cohen: Yes. Yes.

Solaro: Very painful... So... But... You know, and as I say, I guess I figure any woman who can help force the Pentagon to end the combat exclusion rule, lose everything, start in a new country where she doesn't even know the language, and take care of her husband while he's dying for cancer is perhaps not quite [breathes in] the fuck-up she thinks she is.

Cohen: [softly] Yeah. [both laugh] Well, on behalf of the Pritzker Military Museum and Library, we thank you hope you to begin to honor yourself for all the amazing things that you have done.

Solaro: Thank you. I also wanted to say that Jennifer [Pritzker] was one of the people who helped make, *Women in the Line of Fire Happen...* [sniffs] And that faith in me...

[ENDS 2:18:49]