



Voices from the Rwanda Tribunal

Official Transcript: Christine Graham (Part 13 of 13)



Role:	Senior Appeals Counsel
Country of Origin:	Sweden
Interview Date:	29 October 2008
Location:	Arusha, Tanzania
Interviewers:	Robert Utter Donald J Horowitz
Videographer:	Max Andrews
Interpreter:	None

Interview Summary

Christine Graham discusses the considerable length of ICTR cases, due in part to the unusual nature of the crimes and to an initial lack of infrastructure. She reflects that judicial systems usually are built over hundreds of years, yet the ICTR was tasked with building a justice system in roughly a decade. She observes that while the Tribunal contributes to reconciliation by providing a judicial response to the genocide, the mandate for reconciliation had little influence on the judicial procedures.

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Part 13

- 00:00 **Donald J Horowitz: When you, in fact when you talk about reconciliation, you talk also about this woman who was courageous in identifying . . .**
- 00:06 Yeah.
- 00:07 **DJH: . . . a person. One of the things that oc-, has occurred to me is reconciliation (____) with one's own suffering; a personal reconciliation.**
- 00:14 Yes.
- 00:15 **DJH: And I was, and th-, and that's, needs to come first before any other kind of reconciliation.**
- 00:21 I think so but it's very difficult.
- 00:23 **DJH: Yes, and, and it leads me to the next question which is how do you deal with the content? You know, you've been around a while.**
- 00:29 Mm-hmm.
- 00:29 **DJH: You've been presenting a lot of very difficult content and I'm talking now about you as a person. (__) . . .**
- 00:36 Yeah, I don't think we deal with it.
- 00:39 **DJH: Wh-, what do you mean?**
- 00:40 Well, not very well. It, it, it is maybe too much to expect that we can deal with it. You don't. I mean you-, you're limping ar-, around. It's not that you can deal with it and say, "Okay, I've dealt with it. It's fine. You know, I can handle this." No one can handle it. You're just trying to continue to function and we do that to – you know, some does it better than others.
- 01:05 But I think it's the closeness to the, the witnesses and the closeness to the witnesses' stories and of course the closeness to their trauma and the fact that you think, "How can this man or woman go on?" You know, this person has seen their whole family being slaughtered right in front of them and he's, he or she is sitting here and can actually give me a fairly logical account of what happened with the little details of, you know, my kid was wearing a yellow t-shirt or . . .
- 01:36 You know, those things. And you go home and you feel like, "I can't handle this." But this person can handle it and he or she can get up the next day and continue. Not – I mean we drag them out of their own environment and say, "Come to Arusha. Tell your story (____), in

front of a bunch of people you don't know because we, you know, we have a case against this person then you can go home and continue."

01:59 **DJH: Mm-hmm.**

01:59 And, you know, business as usual. But everyone that i-, is involved in this feels that on dif-, on different levels but obviously no one feels them like the victim does.

02:12 **DJH: Have you, have you sought some help from time to time just to deal with some of the issues?**

02:17 No, I haven't. I'm, you know, not professional help. I think it would probably be a good idea if there were such help on tap.

02:25 **DJH: Mm-hmm.**

02:26 We don't have that. I mean many prosecutors in, in other jurisdiction have 24-hours psychological service. You can pick up the phone and say, "Listen, I'm dealing with this, you know, rape case. It's getting at me, you know. Please, you know, help me. What can I do?"

02:42 We, that service is not provided by the tribunal. It's probably a good thing to think about for the future. Often you seek, you know, support from your colleagues and – but, and I think it's very hard for family and friends to understand what it is that you're doing and suddenly you're– you, you becoming . . . not strange, but you, you change. You, you do change. The work changes you.

03:09 **DJH: And you're different today than you were X years ago.**

03:13 Yeah, and I don't – I'm not saying that that . . .

03:15 **DJH: (_____), yeah.**

03:15 . . . is good or bad, exactly. It's just you, you are different.

03:20 **DJH: Well I guess, finally the question is if you were designing a tribunal in the future . . .**

03:26 Yeah.

03:28 **DJH: . . .some of the things that you had proposed that you think would be more helpful on the larger or smaller scale, you just mentioned one about having some – and you're not the only staff person, I mean and the prosecutors, aren't the only staff people.**

03:43 **DJH: The interpreters, or . . .**

03:44 Of course. Yes.

03:44 **DJH: You know, all of those people. (__), so what would you change to improve?**

- 03:51 It's difficult for me to sa-, to say, you know, to mention concretely how you would do it, but I think it's very important to create an organization where everyone feels that they're involved and that they are stakeholders in this organization. Whether you are the assistant administrator that is dealing with someone's pay or whether you are the person that goes to court and leave the evidence or whether you are the top boss that decides this, that or the other.
- 04:20 I mean, everyone has to feel that this tribunal is for a specific mandate and purpose and "I'm a part of achieving that." It's, this is, it's not about a job opportunity only. Obviously, you know, it's good that people get jobs and they get money. They can feed their families and all of that, but it also has to be a feeling of we're all working for the same thing.
- 04:43 **DJH: And what is this same thing that you're working for here?**
- 04:46 Reconciliation is a part of it whether you think that we actually got to succeed in that or not but it's certainly a motivating factor. I would say that, you know, justice . . .
- 04:57 **DJH: I'm talking about you. I'm talking about you. J-, go ahead. I interrupted. You said justice?**
- 05:00 Yeah, no. I would say justice. I would say justice.
- 05:03 **DJH: Okay.**
- 05:05 It's such a difficult charged concept but I would say justice.
- 05:06 **DJH: Yes. And I'm not going to ask you define it unless you want to.**
- 05:13 I just have a problem accepting that idea that you can have many thousands of people slaughtered within the period of three months and you, people are not going to be held accountable for that. I, I, you know, I like to think that we as a world and we as people cannot accept that and I feel strongly about it.
- 05:40 **DJH: And is that why you said, quote, "I'm very glad I left my, the career that I had started."**
- 05:47 Did I say I'm very glad? Oh.
- 05:48 **DJH: (), I thought that was the word. Or I'm glad. Maybe I put the "very" on.**
- 05:53 Yeah.
- 05:53 **DJH: That you left that career that you'd started to do this kind of work.**
- 05:56 Yeah. I am, you know, it's – I wouldn't have done anythi-, I wouldn't, I wouldn't have done anything different in that respect.

06:07 **DJH: Thank you very much.**

06:08 Yeah, thank you.

06:08 **DJH: You have . . .**