

StoryCorps Interview at the Boston Children's Museum  
Eleanor Spinney and Carole Charnow

ES: We're here to talk about this grandfather whose name was George Hunt Barton. I was privileged to spend time with him when he was an old man and had time to just share with me. He was a storyteller; he was a companion.

CC: When we talked before you said that he really inspired in you a sense of personhood.

ES: Yes he did.

CC: Tell us a little bit about what you mean by that.

ES: It's hard to say except I've always felt since I was a small child that I knew who I was and I realized from knowing other people that that's a gift. There are some people that spend their whole lives trying to find out who they are and I think that grandfather played a very large part in that, of knowing myself as a person who was worthy of learning things and doing things and being respected. And that's the way he felt about everyone.

CC: Well, you know that sense of agency essentially is really at the core of the Children's Museum.

ES: I think it is. Yes.

CC: I think that you know when children walk in and they see this place that's just for them they really feel that they are people to be respected, and you know...

ES: Yes, that's just what I'm getting at.

CC: So how he treated you is really how he designed this Museum for all children it's really extraordinary.

ES: Yes, and I'm pleased to hear that you open the Museum at odd times to children that can't be there in a crowd, that you're trying to meet the needs of each individual child.

CC: Well, that's right. I think that this wide open arms that your grandfather had, this generosity of spirit, he was obviously a great humanist has just been at the core of who we are all these years later. I mean a hundred years your grandfather's heart and soul have survived in the shape and the form of the Children's Museum.

ES: Well I love to talk about it.

CC: I know. And now it will be forever recorded for others to listen to.

ES: Life is good.

CC: It is.