



“Cindy Gallop: Talk Dirty to Me” Season 2: Episode 1

Melinda Byerley: Welcome back to Season 2 of Stayin' Alive in Tech. This episode is labeled Not Safe for Work, not because we're ashamed of anything we're doing, but because we're going to be talking about sex. So, if you're listening to this in the car with your kids, or at work with your boss, you might wanna save it for another time.

Announcer: Welcome to Stayin' Alive in Technology, a series of conversations with Silicon Valley veterans touching on war stories from the past and practical advice for today. And now, here's your host, Melinda Byerley, founding partner of TimeshareCMO.

Melinda Byerley: Welcome back to Season 2 of Stayin' Alive in Tech. I'm very excited to welcome Cindy Gallop to the podcast, but before I get into her background, I want to give you my plea as I usually do to leave a review for us on iTunes or Google Play because when you do that the algorithms help people find us. When I first conceived of Stayin' Alive in Tech a couple of years ago, one of the people that I really wanted to interview from the very beginning was my next guest, Cindy Gallop. When I came up with the concept of naming songs, naming episodes after songs, her Talk Dirty to Me was immediately at the top of my mind and it was one of those ideas that just gets you so smiling and excited that it propels you through all of the effort that it takes to bring something like a podcast to fruit. So, I'm very excited to welcome her, but let me tell you a little bit about her first.

Melinda Byerley: She started up the ad agency Bartle Bogle Hegarty New York in 1998, and by 2003 she was named advertising woman of the year. She is the founder of ifwerantheworld.com. Co-action software and Harvard business school case study that enables brands and consumers to implement the business model of the future, which to her is shared values plus shared action equals shared profit, and then by profit she means both financial as well as sort of social implications. She is perhaps most famous in recent years for a Ted Talk that she gave in 2009, where she talked about MakeLoveNotPorn and it begins with a very sort of provocative statement about being an older woman who has sex with



younger men. And so, this platform that she has built to help young people sort of recognize the difference between sex and porn led to her building a social sex video sharing platform called MakeLoveNotPorn, and we're gonna talk a lot about that today.

Melinda Byerley: There's a lot of infrastructure involved which we'll talk about in a minute. She has also just raised 2 million dollars to scale that company, after a long and arduous process. She'll describe herself as a global sextech pioneer and champion, and she is now raising the world's first and only sex tech fund, which is called alltheskyholdings.com, and you'll hear about how she came up with that name on this podcast. She champions gender equality, diversity, and inclusion everywhere, she speaks at conferences around the world, and she describes her consultancy approach as, "I like to blow shit up, I am the Michael Bay of business." So, as you listen to Cindy and I talk there are a few themes I think you're going to pull out of it. The first is that you'll hear her say the words "it was an accident" many times.

Melinda Byerley: And this is such an instructive lesson, especially for young people. Steve Jobs said this as well, he said, "You can only connect the dots in hindsight." So sometimes it's really important to be open to these opportunities that may not be what you thought your life might be but they can take you to the new and interesting places where you can grow. The second theme you'll hear, and this came out of season 1 as well and I talked about this in the season 1 wrap up, which you can find on our website, is perseverance. Building a sex tech start up turns out to be, to require a lot more from its founder than the average startup because the infrastructure are not available to her given the industry that she's in. And even before that you'll hear her talk about finding challenges and issues in her career and being able to stay on task and not give up, and this is a theme you'll hear over and over; people who built careers in tech, things are going to get hard for various reasons. Sometimes it's the industry, sometimes it's fundraising, sometimes it's the politician environment, but you have to stay with it if you want to make progress.

Melinda Byerley: The third theme I noticed Cindy bringing up a lot was this reality distortion field, and again it really builds on what Steve Jobs said, and you heard Ellen talk a little bit about this in the last episode of season 1, which is the idea of a reality distortion field. If you believe strongly enough in what you're doing, if you're passionate about how important what you're doing is, you can often shape the world to your vision. You



can bring people along behind you, you can think about how to change things in order to make your vision a reality. And that leads into the fourth theme.

Melinda Byerley: Again, sort of echoed, I think we see over and over people saying similar ideas, but expressed in different ways, and it's the idea of thinking as big as you can. So, from the idea of helping people by building a website that helped young people determine the difference between sex and porn, but then realizing there was actually a need to have pro-sex content that was not pornography, to then realizing there was no venture capital funding for sex tech and building a sex tech fund, you can see how Cindy keeps adjusting and refining her vision to make it bigger and bigger and bigger. So with that, enjoy our first episode of season 2, welcome back, and we look forward to hearing from you on our website.

Melinda Byerley: So, Cindy, I was researching you before we got started, and I discovered that you were born in England and you grew up in Brunei, is that true?

Cindy Gallop: That's right, yes.

Melinda Byerley: And I also was sort of very excited to discover that, like me, you actually studied theater later in your academic career, but you studied English literature and you started your career in theater. And I wanted to ask you first, and we're gonna get into the really cool stuff that's coming, but I wanted to ask you how you made that transition into advertising, because it was, if it was like mine, it was not easy.

Cindy Gallop: Well, so, everything in my life and career, Melinda, has happened by accident, so I've never planned anything. And, you know, I fell madly in love with theater at Oxford which has a very thriving student drama scene. And, did everything, wrote, directed, acted, stage managed, and basically went, I just want to spend the rest of my career in the theater. And, [inaudible 00:06:45] wasn't good enough for me as an actress or director but I used to draw a lot when I was younger, and so friends of Oxford pulled me into designing theater posters for them, and from there I got sucked into helping them, you know promote their shows, and I discovered that I really enjoyed that. So I became a theater publicist and marketing manager in the UK, first at a theater called the Yvonne Arnaud in Guildford which was pre-west end. So they covered pre-Broadway shows, big, big names, big theater stars.



- Cindy Gallop: Then I went to the opposite end of the spectrum and I was the marketing manager for the Every Man Theater in Liverpool, which was a kind of experimental community theater. And by this time, you know several years in, I was actually getting distinctly fed up with working 24/7 and earning chicken feet, which is what happens in the theater.
- Melinda Byerley: Even in London, or even in Britain, I always assumed people in Britain in theater got paid better.
- Cindy Gallop: Oh my god yes, theater all around the world, absolutely. And so part of my job promoting the theater was giving talks about it, and so I gave a talk to a group of women in Liverpool, and afterwards one of the women came up to me and she said, "Young lady, you could sell a fridge to an Eskimo." And so I thought, okay, that is the universe telling me something, it's time to sell out this establishment and go into advertising. So I did, although to your point with tremendous difficulty because this was the mid-80's, and back then in the UK advertising was a very sexy industry that everybody wanted to work in, and so, in order to get a job in advertising I had to go right back to the beginning, join the graduate entry level sort of recruitment program four years later than everybody else basically. And so I got a job as a graduate trainee at an agency called Ted Bates, and it was the first job I was offered, I seized it immediately. And, I have to say, it was a very, very good change to make.
- Melinda Byerley: I like to ask, because, I don't want to lead you, but I was curious if you still find that there are things that you learned working in the theater that you brought with you into advertising and into your career later?
- Cindy Gallop: Oh, absolutely. Because, you know, advertising is a very theatrical profession, and so I found that my theater marketing skills were eminently transferrable. You know, both in terms of the fundamentals of publicity, promotion, marketing. But also you know, the fact that advertising is very presentational, and you are always pitching, you're always selling. And so, a theatrical background is very theatrical in that respect.
- Melinda Byerley: I have to talk about how we always work together, that it's a very collaborative art form. So it-
- Cindy Gallop: Absolutely.



Melinda Byerley: I feel the theater people listen to each other better and work in groups better but maybe that's my own personal prejudice.

Cindy Gallop: Do you know, it's interesting because while I, I mean I did enormously enjoy working in theater but, it is a very [inaudible 00:09:48] world, and I found to be frank more intellectual stimulus and more like-minded people in advertising. This is the theater world that I started my career in. And so, you know, I've never missed it, I'm very glad I made the transition, but I have an enormous respect for theater, and actually one of the things I feel very strongly about is democratizing theater, because it is a wonderful, wonderful art form. There is absolutely nothing like sitting in a theater, watching a play, a show, a musical happen before you in real time. And, you know, I would love to see that experience available to many more people. I would love to see many more people realize at a young age that this is a career that you can undertake, and so, to this day I feel very strongly about wanting there to be much more democratic and wider access to theater for people in every possible walk of life.

Melinda Byerley: I couldn't agree more. So thank you for that because it's myself is sort of not wanting to know about the theater part of your past which I found personally interesting. I then, as I was looking through your background discovered that you came to found an arm of an agency in the United States, and again looking as myself as an American born and raised, I'm very interesting to hear about your marketing perspective. So many Americans tend to be very U.S focused, right? It's very hard to culturally market outside of your own country, and I would just love to hear your thoughts about one, coming here as a marketer, starting in the UK or Britain, and marketing there and then coming here and doing that, what you learned, what you saw, what that was like, and any perspective you have for marketers on being able to expand your horizon and do a better job of marketing outside of your cultural knowledge.

Cindy Gallop: Well, so, so actually, starting at BBH New York was also an accident in the sense that, it came about because you know, when I was a young thrustingly ambitious account director, BBH in London, back in, I guess this would be the early 90's, I pinned my boss, Nigel Bogle, one of the to-be's in BBH up against the wall, and said to him as you do when you are thrustingly ambitious account director, "Where am I going in this agency?" And Nigel did the classic management trick of turning the question back on me. He said, "Cindy, you tell us what you want to do and we'll make it happen." And he said, "Don't be bounded by the realms



of the possible. If you want a job that doesn't exist yet, you tell us." So I thought, gosh, okay, can't say fairer than that, I went away, I thought about it, I came back and I said, "Okay, my dream job is running BBH North America."

Cindy Gallop: And at the time by the way we only had the one office in London. And I said, "And, I would be okay with doing it in San Francisco." And I said that because we did have Levi's as a client at the time. But to be my true dream job, I would be starting up that agency in New York. And so Nigel said, "Okay, well interestingly we have recently started talking about the idea of opening up in the U.S so your request is logged." In fact, BBH opened up an Asia Pacific office first, because there were more clients out in that region demanding a presence. And so, I went to Singapore in 1996 as number 2 to help start up and run BBH in Asia Pacific, and then in 1998 I got my wish which was, I moved to New York to start up BBH New York.

Cindy Gallop: And, you know, I think the really important thing about the approach that I took was a couple of things. I mean first of all, I remember back in the fall of '98, and we would have been maybe half a dozen people in a little room in the Tribeca Film Center, temporary offices. And, I said to my team, "Our vision is that we are going to be the best agency in America." And I said, "Now, if they could hear me say that down on Madison Avenue, actually they would be rolling around on the floor in hysterics laughing at the idea of this title British upstart with that vision. But one should always have a big vision. The important thing when you state that your agency is to be the best agency in America, is that that then enables you to measure and evaluate every single thing you do as, does this take us one step closer to being the best agency in America?"

Cindy Gallop: So, that was the vision, and then also very important was, you know I said to my team, you know, we have a British heritage, we are a global agency, but here in America we're an American agency. And I feel that was important because we were absolutely bringing the BBH brand and culture to the U.S. And we had a very clear sense of what we stood for. You know, as with any great brand, great brands have a very clear attitude and a point of view and a position, and they basically go, this is who I am, this is what I stand for, this is what I'm all about. And, either you're with maybe or you're not, and if you're not that's fine. Because there are people who will be. So we had a very clear sense of what the BBH brand stood for, but for me it was also very important that we



absolutely respected and understood the market that we were coming into, and that we thought of ourselves as an American agency.

Cindy Gallop: Because, you know, that is how you really get to you know, get to know your clients, understand their needs, understand their concerns, understand what they want you to do and what you need to do for them, and be able to grow your business in the biggest advertising market place in the entire world. And so, that was really how we approached it.

Melinda Byerley: How do you, going sort of a level deeper, how do you get out of your own way? Right? I think, the very famous case of the Chevy Nova where you name something Nova and in Spanish that means doesn't go. Not a great name for a car, right? In Spanish speaking countries. Did you have things that you found successful in terms of helping your team you know, because we all want to understand but it's different when you're not from there, I guess is what I'm trying to get at. How, if you're a marketer going into any other country, how do you approach this problem and get out of your own way?

Cindy Gallop: Well, that's why it's enormously important to basically hire a local team. That was my principal with BBH New York. I am, I came from London to found it. John Hegarty, our creative partner came with me because the 3 partners BBH agreed that the U.S was such an important market that one of them needed to be there in the early years, and I was very lucky that I got to work with John Hegarty so closely starting up an agency here because, John is just, not only is he a creative genius, he's the nicest guy in the world, and so he and I came from London, and ultimately Emma Cookson who is our chief strategy officer. But, everybody else was American. Everyone else we hired here, I mean we also as we grew, obviously more people you know transferred over from London, but it was about, we have a couple of principals who you know are BBH through and through and know the culture, know the brand. And then we're gonna hire the most brilliant talent in the local marketplace in order to absolutely create a local agency that understands the needs of the market and the needs of the clients.

Melinda Byerley: Yeah, well beyond the languages, there's just cultural difference, and it matters. So yeah that's-

Cindy Gallop: Yeah, absolutely.



Melinda Byerley: That's super interesting. And so, I'm transitioning a little bit quickly, but I do like to ask our guests this question. And it's asking you if you remember the first time that you put your hands on a computer?

Cindy Gallop: Oh golly, what a great question. To be frank, I can't remember the exact first moment. But, it would have been essentially when I joined the avatars in Northern London in the mid 80's, and worked with Ted Bates. I guess it would have been, in terms of having a computer myself, that would have been 1985, because prior to that, in the theater world, it was all like typewriters, you know? Printers and all of that. So 1985.

Melinda Byerley: Yeah, when I chose my college, I chose one that had a computerized lighting board. I'm a little younger than you are, so that was in the late 80's, and that was considered very high tech in theater. So I hear you. My vision, and this is well before your time, where it's the giant, the room in Mad Men where they bring the IBM computer in, but I thought it'd be very interesting 'cause this is a podcast about tech, for you to talk about, you know you were kind of there as things were even transitioning sort of in 1985, you were right after Apple's 1984 commercial, how has advertising in tech evolved together, what was your perspective on that?

Cindy Gallop: Well, do you know, one word to sum up my perspective on that, Melinda, is frustrated. And the reason is because, I have always been extremely interested in the cutting edge of tech, and so you know I look back on the things I was trying to make happen at BBH and at BBH New York, which we started 1998, as the tech boom was really taking hold. And a couple of my frustrations were, first of all, I mean BBH is a phenomenal agency, and we had a bunch of amazing creative ideas. But, the trouble is that in advertising, your ability to execute on those cutting edge ideas is entirely at the mercy of your clients', appetite for risk, budgets, willingness to you know go there. And so, it's one of those things where, when I talk to advertising audiences, and I talk about creativity and effectiveness, I talk about the fact that any advertising person worth their salt has, they have in their head that list of the brilliant creative ideas they were involved in that never happened that still make them red hot with rage.

Melinda Byerley: I've only run an agency for four years and I know what you mean.

Cindy Gallop: All these years later, I still burn with red hot rage about the things we could have made happen for our clients that we were not allowed to



make happen. And so, you know, I'll give you one example. 2002, okay, 16 years ago, Levi's moved their business, their American business wholesale into BBH New York, which was extraordinary because, we had their business in Europe, we had their business in Asia Pacific, but we were not expecting them to move their business without a pitch out of FCB into us. And they did that because things were very grim on the sales front and they needed a dramatically fresh approach. But the difficulty was that, when things are very grim on the sales front, there is a real tendency to stick with the familiar, and you know, we crafted a campaign and recommendations and we're absolutely about doing extraordinary things, but a client who is very, very fearful has their mindset stuck on TV, print, TV, print, TV, print.

Cindy Gallop: So on my list of things I still feel rage about not being able to make happen was, our brilliant media director at BBH, Barry Lowenthal, broke out this brilliant this deal whereby Levi's could basically have their brand integrated into the first online sims game for 50,000 dollars.

Melinda Byerley: Oh my god.

Cindy Gallop: Integrated into the sims for 50,000 dollars. And they went, no no no! TV, print, TV, print, and honestly, all these things later I still want to scream when I tell you this story. So, that was frustrating. The other thing that as equally frustrating was, the advertising industry is very old world order in many ways, including a vicious circle in terms of how it celebrates and rewards creative talent. And by that I mean that creatives want to do things that will win creative awards. And so I was regularly battling with my directors on things I wanted us to explore creatively that they could not see the point of from an old world order mindset. So I remember having a discussion with my director who in this case shall be nameless, about you know, about wanting to explore mobile, and the possibilities within a very small screen, and he was going, "But Cindy, none of my creators are gonna wanna do that because they want to do TV commercials to win awards." So that was also very frustrating.

Melinda Byerley: Has that changed, do you think? You think it's changed?

Cindy Gallop: Oh yes. No no no. It absolutely has changed these days, but it's taken a very long time and it still hasn't changed quite enough.



Melinda Byerley: I mean I'm sure it's changed on mobile because we have awards for mobile now. But the mindset, the awards mindset, do you think that's still a factor?

Cindy Gallop: Very much so.

Melinda Byerley: How does in house marketer watch for that, or help sort of help their account director overcome that?

Cindy Gallop: Well, I mean, it's a point of frequent public discussion within the industry, because you know, clients will say, "I don't want to work with an agency that is overly focused on winning awards, I don't care about them when it comes to my business." It's a very difficult one because, and by the way I'm a great believer in the value of awards generally, I believe that every industry should be celebrating and awarding the best talent within it. But, when you have a system within the ad industry that quite frankly is driven partly by a macho male dominated mindset, that is you know your employ ability as a creative is driven by the number of awards you've won, then that's a kind of vicious circle. That keeps awards as a very important dynamic even though lots of people profess to say, "Oh we don't really care about them."

Melinda Byerley: Fascinating. And so, I might be fast forwarding too far, so if I'm jumping over something I want you to stop me, but I thought it would be, at this point to fast forward to 2009 and that Ted Talk.

Cindy Gallop: Right.

Melinda Byerley: Which, we will link to from the page, and I want everybody to listen to because it might be the best opening to a Ted Talk ever. It will get your attention immediately and you created, I think it was a few years later, the site MakeLoveNotPorn And you talked about how your personal experiences led to your decision to focus on sextech. And I thought, the title of this episode is gonna be Talk Dirty to Me. And I thought it'd be fun, and by the way I've always, as I listened to your Ted Talk I've always wanted to thank you because I've always thought of you scaling your knowledge about how to help everybody be better in bed. So I just want to thank you on behalf of all of us for deciding to do that. But I thought it'd be great to hear you talk about that. How you decided to merge these personal experiences you were having kind of with what you saw happening in tech, how did that germ come to you?



Cindy Gallop:

Well again, by complete and total accident. So MakeLoveNotPorn began as an accident born out of my direct personal experience dating younger men, and realizing ... and this was 10 or 11 years ago ... that through dating younger men I was encountering what happens when two things converge. And I stress the dual convergence 'cause most people think it's only one. I realized I was experiencing what happens when today's total freedom of access to porn online meets our society's equally total reluctance to talk openly and honestly about sex. When those two things converge, porn becomes sex education by default in not a good way. So, I found myself encountering all these sexual behavioral means in bed. I went whoa, I know where that behavior is coming from. I thought, gosh, if I'm experiencing this, other people must be as well. I didn't know that because 10 or 11 years ago, no one was talking about this, nobody was writing about it, and being a naturally action oriented person, I went, I want to do something about this.

Cindy Gallop:

So 9 years ago, I put up on no money this clunky site called MakeLoveNotPorn.com, to post the myths of porn and balance them with reality. So the construct was porn world versus real world. Launched at Ted in 2009 became the only Ted speaker to say the words "come on my face" on the Ted stage, 6 times. The talk went viral instantly as a result, and it drove an extraordinary global response to my tiny website that I had never anticipated. And I realized I'd uncovered a huge global social issue. So, I felt a personal responsibility to take MakeLoveNotPorn forwards in a way that would make it much more far reaching, helpful and effective. And I also saw an opportunity to do what I believe in very strongly which is that the future of businesses doing good and making money simultaneously.

Cindy Gallop:

I saw the opportunity for a big business solution to this huge untapped global, social need. And I use the word big advisedly, because even then back in 2009 at concept stage, I knew that if I wanted to counter the global impact of porn as default sex ed, I would have to come up with something that had the potential one day to be just as mass, just as mainstream, and just as all pervasive in our society as porn currently is. And so I was thinking big right from the get go. So what I decided to do was, I sized up the issue. The issue isn't porn, the issue is that we don't talk about sex in the real world. If we did amongst a whole bunch of other benefits, people would bring a real world mindset to the viewing of simply manufactured entertainment.



Cindy Gallop:

So I our tagline at MakeLoveNotPorn is pro-sex, pro-porn, pro knowing the different. And our mission is one thing only, which is to help make it easier for everybody in the world to talk about sex. Talk about sex openly and honestly in the public domain, by that I mean parents to children, teachers to schools, everyone to everyone, and equally importantly talk about sex openly and honestly privately in your intimate relationships. And so, given this mission of talk about it, I decided to take every dynamic in social media and apply them to this one area that no other social network or platform will ever go. In order to socialize sex, and to make real world sex and talking about it socially acceptable, and therefore often just as socially shareable as anything else we share on Facebook, Tumblr, Twitter, Instagram.

Cindy Gallop:

So 5 and a half years ago, my team and I launched the first stage of this vision, MakeLoveNotPorn.tv, which is an entirely user generated crowd sourced video sharing platform that celebrates real world sex. So anyone from anywhere in the world can submit to us, videos of themselves having real world sex, but we are clear what we mean by this. We are not porn, we are not amateur. We're building a whole new category on the internet that has never previously existed, social sex. So our competition isn't porn, it's Facebook and YouTube, or rather it would be if Facebook and YouTube allowed you to socially, sexually self express and self identify, which they don't. So social sex videos on MakeLoveNotPorn are not about performing for the camera, they're just about doing what you do on every other social platform. Capture what goes on in the real world as it happens spontaneously in all its funny, messy, glorious, silly, beautiful, ridiculous, wonderful human us, we curate to make sure of that. Our curators watch every single video submitted. We don't publish unless it's real.

Cindy Gallop:

And we have a revenue sharing business model. So our members pay to rent and stream social sex videos, and then half that income goes to our contributors or as we call them, our MakeLoveNotPorn stars. Because we would like our MakeLoveNotPorn stars one day to be as famous as YouTubers, you know for the same reasons, authenticity, realness, individuality. And we want them to make just as much money. We want to hit the kind of critical mass where one day your social sex video gets a million rentals at \$5 dollars per rental, and we give you half that income. We are the answer for global economy.



Melinda Byerley: So this, I'm so fascinated with how this has grown, too. And as a result of this, and we're gonna talk about this, the results with difficulties you had with raising money to get started. You started talking globally even beyond this about why it was so hard to raise money and I thought it'd be good to pause for people who aren't familiar with sextech, to hear you talk first about what it is, how big it is, and how fast you think it's growing.

Cindy Gallop: Sure, so. This part of my career is also a complete accident. So I fight a battle every single day to build MakeLoveNotPorn, essentially because every piece of business infrastructure, any other tech startup just takes for granted, we can't because the small print always says no adult content, and this is all pervasive across every single air of the business, in ways that people outside this sphere don't realize. And obviously, this attitude manifests when it comes to raising funding, my biggest obstacle with investors is the social dynamic that I call fear of what other people will think. Because it is never about the person I'm talking to thinks. When you understand what we're doing and why we're doing it at MakeLoveNotPorn, nobody can argue with it, the business case is clear, it is always the fear of what they think other people will think, which operates around sex unlike any other area. So 4 years ago, I set out to raise \$2 million to scale MakeLoveNotPorn, and by the way I made that minimum viable ask. I would have liked to raise more, but I knew it was going to be challenging, and so I knew therefore that I was going to have to pave my own way.

Cindy Gallop: I have to break down the business barriers in my own path if I want to scale MakeLoveNotPorn to the billion venture I know it can be, and so I realize that I would have to do what I tell other entrepreneurs to do, which is, when you have a truly world changing startup, you have to change the world to fit it, not the other way around. And so I'd like to say that that was the point at which I got into the Steve Jobs business of reality distortion, because if reality tells me that I cannot grow MakeLoveNotPorn the way I want to, I'm going to change reality. And what I mean by that is, I therefore deliberately 4 years ago began defining, pioneering, and championing my own category—sextech. So I literally wrote the definition of sextech. If you google sextech I'm result one on page one, and sextech is any form of technology or tech venture designed to innovate, enhance, in any area of human sexuality and human sexual experience.



Cindy Gallop:

I coined the hashtag sextech, I didn't invent the term, but I'm directly responsible for propagating the hashtag as widely as it is used today. And I began speaking at tech conferences all around the world on why the next big thing in tech is disrupting sex. Because I thought at base level, if I just say this loudly enough, often enough, in enough places, people will start to believe it. And that in turn had two fervor accidental consequences. The first is, I mean I was doing this purely to create a climate of receptivity amongst investors to get my own startup funded. But as I began delineating and demarcating this category, I began seeing for myself the enormous potential within it, not at least financially. And the second accidental thing that happened was, I gained a reputation as a global champion of sextech. Sextech founders began writing to me from all around the world, literally I hear from a sextech founder every day. They write because they face all the same problems I do: they can't get funded, they can't put payments in place, they pour their hearts out. And I realized that I have unique access to extraordinary sextech deal flow.

Cindy Gallop:

So that was the point at which I went, okay, in order to get my own startup funded, I'm going to have to get the entire category funded. In a seemingly counterintuitive move, because I couldn't raise 2 million dollars for MakeLoveNotPorn, I decided instead to raise 200 million dollars to start the world's first and only sextech fund. Because if no one else is going to do this, then I will. And, obviously I have zero experience starting a fund, but I'm going to anyway. So, I then began doing, again what my talent is to do, making it real. So I gave my fund a name, I bought the URL, I registered the company. The name of my fund arrives from the quote by Chairman Mao who famously said many years ago, in the interest of gender equality, "Women hold up half the sky." I think that's relatively unambitious, my sextech fund is called All the Sky Holdings. And the derivation is deliberate because All the Sky has a dual investment thesis.

Cindy Gallop:

The first area I want to invest in is radically innovative sextech startups with a focus not exclusively but primarily on things that are founded by women. The most interesting things in sextech are coming from female founders. We are finally owning our sexuality, finding unique ways to leverage on business terms, because we get the enormous market that is woman's needs, wants and desires historically deemed too embarrassing, shameful, taboo to address in business, and by the way, tap that huge primary market, you tap a huge secondary market of



extremely happy men. So that's the first area. And then the second area is every business obstacle I encounter is a huge disruptive opportunity in itself.

Cindy Gallop: I want to fund the infrastructure of sextech, what I'm calling the sextech full stack. Because the first payment process that it embraces, legal ethical transparent sex tape ventures like mine, it cleans up. The first hosting provider, the first video streaming platform, the first e-commerce channel. I want to fund the ecosystem of sextech to do three things. A) to create a self-sustaining portfolio for All the Sky, because the ventures I fund will need all of this. B) to be a colossally huge revenue generator, because every single sextech venture all around the world, and by the way the entire adult industry needs this. And C) and I use a Peter Thiel term deliberately here, to monopolistically build out and own the entire underlying ecosystem to make sextech the next trillion dollar cash for intake. So that's what I'm doing.

Melinda Byerley: I think it's amazing. I want to stop and pull back for anyone who's not familiar with the stack concept. Let's talk for a second about...payment infrastructure's a good one. Because I work for PayPal and I know what their policies were about adult content. So for people who aren't familiar with this, Cindy, by starting MakeLoveNotPorn, why were you not able to accept payments? And then, one of the questions I thought of was, how would MakeLoveNotPorn have had to change to sort of grow in that world if it could even have existed?

Cindy Gallop: Well, so first of all, it's not simply payments, and this is the appalling thing that people don't realize. My single biggest operational challenge is payment processing. PayPal will not work with adult content. Stripe can't. And by the way, Patrick Collison, John Collison, the co-founders of Stripe are friends and their fans and supporters, they went to bat for me with their bank, who would not allow them to work with us. Instant credit card processors won't work with adult content. But it's literally everything else.

Melinda Byerley: Is it because of the charge back rates by the way, just out of curiosity?

Cindy Gallop: It's actually, no, it's out of fear of what other people will think.

Melinda Byerley: Okay.



Cindy Gallop: It is literally knee-jerk. MakeLoveNotPorn is a social sex platform. We call ourselves the social sex revolution, the revolutionary part is not the sex it's the social. We have a zero charge back record.

Melinda Byerley: Wow.

Cindy Gallop: Couples watch our videos together, I mean, nobody's hiding anything from anybody. But, I try to explain that, and nobody was interested. It's that little clause in everybody's compliance that means they won't touch you. So it's not just payment processing. I can't get banked, it took me 4 years to find one bank here in America that would allow me to open a business bank account for MakeLoveNotPorn. Every single tech service that we need to use to operate MakeLoveNotPorn, be it hosting, encoding, encrypting, the terms of service always say, no adult content. In every single case, and we use probably about 14 different services a month, I have had to go to the people at the top of the company, explain what we're doing, beg to be allowed to use their service, sometimes they'll let me, sometimes they won't. It's very labor intensive process as you can imagine. We had to build our entire video streaming, video sharing platform from scratch ourselves as proprietary technology because existing streaming services off the shelf components will not stream adult content.

Cindy Gallop: I am so jealous of friends who built video startups on top of Vimeo, quick, easy, simple. I can't do that. Even something as apparently simple as finding an email partner to send the membership emails out with. MailChimp won't work with our content, we were rejected by six or seven before we found SendGrid who would. Every single thing is a battle, and that is why sextech founders are the founders to bet on, because we have been forged in fire. To build a successful sextech startup, you have to refuse to take no for an answer. You have to be creative as anything. The single thing that most motivates me is a dynamic that's called I'm gonna fucking well show you. You tell me it can't be done, I'm gonna fucking well show you. You put it on some path, I'm gonna fucking well show you. If you don't have that spurt as a sextech entrepreneur, you will fail. And I regularly say to my MakeLoveNotPorn team, the biggest thing we have to celebrate at 5 and a half years old is that we're still here.

Cindy Gallop: Because the tech in the business world has done everything they possibly can to kill us.



- Melinda Byerley: Could you have even existed ... it sounds like MakeLoveNotPorn could never have even existed within the sort of Vimeo, PayPal standard tool world. It just, it couldn't exist. If you hadn't built these tools, you would not exist.
- Cindy Gallop: None of them will work with us. To make this business successful, I had to be so creative, I had to think around, through, under, over every single obstacle, and that is why it is extraordinary that VC's won't fund me.
- Melinda Byerley: It is extraordinary. It's one of the reasons I asked you to join because I figured, also, I'm fascinated by the fact that you, we call it going vertical. Right? Like, in order to raise 2 million, I actually had to raise 200 million. And so I thought it'd be interesting, now that you're ... there's sort of so many question I want to ask you. There's a path about being a founder and how things change as they get funded but we'll come back to that. I want to go into the, how did your perspective as a founder, and all of this just persistence on this, how did your perspective on raising money change when you went to raise a fund?
- Cindy Gallop: I hasten to add, it's very early days for All the Sky. So, as I fully admit, I decided to raise a sextech fund as an act of desperation, as a last resort because I could not get funding for my startup any other way. So, I put my plan together and I began talking to people, and actually, my supporters to date have absolutely demonstrated what I surmised, which is that there are more people willing to fund the category than to fund a single venture within it. Because effectively, with my sextech fund I'm doing your diligence for you. I'm demonstrating to you, the scope of the category, the potential, I'm doing all of that for you. Now, while I was working on All the Sky, I very unexpectedly did raise that 2 million dollars for MakeLoveNotPorn, and I say unexpectedly because it came for me from an unexpected quarter which is our original angel investor.
- Cindy Gallop: So, you know, after my Ted Talk in 2009 when I conceptualized MakeLoveNotPorn.tv I then spent two years pitching that and getting no's from investors until I found one investor who got it, put up the \$500,000 seed funding we needed to build the platform, and by the way unfortunately asked to be anonymous, because he works in finance and regrettably it wouldn't benefit him to be known as having backed us, otherwise I'd be celebrating into the skies, but he has been enormously supportive over the years. Put more money in the form of convertible notes to keep us going, and because he's a professional investor, and he

meets a lot of very high rollers, every so often when he comes across somebody he thinks might be open to it, he will pitch MakeLoveNotPorn to them. I'll get an email saying, you know I've met so and so, send me the pitch deck.

Cindy Gallop: Which is how he found out for himself what I already knew, which is that sextech is literally the finally investment frontier. So, we were having dinner towards the end of last year, and he was gobsmacked. He said to me, he said, "Cindy, these people I'm meeting, they will invest in literally anything else."

Melinda Byerley: Yeah, guns. Cigarettes.

Cindy Gallop: Alcohol. Tobacco. Gambling. But sex, whoa. And he was so frustrating because he sees potential in what we're doing. He went, "So, have 2 million dollars. I'm gonna put it up myself." And my jaw hit the floor because I was not expecting him to do that and I would not have gone back to him because he's done more than enough for us already. But obviously that was fan-bloody-tastic. So I had to put All the Sky on hold, hit the ground running, hire a full time team, develop the roadmap ... anyway, the good news is that having done all that, especially having hired the most bloody brilliant chief operating officer, Charlotte Reed, who has taken all of the day to day financial operational management of MakeLoveNotPorn off me, which has made my life exponentially better, I am now able to pick up again and absolutely start working towards raising my sextech fund.

Cindy Gallop: And where I'm at with that is, you know, my first port of call is I need a partner. I obviously need somebody to partner with me on this who brings the track record that I don't have of having raised or managed a fund, and also the credibility of having done that. And I am actually in a dialogue with somebody at the moment who is very keen to partner who has all that in spades. And so, and so I will be progressing that. But as I say, the dire looks I've had to date about All the Sky have been very encouraging.

Melinda Byerley: I'm fascinated. For those of you, if you're listening and you happen to not work in tech, the idea that Cindy's investors have to be anonymous is actually another roadblock for her, because everybody relies on something in tech called social proof. So, if you can get someone who's really well known to invest in your company than everyone says oh, that

person must be really smart, and then they all pile on behind. So anonymity raises another barrier. Right? To Cindy's being able to raise. So I'd just like to provide that context for people who are you know, if they're listening and they're not in our world. It's something else that she's had to fight her way through that I just consider most impressive.

Cindy Gallop: And actually the good thing about the sextech fund I'm planning Melinda is that, there's the opportunity there for LP's to invest at one remove, as it were.

Melinda Byerley: How does that work?

Cindy Gallop: When you're investing the fund versus the individual venture, I'm hoping that may get over some of the hurdles that ludicrously, this next trillion dollar category in tech encounters. And talking of ludicrousness, I have to just vent on as an example of how ridiculous Silicon Valley's attitude towards sextech is. So I talk regularly about the fact that the three huge disruption opportunities in tech today are sex, cannabis, and the block chain. And ironically, investors are flooding to the other two more than they are the first. Which means by the way that BCs and start ups in cannabis and the block chain can afford to fund lobbyists, regulation change, public education initiatives foundations. We need all of those in sextech because we need a new legal definition of adult content.

Cindy Gallop: But the thing that demonstrates for me most vividly how ridiculous Silicon Valley's attitude towards this is, is that you know this year, back in May, as she does every year, Mary Meeker presented the Kleiner Perkins, her eagerly awaited annual internet trends report. This May, as she does every year, Mary Meeker presented over 200 slides covering every single possible trend on the internet, and this year, yet again as happens every year, Mary Meeker's 200 slide presentation omitted any mention of the single biggest use of the internet, porn, and the single biggest trend and impact that is having on real world sex. And by the way, this year, as I do every year, I tweeted that at Mary Meeker Kleiner Perkins and out to the Twitterverse as a whole, and yet again they never respond.

Melinda Byerley: And that's interesting because you said it was a trillion dollar opportunity, tell us more about that.

Cindy Gallop: So, I am again, this is something I say regularly, that sextech is the trillion dollar category in tech. And, I'm basing that you know, seemingly

assumptive claim on several things. The first is, we are talking about the biggest and most universal human use case. And, the most important human use case, in the sense that, you know, when I talk about MakeLoveNotPorn I explain that MakeLoveNotPorn exists in the biggest market of them all. Not sex, not porn, the market of human happiness. That's how fundamental this area of universal human experience is to all of us. Then, where I see the colossal opportunity, and this is something I absolutely plan to leverage, with my sextech fund All the Sky ... so earlier I mentioned the fact that you know, we talk about MakeLoveNotPorn as the social sex revolution, and this is the approach that I am bringing to how I plan to operate my sextech fund.

Cindy Gallop: I have created a portfolio map for All the Sky based on two axes. Shameful to social, and incremental to game changing. And I plan to invest in the top right quadrant which is social and game changing. The single biggest piece of advice, the most important piece of advice I have to give all the time to other sextech entrepreneurs, and to friends of mine doing something interesting in the art industry is this: take yourself out of the shadows. And what I mean by that is, people who operate in anything to do with sex unconsciously internalize, without even realizing they're doing it, society's disapproval of what they're doing, in a way that negatively impacts their ability to do business and to do the kind of business they want. So for example, many years ago a young woman came to me with a sextech venture. There are many of these now, but at the time she wanted to redesign sex toys, make them cool, sell them online.

Cindy Gallop: So she was telling me about her startup, and she went, "And the thing is Cindy, people are really embarrassed to be seen buying sex toys. So we're going to package them like this." And I said to her, "Okay, hold it right there. You need to go right back to the beginning and re-concept your startup from the ground up. Because you need not to say to me, people are embarrassed to be seen buying sex toys. You need to say to me, we're going to make people not embarrassed to be seen buying sex toys." When you concept and design the venture around existing societal bias and prejudice, all you do is reinforce it.

Cindy Gallop: I refuse to bow to bias and prejudice, I'm out to change it, and that is the huge opportunity for sextech. And the kind of social sextech that I want to invest in and drive as a category. Because, you know, when you are able to publicly and openly basically purchase sextech goods and



services in whatever area, when you're able to publicly then do what we do publicly with every other category, openly recommend, review, share, advocate, and publicly badge yourselves those brand ambassadors, that is what drives the next trillion dollar category in tech. Social sex tech. And so that's what I'm determined to make happen.

Melinda Byerley: I'm in awe of listening to you, it is very much like Steve Jobs reality distortion field. I mean if the glass didn't exist, he had to go make it. And it's the very best of what we do. Now that you've raised the money, you said that you hired a chief operating officer, how is your approach to running the company changed, how is running a tech company if you will different from running an ad agency?

Cindy Gallop: Well, I mean first of all, I'm still running MakeLoveNotPorn the way I've been running it for the past five and a half years which is very fiscally cautiously. We have to make our runway last as long as possible. But you know running a tech startup is no different from running an ad agency startup. It's all about the team you build and how you work together to achieve your goals. And so, I mean, you know, we have a tiny core team of five of us. We are all slogging our guts out, we all passionately believe in our mission. You know it's like any other company, that's the key to success.

Melinda Byerley: You know, at eBay we were all required to purchase things on eBay to grow our feedback status and to use the platform. Do people who work for MakeLoveNotPorn, are they required to post videos of themselves?

Cindy Gallop: So, we get asked this question all the time, and we have absolutely had this discussion before we launched. We sat down as a team six years ago, whenever it was, and we said, as entrepreneurs we should be using our own platform.

Melinda Byerley: For sure.

Cindy Gallop: Now, there were different views within the team. Some people more keen than others, but what we all agreed as a team was, we already battle every possible business obstacle every single day to keep this business alive and grow it. It would not help us from a business perspective to be on our own platform, and so it's a business decision driven by the ridiculous battles that we fight every day. Further down the



road, who knows? But right now that's the reason why we are not on our own platform.

Melinda Byerley: I actually didn't know that everyone asked you that question, it came up as I was listening. I was like-

Cindy Gallop: We get asked that all the time.

Melinda Byerley: Yeah literally how do you eat your own dog food in that environment.

Cindy Gallop: Yeah, and that's an entirely fair question. As I say, we sat down as a team and discussed it very seriously pre-launch.

Melinda Byerley: Are there other types of things like that that we would take for granted in tech that, maxims that you've found that, like yeah no we can't do that because we're sex tech? Like besides the platform and so on, things like eating your own dog food, if I were a marketer advisor advising a sextech firm, what would I have to stop, how would I have to change the way I think as a marketer to give good advice to a sextech firm?

Cindy Gallop: Oh, you would have to basically overcome all your shame and embarrassment and fear of what other people will think. Literally that's it. Sex more than any other area proves the truth of, we do not see things as they always things as we are. And so, you know, I mean you have to basically do what we're doing at MakeLoveNotPorn which is socialize sex. So you know, we are living the social sex revolution. And I'll give you an example of what I mean. So one of the things I also get asked very regularly is, I mean, people love our mission. In 9 years we have had a universally positive response from all around the world to MakeLoveNotPorn. Our only challenges have been financial and business ones. So people will say to me, Cindy I love what you're doing, I've joined MakeLoveNotPorn, I've rented videos, if I were invest in tons of money I'd give it all to you, but as I don't, what else can I do to help you to help MakeLoveNotPorn succeed?

Cindy Gallop: And I go, you know, there's one very easy, very simple thing that you can do to help our cause. Every single day, talk about sex. And when I say that I don't mean, don't worry I don't mean gather and talk about sex. What I mean is, because this is what the social sex revolution's all about. As you go through the course of your daily life, as you're having conversations, if you're having a conversation where, if we were not so

messed up about it it would be completely normal to talk about sex, talk about sex. So my own example, and this is something I do deliberately, is ... you know on Facebook how you know friends will post, it's their birthday and there's a photo of great live birthday dinner or celebration. Or maybe they're on some like nauseatingly jealousy inducing tropical vacation posting photos.

Cindy Gallop: And you know all one's friends will post things on the birthday celebration like happy birthday, have a wonderful time, or on the vacation photos oh my god I'm so jealous whatever. So I will comment, and on the birthday celebration pic I will comment, I will say, happy birthday, hope you had great birthday sex. And on the vacation photo I will say, oh my god what a beautiful beach, hope you had great sex on it. Because you know they are.

Melinda Byerley: You know they are.

Cindy Gallop: And so that's what I mean by normalizing and socializing all of this. And by the way, when I do that I will get very happy entertained responses along the lines of, yeah, you bet we did it. You know? We are literally normalizing all of this, and so anybody wants to market a sex tape venture, that's what you have to do. Socialize and normalize it. And by the way, when you do, when you do the flood gates open. You know the tiny clunky MakeLoveNotPorn website that I put up 9 years ago that got that extraordinary reaction, I think it's because MakeLoveNotPorn.com, porn world versus real world was a manifestation of me. And what I mean by that is, it was very simple, very honest, very truthful, down to earth, utterly non-judgmental, and it had a sense of humor. We never get to have conversations about sex within those parameters. The moment you do, the floodgates open. I can tell you from 9 years of working on MakeLoveNotPorn that everybody but everybody in the world is dying to talk about sex.

Melinda Byerley: I cannot wait to start saying, hope you had great birthday sex on all of my Facebook posts.

Cindy Gallop: Yeah. Exactly.

Melinda Byerley: I'm gonna do it. It's easy. Like ...

Cindy Gallop: It's fantastic.

Melinda Byerley: I think people will really appreciate it. As much as I appreciated you coming on the show. Cindy, what didn't I ask you that you want to share because I'm just so fascinated about your life journey. I mean, I saw your tech crunch article from January, you said, "I don't wait for things to change, I make them change." And I just, how did you get that way? Were you born that way, were you raised that way? I'd love to hear you talk a little bit about that before we say goodbye.

Cindy Gallop: Honestly, who I am is the result of 58 years of life. You know, I really, I can't identify any key moments or ... this is basically what life and experience brings. And by the way, Melinda I would just say, actually this is one thing I would just like to make sure I get into this interview. Your question and my answer to it is precisely why one of the things I'm all about is disrupting aging. You know, I represent the triple whammy of slick and belly un-fundability. I'm female, I have a sextech venture, and I'm older. And, you know, there is no substitute whatsoever for experience. Whether in entrepreneurship or in business or in life generally, I consider myself a proudly visible member of the most invisible segment of our society, which is older women. And, I want to help re-define the way that I live my life, what society thinks an older woman should talk like, be like, dress like, work like, and date like.

Cindy Gallop: And so, I absolutely champion the extraordinary value that older women and older men brings to business, bring to tech, bring to the entrepreneur world, you know bring to the world generally. And also by the way because, age is on cuts both ways. You know, you are as easily dismissed if you're young and by the way especially if you're young and female, as you can be easily dismissed if you're older and female or male. And so, you know, I am all about, you are never too old or too young to do anything. And in fact, what I want to see happen much more often is, you know, flatter working structures where, you know, older people and younger people come together and work as equals. There's a steeply hierarchical structure that means that you don't often have that opportunity.

Cindy Gallop: Because, the fresh perspectives of youth together with the experience and the wisdom and the expertise of age make a phenomenal combination. And so, I'm very much about combating ageism, in life, in the workplace, in Silicon Valley, in tech, anywhere. Because, you know, you are missing out on so much value and so much innovation born of experience and expertise when you're ageist.



- Melinda Byerley: That is one of the reasons I started this podcast is that I truly believed, as I saw myself growing older, I could see what I could add to the conversation that I couldn't add 20 years ago. And I believe it's not both, it's not older are better, younger people are better, it's that combination of both that's just magic.
- Cindy Gallop: Exactly. Yeah.
- Melinda Byerley: Cindy, I can't thank you enough, I'm so excited to watch where you're going next, and I hope you'll come back and keep us posted on the progress of raising money and how MakeLoveNotPorn is going, 'cause I need the reminder to say have great birthday sex on a regular basis.
- Cindy Gallop: Absolutely, and also by the way if any investors out there, email cindy@MakeLoveNotPorn.com, I'd love to hear from you.
- Melinda Byerley: And you should hear from her because, and I'm jealous because you want to have dinner with this woman I'm telling you. Cindy thank you so much, we appreciate your time.
- Cindy Gallop: Thank you so much, Melinda.
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