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**U.16 Long Civil Rights Movement:
The Women's Movement in the South**

Interview U-0539
Rebecca Judy
10 May 2011

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ABSTRACT – REBECCA JUDY

Rebecca Judy was born in Putnam County, Tenn. She worked for forty-one years as a social worker in East Tenn., and she was instrumental in the Project Against Sexual Abuse of Appalachian Children and also worked as clinic supervisor at the Sexual Assault Center. The interview begins with a discussion of Judy's childhood and her family. She was the first female in her family to graduate from college; she attended Tennessee Tech University and graduate in 1962. She discusses moving to Sevierville, Tenn. and working in social services there, specifically advocating for girls in juvenile court. In 1965 she entered the University of Tennessee for graduate school in Social Work. She discusses how she navigated graduate school at the same time that she was starting a family. She discusses researching the Gault decision. She also began taking women's studies classes. She describes the barriers she faced to getting into law school and the limited options for women professionals. She describes her work at Child and Family Services in Knoxville, Tenn., which included problem pregnancy referrals. She then talks about her participation in the reproductive rights movement and her role in educating the public about child abuse and rape, including the establishment of counseling sessions for women and children who had been sexually assaulted or sexually abused. She describes the messages that she received from the women's movement, her participation in consciousness-raising groups, how she defines feminism, the relationship of the civil rights and women's movements, and how she viewed women's liberation. This interview is part of the Southern Oral History Program's project to document the women's movement in the American South.

FIELD NOTES – REBECCA JUDY

Interviewee: Rebecca Judy

Interviewer: Jessie Wilkerson

Interview Date: May 10, 2011

Location: Knoxville, TN

THE INTERVIEWEE. Rebecca Judy grew up in Putnam County, TN. She received her bachelor's degree from Tennessee Technological University and later received her master's in Social Work from the University of Tennessee. She worked as a social worker for forty-one years, and she worked for twenty years as a psychotherapist and clinical social worker. She was involved in the Project Against Sexual Abuse of Appalachian Children and also served as clinic supervisor at the Sexual Assault Center of East Tennessee.

THE INTERVIEWER. Jessie Wilkerson is a graduate student in the Department of History at UNC-Chapel Hill, currently conducting research for her dissertation which will explore social justice activism in southern Appalachia, with special attention to women's activism, from the late 1960s through the 1990s.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERVIEW. I was in another interview prior to meeting Ms. Judy, and because the first interview went longer than I anticipated, I was about thirty minutes late to Ms. Judy's home. She was expecting a guest that evening, so we ended up having less time for the interview than we had hoped. We sat at the table in the kitchen, where it was very quiet. There is only one interruption when the phone rang.

NOTE ON RECORDING. I used a Zoom recorder.

TRANSCRIPT – REBECCA JUDY

Interviewee: Rebecca Judy

Interviewer: Jessica Wilkerson

Interview date: May 10, 2011

Location: Knoxville, Tennessee

Length: 1 disc, approximately 1 hour and 8 minutes

START OF DISC

JW: This is Jessie Wilkerson and I am at the home of Rebecca Judy. The date is May tenth, 2011. Rebecca, can you start by saying when and where you were born? And I'll check the sound as you tell me that.

RJ: Okay. I was born in November of 1940—in a log cabin that was a hundred years old—without the benefit of medical care for my mother or me in a very rural section of Putnam County, Tennessee. I said that the culture was pretty much more like 1840 than 1940. I mean, the culture had stayed pretty much the same and very agrarian, very dependent on products from the land, i.e. farming. For us, it was plants and not necessarily animals. So we were pretty dependent on the dirt. So we'd be called dirt farmers. So I lived there until, my parents lived there until I was in college.

JW: What are your parents' names?

RJ: Helen Denny and she's still living, and we've just moved her into quasi-assisted living in Hendersonville, Tennessee. My father is deceased. His name was John Henry Denny and he was first a farmer. Then he ran for public office and then became a banker. He graduated from high school as a valedictorian. My mother married him when she was a junior in high

school, so she never completed high school. But she was pretty much a homemaker in the most literal sense. She made all of our clothing and did all the cooking and the canning and the milking of the cows, the whole nine yards until my father got to be trustee of the county. And then she became a self-taught bookkeeper for him in that office and then later became a bookkeeper for a furniture company and then became a bookkeeper for the city there in Cookeville, Tennessee, from which she retired. She was pretty self-taught in a lot of areas of her life. My father was, too.

JW: Did you have siblings?

RJ: I did. I have a brother that's two years and nine months older than I am. He went to college at Tennessee Tech, where I did, and he became an electrical engineer, got his masters from Georgia Tech, and became an administrator for their electrical engineering laboratory in Georgia. And then I have a younger sister who's four years younger than I am, and she got her masters in education and retired as a teacher. And then I have a younger brother who's nine years younger than I am, David, and he has been in sales for several years in the Hendersonville area. There were four of us, and we all finished college.

JW: And were you the first generation to go to college?

RJ: I was the first generation female. Of course, my brother graduated before I did.

JW: Right.

RJ: Yeah, I was the first woman in my, sort of that I knew of. Well, no, a cousin had come to UT and graduated before I did. But in my immediate family, I was the first.

JW: And had your parents encouraged you to go to college? Was education important to them?

RJ: That's an interesting question. That took five years of therapy to figure out. Was I encouraged to go to college? I must have been, but the encouragement I got was from my brother more than my parents.

JW: Your older brother?

RJ: Yeah.

JW: He was a really high achieving student. When I went to high school right after he did, two years later, the teachers, the first thing they said to me was, "Well, are you going to make good grades like your brother?" That kind of comparison. But nevertheless, we were best friends, and so he encouraged me and I modeled a lot of my behavior and my thoughts based on his guidance and emotional availability really. He was really encouraging me to go to college. But three weeks before I went to college, I didn't have a clue on how I was going to pay for it because my parents did not. They didn't pay his and they weren't going to pay mine. But as the world works, I had three weeks before I was to go to pay my tuition, this speech coach called me and said, "How would you like to have a work scholarship in speech? It pays all tuition and job on campus to pay other kinds of expenses."

I'm not sure as memory kind of fades, but my mom may have helped pay me the rent. I lived in town that year, that first year. I rented a room. I had roommates, etcetera. But the second year, my mom did become supportive in that she announced that she was moving to the city also, the city of Cookeville, and my father could either join or us or not. So he did. She rented a big house, and she rented to students at Tech and that's how she paid the rent. So in that way, I didn't have to pay rent, but I lived there. So in that way, yeah, they were supportive.

I did a lot of interesting things in college. I graduated in 1962 and at that time, I got an award for combining academic achievement with extracurricular activities. I did a lot of things.

JW: What kind of activities?

RJ: Well, I was on speech scholarship. So I was on the debate team. I got interested in journalism. So I'd also worked at the county paper before I went to college and they really, I wanted to continue that and the editor said, "No, you go and get your degree in something and talk to me after you get your degree." So they were very encouraging, and I got interested in journalism and became whatever on—I don't remember exactly what I did on the college newspaper, but I did that for four years. I worked in the library. And during all this, I had a plan where I'd get out of town at least once a quarter. We were on the quarter base. So I traveled a lot in college, even to national conferences. I was president of the international relations club, which was the liberal arts or arts and sciences division of Tech. That just focused on the global aspect of the economy as well as history. That's what I did.

JW: How long had Tennessee Tech allowed women to apply?

RJ: Well, believe it or not, they had been pretty much open for women for a long time since the [19]20s, if I'm not mistaken, but of course, the focus was on home economics, nursing, some of the other allowed female areas, secretaries. My mother never could understand why I did not want to just be a secretary. I said, "Mom, I don't like to type." (laughs) And I knew then that I wanted to do something a little more active than that. So I wanted to, and I ended up doing that after I graduated from Tech. I, again, had no clue what I wanted, where I was going to go. My last job in school, I ended up driving the bookmobile. Are you familiar with that program?

JW: Yeah.

RJ: We had about five counties in middle Tennessee where we drove over the back roads and brought books to little stores and that kind of thing. I ended up doing that awhile and I had some connections with the librarian's husband who also was in a social service program that the

state started probably in 1960 or '61, and he just said, "What do you want to do?" And I said, "Well, I don't know." By that time, I figured I was going into some sort of social work and he said, "Well, we've got some openings for women for the first time to be a probation counselor for females that had come in front of the juvenile judges in east Tennessee." He asked me where I wanted to go and I said, "The mountains." He said, "Well, you can go to Sevierville."

And so my first job was in Sevierville, Tennessee. So I came to there. Mother did ride over with me to try to find a place to stay. But that's what I did. I came by myself, rented a room. It was fun at that time. It's unbelievable now, but there was one restaurant in Pigeon Forge at that point. I got a room with the Ford dealership widow there. I think she was a widow then. But anyway, there was such a shortage of hotels there then that one night, I got up to go walk down the hall, it was an attic kind of room, and there was a strange man in the hallway and she said, "Oh yeah, I forgot to tell you. I take the overflow tourists from this particular hotel." (laughs) So they had come in that night.

But anyway, that was my first job and I came, again, I didn't know anybody, but I loved East Tennessee. So I came and worked nine different counties. I think I ended up traveling over sixteen different counties in East Tennessee when I was with the state. My job was to convince the juvenile judges to not send females away for two years for an offense, a juvenile offense. The boys got four months in an institution. The girls often got two years.

JW: Why was there that discrepancy?

RJ: (laughs) You tell me. Well, I'm not sure there. Number one, I think there was just more facilities for boys because boys got in trouble with stealing cars at that time and sort of crimes against property whereas girls often got charged and convicted for having sex. I guess

there was an assumption that they needed a lot more help or something, I'm not sure, or punishment.

JW: And what was the charge actually called?

RJ: Oh what is it? I don't want to say [incorrigible], but just out of control behavior and they couldn't---. It was just incorrigible, some really strong terms, and most of time all they had done was stayed out too late and maybe some of them had run away with boys, with men, and if they were caught, they were charged more apt than maybe the person that took them away. It was a very different setup then. I met my husband and we got married and so I decided I didn't want to travel that much. I didn't want to be on the road all that much.

So I went to work for juvenile court here in Knoxville, and I was there for six or seven years. And again, I did probation work and a lot of what now is the purview of the Department of Human Services. I would take babies from unsafe situations and try to find an emergency shelter for them. We were sort of the substitute parents at that time whereas for DHS to be involved at that time, the family had to be receiving aid for dependent children, AFDC. So if they weren't then and they had an issue where the child was in danger, it was the court's responsibility.

A lot of that changed, of course, after sort of the rise of the civil rights of everybody, including children. So the protection of children then switched from the juvenile court to the Department of Human Services. So that shifted the court primarily to deal with children that had violated some rule of law. And then the Gault decision came along and said that juveniles had a right to an attorney in a court hearing. So that shifted everything. It shifted the mission of the court at that time. It became a small, I want to say a juvenile criminal court as opposed to a protection agency.

During that experience, I decided, well, for me to get to do really what I wanted to do, which was to work with families and individuals, I needed to go back to school. So I went back. I started my first year in 1965 and again, I got a grant to go. I was working, let's see, I was working in juvenile court and I got a [grant] through the Department of Corrections and got my graduate school paid for.

Then this is in relationship to what we're talking about, and that is the women's shifts in thinking in what our role was. At that time, the University of Tennessee, the second year of your masters level of social work, the academic part, which was three months, you had to have that on campus in Nashville, not in Knoxville. So I couldn't see myself leaving my new husband for three months to go to work on my masters. So we decided as a family, he and I decided that we would just start our family rather than me go off and finish my degree. I said, "Well, that would fit." So I got pregnant. So it took me seven years to finish my masters. In 1973, he got some ideas about going back and getting a PhD in something and I said, "I really would want to finish my degree before I leave Knoxville." So that's what we decided to do. Meanwhile, I had had another baby. So I had two children. I had two preschool kids, and I went back and finished my master's degree.

In that seven years, so much had changed if you know the history from '65 to '73. We had had the civil rights movement. We had had a lot of social changes, the Great Society, those kinds of things, the assassination of President Kennedy and Robert Kennedy and the whole Martin Luther King experience. So when I walked into the classes in 1973, the big difference was, number one, there were more men in social work and there were people of color. Their skins were different, both oriental and African-Americans. But they sat on one side of the class and we sat on the other, we meaning the Caucasians. So that was very different. But meanwhile,

a lot had happened in the whole issue of women and where we were going in the culture and what was expected.

I did a lot of research on the Gault decision and got training in family therapy and assistance, what happens with agencies, what happens with funding, and those kinds of things. And then, of course, we had women's studies.

JW: And did you take courses in women's studies?

RJ: Well, they were all the way through in the sense that what was going to happen, what difference did it make if you were—in fact, I taught a course later on what difference does it make if you're old and in public housing? What difference does it make if you're a male or female? What difference does it make if your heritage is African or some other, different nationality? So that influenced me a lot and I said, I guess I was always-- Well, they called me a "women's libber" in the sense that I didn't really see that much, I didn't see why we couldn't do everything that we wanted to do.

But back to my own education, when I interviewed, I think I had an interview at one time to think about going to law school at the university, and I was kind of told that I was the wrong sex, which made me furious.

JW: And who told you that?

RJ: Well, the interviewer said that my chances of getting into law school were very thin and it wasn't because—I had a 3.8 or something. So it wasn't my grades that were that bad. It was just that they weren't-- Of course, that had all shifted, as you know. There's more women in law and there's more women in medicine now, but that was pretty closed, pretty closed. In fact, when I was looking at social work versus psychology, it was heavily favored in males, psychology was and psychiatry for sure. Freud was it, and that would be men. So all of that

impacted on my [choices]. I never thought about not being in a profession or not making an equal contribution to the family income. I did like staying available to my children when they were young. I had two daughters. I worked part-time and was available for them for the most part. We shared parenting a lot.

JW: And in those years, were you getting more engaged in the women's liberation movement?

RJ: Yeah. I wasn't one of those that, well, I did go march on Washington once for choice.

JW: For reproductive choice?

RJ: Yes, access to birth control and procedures if you wanted one.

JW: Do you remember what year that was that you went?

RJ: Oh gosh, I wish I knew. It was in the [19]70s. And one of my jobs at Child and Family Services in Knoxville was problem pregnancy referrals. If you were pregnant, you could come to me, and we would decide in the counseling sessions. The goal was for the female to really help her decide what she wanted to do with the pregnancy, what kind of resources were available, how to get to the health department, how to get birth control, how to get good medical care, prenatal care. At that time, the advent of getting vitamins and don't smoke and those kinds of things were just coming on the horizon. I did a lot of reading. So in that job, that's what I did. But of course, you couldn't get a termination of a pregnancy here in Tennessee. I helped get a lot of airline and bus tickets to New York and Washington. At the time, I think they were the only two places, as I recall. Again, I know New York was the big, the most available state for termination of a pregnancy if that's what you wanted to do. And so that position really catapulted me into really advocating for women. I was not as active on the local level, but I joined NOW

and all those good old great ones and became a real advocate for not just social workers, but women in those positions, women in the field.

So that's been my focus all these years. I'm a very verbal person, and so I made lots of speeches when I was with—the next program that I worked in in Child and Family was the Project Against Sexual Abuse of Appalachian Children. So that included, as I shared with you on the phone, I think, that agency had sort of a research project that started with setting up a helpline in 1979. The helpline was for women and children to call in and report just to the helpline or just to talk about their abuse, primarily sexual abuse was the target. And that meant any women that had been sexually abused as a child or were still or had been raped or a child that had been molested or somehow been offended sexually. So that sort of experiment or, in research terms, sort of out there to gather data, that following next year, the referrals to the Department of Human Services went up four hundred percent. So that data was used to support getting the funding for a regional research and service delivery system for abuse victims and so that's where the Project Against Sexual Abuse of Appalachian Children. It's an unwieldy name, but PASAAC, and I was clinical supervisor there for six years.

So I did a lot of speaking at that time throughout the southeast. And what we did was try to get the various parts of the systems that deal with abuse to talk to each other. Police—if a rape was reported, how do they talk to the victim? What kind of services were available at the emergency center, the emergency rooms? Of course, the Department of Human Services that gave services to children, often they weren't communicating with anybody. The sheriff's department, the police, all of those people needed to coordinate services and learn how to not do further damage because the interrogation, particularly around rape, man, it was almost as bad as the rape sometimes for women. So we advocated strongly for that to change and for a more

humane, more private inquiry, and did a lot of training throughout the southeast all the way from Texas to South Carolina, Florida.

JW: Was there openness to that kind of change or what was that process like?

RJ: What was that process? (laughs) Well, the big resistance, you can imagine, was from [males]. We wanted to include doctors and many physicians would not, were the most resistant group. And I'm not sure why that was. I think a lot of that was because there weren't very many women physicians at that point. And I think that, number one, a lot of men had not been trained to really see rape as [a crime]. They saw it as, well, did she have any injuries, was she pregnant, and that's it, and not any of the psychological impact of being assaulted that way.

JW: Were you trying to get them to report cases?

RJ: Yes, definitely trying to get, well, trying to help them help the victim, to take charge, and to talk about it. A lot of women still won't talk about being raped because back then, of course, there was very anti-female [attitude]. First of all, rape didn't exist. Number two, if you were raped, you asked for it, you wanted it, because you wore that skirt too short or you were being seductive or you didn't say "no" loud enough. Why did you finally give in? Nobody can [be raped]. It was a lot of old boy things: "Well, nobody gets raped. If you don't want to have sex then you just say no." But the fact that the man was two hundred and fifty pounds and the woman was a hundred had nothing to do with it. So there was a lot of denial of inequities, physical strength and intimidation, and then the women often felt so guilty and so dirty. All she wanted to do was forget it, and so there was not much follow-up for the mental health [treatment].

So as the next project that I worked on, as clinic supervisor at the Sexual Assault Center, which was an agency designed specifically to work with women and children. [The] women that

had been sexually assaulted or had been sexually abused as children and were still dealing with the trauma. So I ran a group for nine years for women that had been sexually assaulted or had reoccurring memories. The whole memory thing got really to be an issue. And then, of course, I had staff that worked with children that had been abused, a lot of play therapy and those kinds of things.

JW: And what year did you start that?

RJ: Oh gosh. I left Child and Family in '86—no, I started in private practice in '86. I left Child and Family in '84. I went with Overlook Mental Health Center for a couple years and then I went in private practice. And when I went in private practice in '86, then that's when I associated also with the Sexual Assault Center. There was three of us on staff, four on staff at the time and so I was the clinical supervisor and then we started adding staff. I was there for fifteen years on some level.

JW: So how were you learning to counsel people through this when, like you said, rape didn't exist? You were part of that movement to say, "Wait a second. It does."

RJ: It does exist and it has more than physical impact on the victim. Well, how were we learning that? Well, learning how to be a counselor, quote, therapist. Counseling usually is around solving problems, defining problems and solving problems in a real sort of one, two, three way. That's my definition. Now therapy is a much longer and more in-depth look at how you reacted to the problem on an emotional level and what that did to your mental health. What has it done? Do you find yourself depressed, staying in bed all day long, or continuing to get into self-destructive, abusive relationships? That takes a long time to figure out how to break those patterns and we're now learning a whole lot more about the brain. If I had time to go, I'd be a

neurologist. I would study that and how to educate people to train their brain differently. We know that can happen now. We have the technology, and we have the expertise.

But anyway, back to how do you learn how to deal with somebody about a behavior or an event that supposedly doesn't happen. (laughs) Well, the first thing you do is say, "It does happen." And again, since we're products of our culture, you have to do a lot of work on yourself, or at least I did, in saying, "Yeah, that happens and yes, it's not good and yes, most of the victims are women, but also little boys get raped and vulnerable males also get raped." So you have to sort of retrain your own thinking about that and disconnect yourself from the common belief system. It has some service in the community to deny certain things and so you have to figure out, okay, if I rock the boat, what happens? What role do I play?

It's like the whole thing with women, the women's movement. There was this thought that women, you can have it all. You can't have it all. You have to make choices. You can't be the CEO of a multimillion-dollar corporation and be there every time your kid has a fever. You can't do it. So you make choices. But anyway, so that's kind of what you do when you become a social agitator? Okay, what are we going to do with the problems that come with change? And we've seen a lot of problems and a lot of change in family structure when both parents are out of the home eight to twelve hours a day. One is food preparation. The drive-thrus would not have happened. McDonalds wouldn't be here if it wasn't for two working parents. It doesn't matter who stays home, by the way.

JW: Do you think people anticipated that?

RJ: No.

JW: Like the women of the women's movement?

RJ: No. I think Gloria Steinem said, "You can have it all." That was the message I got. I never bought that. That's the reason I only worked part-time sometimes when my children were little and I was having, not getting good help care with people to stay with my children and getting daycare, which was a nightmare at times. So I said, "Well, when they get to be a certain age and they can do these certain things, then I will." So like when my kids were needing tuition money, I worked every night. I saw people really late in the evenings. But they were essentially adults by then, and my husband was home with them and he did the evening meal kind of thing. We as a family decided this was what we were going to do, but it took a lot.

JW: What was your husband's career?

RJ: He was an environmental educator. When we first got married, he taught in elementary school and then he went to junior high and then went to high school. Then he went to a science center in Oak Ridge, which lost its funding, became unemployed. That was an interesting journey, and right after we had bought a house. But then he got a job, a crazy time in the world. TVA recruited him to become an environmental educator through the southeast. He developed programs through the various colleges in the southeast as laboratories for demonstrating the benefits of environmental education, and he did a network with the university and a network of colleges and universities in southern Russia, Rostov. So he went there and then he did programs in India and all over. So he did that and he retired from TVA and the next month, he died. It was lung cancer in '95. But served the national boards, environmental educators, and had done a lot of really good work.

And that came on, again, at about the same time as a lot of social issues were coming up to be. It's like we're all tied together. We were ripe for change, whether that meant looking at the natural world more closely, i.e. environmental issues, the black-white issues. If you've seen these

recent TV things on the freedom rides, I'll tell you, it just brings back a whole lot of stuff. At the same time, there was the women's movement and the bra-burning. I never burned my bra, though, I'll tell you. (laughs) First of all.

JW: And you know, I don't think anybody did.

RJ: Well.

JW: That's been a myth. People have gone back and figured out that it didn't actually happen.

RJ: I mean, some of them did. Some of them through them in the fires and that was supposedly a liberation thing, whereas with me and my culture, 1830, you remember, women didn't wear bras. And I thought, "Oh gosh." When I saw my breasts developing when I was about twelve, I thought, "Oh my gosh. I want a bra." (laughs) But my mother was so closed to talking about anything that might indicate sexuality. I thought, "My mother will never buy me a bra." So my aunt who was a lot more liberated than my mother [brought me a bra]. I only had one for a long, long time. So I wasn't going to burn it. And my mother's view of sex education was that she laid what we called a Kotex at the time, it was a sanitary napkin, on my pillow one day and said, "You may need this some day." (laughs)

JW: And that was the extent of it?

RJ: That was how I got prepared for menstruating. So it was a fun time to be alive.

JW: So how did growing up in a rural place influence your ideas of feminism and the women's movement?

RJ: That's an interesting question, and I've kind of spent a lot of time thinking about it because I can't ever remember not feeling liberated in a way. Because I've said that by the time I was eight or nine years old, I knew I wasn't going to live there forever. And again, my brother

and I talked. We had fantasies of we were going to go travel the world and that doesn't happen, I don't think, between many brothers and sisters. But we were kind of tight and he was very, very different. We went to a high school reunion the other night together, and I heard him say to this fat football coach that when he entered high school, he weighed, he was four foot nine and he weighed a hundred pounds. He was little, tiny, tiny. He'd had rickets when he was little, and so he was always under weight. He didn't get to go to Annapolis because he was too small, but they wanted him because of how smart he was. But anyway, we were both going to exit somehow. We didn't know how. But anyway, we did.

And so in that sense, his influence was my liberation in a lot of ways because he didn't treat me any differently than he would have a boy. So that was helpful. He got the car, though, in the family. When he got to be [a teen], he got access to get a car. They never got me one. I never had a bicycle because they bought his first and then he let me borrow his. So there was a lot of discrimination in the family because I was female. They had a big party when he graduated from college. I got nothing, but that was five years of therapy to talk about. But nevertheless, so there was a lot of differences made and that made me angry. I responded—. The therapist, you don't say "makes me feel." You say, "I responded to that situation with anger and determination." I didn't get into a lot of self-destructive things. I got into a lot of energy to make it different.

And the women's movement was ready made. Finally, they were saying, "Hey, you can do it." I knew we couldn't do everything, but I knew that we had more choices than we had been giving ourselves, and we talked about on the phone about how long [the suffrage issue took]. The vote in the Tennessee legislature was the thing that made the nineteenth amendment possible. And I resent the term "gave the women the right to vote." I want to say, "Finally, justice was given," that women were, again, I don't know what word I'd use, but it was like we finally got

our civil rights. Finally, somehow the movement, the suffragettes' work was realized. But it certainly wasn't, it didn't feel like a gift. They had bled in jail so that eventually the social system responded and said, "Yeah." And technology was changing. Telephones came on and again, we saw a communication and transportation technology that had not been there before.

JW: Were you a part of the group that raised the money and got the statue in Market Square?

RJ: I gave money for that. I was not one of the movers and shakers in that, but I certainly have been supportive of it and I've done the march too, dressed up and marched up there on the day in August. It's always hot.

JW: Can you explain why you think that's an important—

RJ: Monument?

JW: Monument that's creating a memory. Can you talk about that a little bit?

RJ: I just think it's, again, because it was the Tennessee guy that voted it, and I think every town in Tennessee ought to have one just as a reminder. That's what monuments do. They trigger memories of an event, of a group's courage to make changes. I don't know whether you saw recently this thing in Memphis with the flooding. There's this statue of an African-American man who in, gosh, I don't know how long ago it was, but several years ago before the civil rights movement. But he saw a boat going down out in the Mississippi River, and he knew there were people going to die. He couldn't swim, but somehow he got out there and pulled twenty-six people to safety and there's this statue now in Memphis where there's an African-American young man and he's out reaching to one of the victim's hands. It's just so moving. Those things help us remember how common our humanity. We have a commonality in the human family and

we shouldn't be dividing ourselves like we did into male-female, black-white, animals-not animals. (laughs)

JW: Now were you a part of any—

(break in conversation to answer phone)

JW: Were you a part of any consciousness-raising groups?

RJ: Well, a lot of the work I did in therapy groups turned out to be that and then I ran a group when I went into private practice where that was essentially the goal was to help women become--. When they say "consciousness," it's more like a self-appreciation, an awareness of your situation.

(break in conversation to answer phone)

RJ: So, the consciousness-raising groups that the women's movement really supported. I went to consciousness-raising groups myself, but I didn't run them. That's almost like every time women got together at that point in history, it was a consciousness-raising group.

JW: So you attended organized consciousness-raising groups?

RJ: No, not necessarily a group.

JW: Or you think it was just a group of—

RJ: Not necessarily. Here, I think, most of those kinds of things, those activities were sponsored or started at the university on campus and so, of course, there was a chapter of NOW here that was pretty, pretty active and then groups like Planned Parenthood were really active too. But per se, no, I was, again, I had two children and was trying to get my own professional life going. But you couldn't avoid it. You could not escape it. It was just part of the every day, particularly if you were working out in the community and particularly in abuse situations. You

really had to, again, grow yourself in consciousness. Like I said, I don't remember exactly what year it was, but a group of us got together and carpoled to DC to march.

JW: Can you describe that experience?

RJ: Oh that was great. That was so fun. We didn't have any money, but we all got in this car and there [a boy] with us, one of the women's sons. So we all rented this one little room, and we all kind of slept together and got up this next morning and marched on the Mall and carried the placards. We were pro-choice, not pro-abortion, but just pro-choice for women, period. And that means everything from choosing if you don't want to become a parent, then you can make steps to not do that, birth control availability, and just choice. I think there's a whole lot of movement toward making that not possible now and some backlash, and I'm not sure what that's about really because we're not that concerned enough about [care for children]. I found myself this afternoon saying, there's these doctors now wanting to really make it tough to get a procedure to end pregnancy and I find myself saying—and this is where I might want to rescind this—but I want those people that do that to provide free medical care for that child for eighteen years.

JW: It'd be a good way to put them to the test.

RJ: Yeah, and say, okay, or will you adopt this child? Everybody that says that, men included, should be willing to financially support because a lot of times, it's panic time for a female. It's not an easy, not an easy choice, of course.

JW: This backlash against choice has been going on for a while. It's picked up recently, but what are the repercussions? What have been the repercussions for your type of work where you're doing the counseling and providing these services?

RJ: Well, I think that, again, psychotherapy, the therapeutic community, there are a variety of opinions and attitudes just like in the broader culture, but generally, I think that it's sort of like when we first started. There was a lot of, it wasn't easy and so it's sort of retracing those early days of, okay, this is tough. It's not an easy decision, and yet not to do it was often a disaster. For the adult that's involved, that's one thing, but for this unwanted being and particularly if there's medical problems. There was a poignant interview today on NPR about this, oh man, just a child that is two years old mentally and is now eighteen years old or sixteen, sixteen, I guess. But anyway, it's a tough decision. So I think when you ask how it impacts, it's depending on the person, of course. Each individual comes to it, and you have to respect their opinions, respect their attitudes, and meet them where they are, and that's what we did early on and that's what I would do now if I were. I'm not seeing any people now.

JW: In what ways has the culture been slow to change around these issues of sexual assault and rape and the violence?

RJ: Well, how has it been slow to change?

JW: Or has it been? Has this mostly been a positive story of success?

RJ: Well, in some ways for some people it has. I think there's still a lot of, and I'm thinking of just a great influence on people's attitudes on sex generally and then, concomitant of that, the misuse of sex to control somebody, which is essentially [abuse]. Rape is not about sex. It's about violence and control, because if you want to have good sex, you don't rape. And sexual overtures to a child essentially, those people, in my humble opinion, do not have power any place else or they don't feel powerful in any place else. So it's not about the use of your sexual self for pleasure or for connection. It's about violence, psychological violence if not physical violence, on another person.

So how have we changed? I'm not so sure that television and popular media doesn't sometimes glorify non-consensual sex and it certainly, I don't think, creates enough distaste for prostitution and those areas that females get entrapped maybe. I know that some of your audience would probably say, "Well, there's choice there too." Anyway, so we've both been changing toward appreciation for the individual and individual choice and for women, but we've also degraded, to some degree, the whole process of sexuality and made it entertainment and/or a power play. It's kind of sad in a lot of ways.

I'm at the age where I don't want to sound like a curmudgeon and blah blah blah blah, the world's going to the dogs, but I have spent my whole career, adult life, advocating for women and for choice and for equality in all arenas. I don't think we've got there yet. What is real discouraging at times is to see women who get power and also become abusive and not nice, not helpful, not nurturing. We know of those folks. That's really sad. So maybe it's the power in the human family that's the culprit, not necessarily discrimination based on male-female, but it's on the power group versus the un-empowered. It's possible for us to destroy ourselves as a species.

So have we made progress? I don't know, but the human community is very slow. Again, I think our brain is slow to change. And once we get an idea, it's very hard to change back and say, "Hmm, maybe, maybe the best place for children is not eight to ten hours a day in daycare."

JW: Do you still consider yourself a feminist?

RJ: Yes, definitely, yeah.

JW: Can you say what that means?

RJ: For me, well, it does say a person that's baseline philosophy is the equalization or equality for all human beings, women included. Feminist in the sense of, yeah, don't

discriminate against me because I'm a woman, and don't support a system that does it. Don't buy from big corporations that routinely do not promote and do not pay equal pay for women that they do for men. Yeah, I'm a feminist. I boycott those places, and I let them know why. Yeah, I still am on my soap box for that.

JW: Well, is there anything else that you want to add or any questions that didn't come up that you thought would, that you were ready to answer?

RJ: Well, I think we've covered it pretty much, but I think any time we're looking at this whole issue and particularly in the southeast—we haven't regionalized my comments that much—I think a lot of the movement in the southeast, on some degree, has been slower, but we had a lot further to go in a lot of ways. There's been this strong southern woman and particularly in Appalachia. If you've ever read any of Wilma Dykeman, man, I'll tell you those women, they were not weaklings. We had a culture that, in some ways, glorified and observed and appreciated the contributions of the female in the family unit and that was pretty much in the southeast. Of course, the women that got in the covered wagons and went west, became westerners on the prairie, they survived a lot of stuff too and were very strong.

But in the southeast, I think our movement toward equality for women or recognition of the contributions of women equal to men came along with the civil rights generally, the civil rights, the '64 Civil Rights Bill that recognized the equality of all people regardless of skin color, regardless of race, nationality, whatever, or sex. It was tough for the southeast because they had been so enmeshed and so stuck in the Civil War mind, pre-Civil War attitude that the white good old boys ought to be in charge. So if you didn't believe it, just ask the governor of Alabama. (laughs) "We will have segregation forever." But anyway, "And we'll always pay women less, too because they ought to really be in the home." So that was the struggle and in some ways, it

was a more defined struggle than in any place in the country. Now we had the other groups, like in California, it was the Chinese or Japanese or oriental. But in the southeast, it was women and blacks. So that impacted, I think it's impacted--. The civil rights movement really helped propel the South.

JW: And were you thinking that at the time? Were you watching the civil rights movement unfold and thinking—

RJ: Oh yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. I wanted to march on Washington. I wanted to go to that so bad, but it was not--. I started wearing blue jeans just because--. I'd worn blue jeans all my life, but it became a popular thing to do. The Poor People's March, as if that was some sort of state to envy, not. (laughs) Now I want tickets. Okay, you have anything else?

JW: No.

RJ: Okay.

JW: Thank you. This has been great.

RJ: Oh okay. I hope it met with your goals.

JW: Yes, absolutely.

RJ: Alright.

END OF INTERVIEW

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