

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Women's History

Personal Experience

O H 1798

MARLENE WARD

Interviewed

by

Beth Burr

on

February 26, 1996

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Women's History

INTERVIEWEE      MARLENE WARD

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SUBJECT            Women's History

DATE                February 26, 1996

B      This is an interview with Marlene Ward for the Youngstown State University Oral History Program. It is about Women's History and how life has changed for women. The interview is being done by Beth Burr at Marlene's home on Jefferson Street in Jefferson, Ohio on the 26th of February.

        Tell me about your childhood, what you did for fun, where you grew up, and our hometown.

W      I was born in 1932 in Jackson, Michigan <sup>h</sup> where I spent the first several years of my life. I grew up in a modest family. I had a mother, father, and one sister. My mother did not work <sup>d</sup> and my father was a milkman. I spent <sup>r</sup> much of my <sup>s</sup> Summer helping him ~~out~~. The neighborhoods were very safe. We played kick the can, monopoly, hide-and-go-seek, and baseball. My sister was four and a half years older than I, <sup>was</sup> so we were never <sup>very</sup> close. I went to school through high school. As a senior I became engaged. I got married after graduation.

B      Right out of high school?

W      Yes. In school I took all college prep classes to become a teacher, but I never did <sup>it</sup>. My

mother was always at home I <sup>always thought</sup> ~~was~~ ~~thought~~ ~~that~~ it was too bad that more mothers <sup>couldn't</sup> ~~can't~~ be home for their children We were never really that close, besides the fact that I knew she would always be there We spend vacations together

B How did you meet your husband?

W A blind date He went to school with my older sister and he played semi-pro football out of high school I followed that after we became acquainted ~~That's about it with him~~ We've had seven children and all are doing well

B. What about working? Did you work?

W ~~I really didn't have anything very practical~~ I was able to find a furniture office that was willing to train me I got married in 1950 and had my first <sup>h</sup> ~~son~~ in 1953 I worked there only a few years At that time my wages were 25 dollars a week and my husband was making 40 and we thought we had the world by the tail

B Going back a little bit, tell me how major world events affected your family

W I remember during the second world war that my father was an auxiliary officer He would have us practice bomb <sup>affects</sup> ~~shelters~~ I can remember that when the war was over, everyone got in their cars and drove downtown to <sup>throw streamers</sup> ~~through~~ ~~beams~~ out the window<sup>s</sup> I had one cousin that was in the war He lost a lot of this friends We were really close to him He was more like a brother than a cousin

B Tell me about when and why you moved here to Jefferson.

W We came to Jefferson in 1965 My husband transferred here to work It's been very nice The kids have seemed to do well in a small town After we came here we had five more children The last one was born when I was 43, right before our 25th wedding anniversary.

B How have you seen things change for women over the years?

W ~~Then~~<sup>↑</sup> the women had schedules. Each day had its own duties. It wasn't until the second war when women started working and the schedules changed. I've been watching children in my home, which made it easier to be with my kids plus it created some extra income. I think that is very important that a child has a stable environment to live in. Anymore, parents and teachers can't correct children without getting in trouble.

B Did you have anyone that you could consider a role model?

W I took care of children that lived next door to me. The mother was a great person. Then my mother-in-law became one of my best friends. We just lost her <sup>Dec 30</sup> right before the New Year. I respected her a lot. I was in Rainbow Girls in high school. I had advisors that were very helpful. I had some fond memories.

B Do you vote?

W Yes, but there has been times when I haven't.

B I asked because women haven't always been able to

W Yes, they should.

B. What do you think about women in politics?

W I think that it is okay. It's just a change, but it's a coming thing.

B Have you ever been aware of any discrimination?

W Not really. My one daughter that works has never had any problems. No one I know of ~~hasn't~~<sup>↑</sup> really said anything.  
*have*

B Other than the child care that you give, what else do you do to keep busy?

W I go to church. I've raised all my children in the church. I am in the choir. I do a lot of

knitting Today, a normal day, I had eleven children and three of those were three months, six months, and nine months old

B. Tell me more about your children and grandchildren

W. Our oldest son is 43 and living in Columbus Our daughter lives in Virginia managing a sport's store Timothy lives in Ohio, he's been in the service Jeff is working with mentally retarded men and is going back to school Ed is living in Jefferson and is married with two children and one on the way He works at Lincoln Electric. Bob is a nurse in Akron Kim is 20 and is an EMT at the Jefferson Rescue Squad They keep us busy

B Is there anything that you would like to add?

W I've been married for 45 years to the same man I've had a good marriage and a good life I am very proud of all my children

B Thank you for this interview

W You're welcome

End of interview

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