

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Woman's History Project

Personal Experience

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FANYEROSE G. CULLINAN

Interviewed

by

Patti C. Swartz

on

December 6, 1987

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

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INTERVIEWEE: FANYEROSE G. CULLINAN  
INTERVIEWER: Patti C. Swartz  
SUBJECT: Women's Herstory Project  
DATE: December 6, 1987

S: This is an interview with Fanyerose Cullinan for the Youngstown State University Oral History Program, on Women's "Herstory" Project for the Women's Resource Center in conjunction with the Youngstown State University Oral History Program, by Patti Swartz, on December 6, 1987.

Fanyerose, I do not know exactly how long you have been practicing law here, but I know that there were not very many women lawyers at the time that you started, especially in the Youngstown area. Could you tell us a little bit about the beginnings of your practice?

C: Yes. I can tell you that I started practicing law on February 12, 1930.

S: That is quite a long time ago.

C: It is quite a long time ago, but it goes very fast when you are busy.

S: How many other women attorneys were there in this area then? Do you have any idea?

- C: I could not tell you how many. I can tell you that there were two or three very active in the profession and were very helpful to me. I have always been thankful that I knew them and that they guided me
- S: Was it difficult for you getting started? This has basically been a man's profession until just recently and still is pretty much considered one. Was it difficult for you starting?
- C: On the contrary, it really wasn't. I ended the profession without any money. I was fortunate enough to rent an office with the promise that at the end of the month I would pay the first month's rent. I was busy from the very beginning. This was in 1930. Quite a short time after I began to practice law, I heard about the Home Owners Loan Corporation that was being activated by the federal government. I made the application and was appointed a lawyer. From that time on I was so busy that I had to have quite a staff. I had a staff of five. Some of them were title searchers. Others were stenographers and secretaries. I was much too busy to worry about anything. I did not suffer the discrimination that women are always talking about.
- S: You were very fortunate then
- C: Possibly I was, or maybe it was my own attitude. I do not know. I won't say that no man ever insulted me in one manner or another. If something like that happened, I didn't take it to heart. I just waited patiently until the next time we had business. Then I beat the hell out of him. After that it was respect. [Laughter]
- S: I would imagine so
- C: I was too busy to enumerate all of the little things that happened. It always surprises me when the women lawyers get together and they constantly discuss discrimination and unfairness. I don't think that they believe me at times, but I really had no problem with that at all.
- S: What about law school? Was law school the same as general practice?
- C: Yes. I went to law school as a night school. I worked a full day all through my law school work.
- S: Where did you go to law school?
- C: I went to Youngstown. I had previously gone to Western Reserve. At Youngstown it was very informal. You could learn as little or as much as you wanted to.

It was rather interesting. I went down to take the bar examination just once. We had a class of 13. All the rest were men. The night before the examination in Columbus, they were partying and banging on my door. I was reading the code. [Laughter] It was a curious thing that among the 13 that went down was Maynard Dickerson, a colored boy. He rode down in the trains as I did. He didn't have a coat. I said to him, "Maynard, why do you not have a coat? It's cold." He said, "I don't own a coat." He was very poor. He and I were the only two who passed the bar examination. It was exciting from the beginning. I never felt any sense of inferiority or any problem. As soon as I finished, I rented an office. I got busy. I was very, very busy from the very beginning.

S: You said that you worked full-time when you went to law school. What did you do during the day when you went to law school?

C: During part of the time I worked as a secretary in a real estate office. During the time that I was in high school I also worked. I have always claimed and I believe that I had the best job that I have ever had. I managed to get an appointment as a cashier at the Youngstown Municipal Golf Course. That was about a block and a half from my home. Every noon-time my mother would bring me my lunch. She was so worried that I would not get enough to eat. When it rained or if we did not have very many people around, the pro would give me lessons. I really enjoyed that episode very much.

S: There were all kinds of fringe benefits.

C: All kinds of fringe benefits. It's true. It was very lovely. I worked in an office in the Dollar Bank building. I had a little tiny office. The other lawyers in the office were constantly playing tricks on me. It was during the Roosevelt era. I had a little bust of Roosevelt on the desk. Invariably when I would go out they would stand him on his head. [Laughter]

S: They did not approve of Roosevelt?

C: No.

S: Were they more conservative than you then?

C: Oh, very much so. That was how I managed to pay the rent and managed to get along. All along I felt that I was in the profession that I wanted to be in. I never changed from the time that I was 12 years old. I decided that I wanted to be a lawyer. I never changed my mind.

S: It's kind of unusual to make that kind of decision when you are that young.

C: I know that most of the children want to be actresses and all kinds of variations, but I never changed my mind. I just wanted to be a lawyer. I had some interesting experiences, but I never took them very seriously. I wanted to get a job in the municipal court. I thought that if I could read all of those pleadings as they came in that it would be very educational. One of the lawyers who had political strength with reference to appointments was officed in the City Bank building. I won't mention his name, but I went to see him. I told him that I was in law school and that I would like to get a job in the municipal court. He assured me that he could make arrangements. Then he came from his side of the desk over to my side. We proceeded to run around the desk. I finally ran out. I had enough of that. I never did get a job in the municipal court.

S: Today someone would file a sex discrimination charge for that

C: Yes

S: When you made up your mind at 12 that you wanted to become an attorney, did your parents encourage you?

C: They encouraged me very much. My parents always encouraged me. I was an only child.

S: so you were fortunate to have a lot of support from your parents?

C: Yes. By that I mean moral support. My parents were not in a position to give me any financial support.

S: You said that you attended Case Western Reserve. Well, at that time it was Western Reserve. What was your major there?

C: I put in a year there. I had not gotten to the point of selecting a major. I have an idea that it would have been history if I proceeded further. It was in the heart of the Depression. There was no choice except to go home.

I remember so well when it became payday at the Youngstown Law School. They would call names out to go to the office. I had horror that my name would be called. Meeting each of those paydays was a big responsibility.

S: Yes. The Depression had started before you began law school and during law school. I imagine that it was a rather difficult time for you.

C: It was, but I thoroughly enjoyed every moment of it. I always thought that I was so blessed that I had the opportunity to work in an area that I really wanted to work.

S: Can you tell me a little bit about your parents?

C: My parents were wonderful people. My mother was ill all of my life. I learned for that reason to accept responsibility even before I went to school. My father was a traveling salesman. He went all over the United States. It was not an unusual thing for me to go on the long distance telephone and call my father in the state of Washington or wherever he happened to be, maybe Iowa, and tell him, "Mother is very sick. The doctor said you better come home." That happened more than one time.

S: So it was rather difficult for you having him away. You learned to take responsibility.

C: I never thought of it as being difficult. I just thanked God always when I was able to do what needed to be done. I learned to do household occupations that people learn usually several years later, but I learned to do them. I always admired the courage that my mother had. My father was always a wonderful optimist to the very day of his death which is something that I had not inherited.

S: Sometimes it is rather difficult to be optimistic.

C: Yes, it sometimes is.

S: Can you tell me a little bit more about the types of law that you have practiced? I know that you ran into almost everything. Haven't you?

C: I will tell you what I did in order to get experience. I went to one of the judges and asked if I could be appointed to defend a prisoner. I had never tried a lawsuit. This was my first case. He was charged with some kind of a felony. I do not actually remember at this time. The things that stand out in my mind are that I practiced my first case. . . . My mother and a very good friend, Mr. Julius Kahn, who was a wonderful friend of mine, sat in the courtroom throughout the trial. That made me a little uneasy in case I would make a mistake. We tried it before a jury. We got a hung jury. You never know what a jury is going to do. So after that they decided that they were going to try him again. So I tried him again. This time I got him acquitted, but very shortly after that the immigration authorities deported him. My first case was rather unusual. [Laughter]

S: I guess it would be. Do you remember why they had deported him? Was it because he had been in other trouble?

C: Yeah. He wasn't a desirable citizen. As a result of that case I had good publicity in the jail. I got a lot of calls to represent people. All of them without any money of course. I took all of the cases. I tried everybody. I wanted a chance to get experience. I finally reached a point when I said this can't go on forever. They are taking all of my time and I am not making any money.

S: It was worth the experience though for you?

C: Yes, it was. I did this before I got the appointment for attorney for Home Owners Loan Corporation.

S: That is kind of a difficult thing to work with because you had to do title searches. It is a complicated field of law.

C: Yes it is, but it was a wonderful opportunity for a young lawyer. Those were some of the things that I did that maybe wiser people would have said, "I don't want to try cases unless I get paid." As far as I was concerned I did not care. I just wanted experience.

S: Probably at that point it was wise to get the experience and get the reputation and get your name around. Sometimes I think people are not too wise in always wanting to be paid. Sometimes the experience is worth a great deal more.

C: That is true. I will say this and I thank God for it every day. I am presently servicing the children, grandchildren, nieces, and nephews of my original clients.

S: So apparently your original clients and their families thought that you did a good job.

C: Evidently they did, because I have never had to indulge in any of the advertising procedures that lawyers do now.

S: What do you think about the advertising?

C: I think it lowers the profession. It is no longer a profession. That is how I feel.

S: I feel that it is sort of tacky.

C: I feel that way. I will tell you how I gained my clientele. As I got to know people as a result of the Home Owners Loan connection, I would get invited to different church affairs and weddings and all kinds of things all over the county. I ran around to Campbell and Struthers. Any place where I was

invited, I would go. I kept on the move all of the time. That is really how I built my clientele. Then my clients would introduce me to others and sometimes say something kind. That is how I built my law practice. I have always practiced alone. I was never associated with another lawyer. I think that was largely because nobody asked to be associated with me.

S: It is almost like being married to someone to be in a partnership with them in a lot of ways. Sometimes it is even more difficult than marriage.

C: At this point I wish that I had been associated with someone else because I am passing through a period when I am finding it very difficult to do some of the things that I am accustomed to doing.

S: Is that because of your eye surgery?

C: Yes, because of eye surgery and the fact that it has not progressed yet to the point that I am having normal sight. I often wish that I had a partner. In the meantime I have consulted other lawyers and passed down a lot of cases and so forth, but I do not like having to do it.

S: You have a lot of energy, and you are very active, and you like to keep going. I would imagine that this problem with your eyes is really frustrating to you.

C: It is very much so.

S: It should probably clear up though. Your doctor seems to think that it will. Is that right?

C: I guess. He has a wonderful work that he used constantly: patience. That has never been one of my strong points.

Yes. There is something else that I think you might be interested in, my personal life. My husband and I moved out in the country the first year after our marriage.

S: When were you married? I know you and Jack were married for a number of years.

C: We were married 23 years when he died. We were married in June of 1952. People can be very cruel. They would leave dogs out in the country to starve. We couldn't stand anything like that. So we would take them in. Some of them had been abused and beaten. We would take them to the veterinary. Some of them were ready to have pups. That was probably the biggest fault that their owners found with them. Over the years we acquired a very large family. We took care of them



When Jack died on February 15, 1975 I decided that I had all I could handle. There was not any way that I could enlarge our family. So since that time I had not taken in any new dogs. I am proud to say that I have 11 of them now. Some of them died from old age and were buried in our little cemetery. I buried them and dug the hole. Some of them were born here. My youngest dog is 13 years old.

S: That is a long life for a dog.

C: One of my beautiful fellows died--he was more than 18 years old--a few months ago. I had the vet here for four hours trying to relieve him and make it an easier passing for him. I am very devoted to them. In a sense I think some people think that I am probably a little nutty, but I really love taking care of them. I hope that I last long enough to see the last one through.

S: How many dogs did you have at one time? What is the highest number?

C: We once had 26. [Laughter] Each one has his own house, except the girls. I have four girls who come in and out. They are housebroken. They have made themselves little beds in the garage with straw. Sometimes they live in and sometimes they live out, but they have very good manners.

S: It must have been kind of an expense taking care of them all of these years. Vet bills are extremely high and food. That is a large family to have.

C: I remember one little dog that was hurt and I took him to the vets. He was there for about a week. The vet told me that there was nothing more that he could do. I brought him home. I had spent over 300 dollars. Somebody had shot him. The bullet was lodged close to the spine. On account of the nerves, they couldn't operate. So I brought him home. I knew that he was failing. I kept him in the house and took care of him. The night that he died I sat up and held him in my lap. He felt very secure. To me, they are just friends, people, because you know that I am completely alone. I do not have any brothers or sisters. Most of my relatives are very busy with their own affairs. I am alone so these animals are quite dear to me.

S: Most of them live outside then and you take food out to them and make sure that they have water.

C: Yes. Each one has his own house. Even if they happen to break loose once in awhile they never hurt anybody. It is a responsibility in all kinds of weather. I welcome it and I

think God every day that I have them because they are very dear to me.

S: Sometimes they can be much dearer than people. They do not hurt. . . .

C: They do not change around.

S: One other thing that interests me about your private life is the fact that you were raised Jewish.

C: Certainly. With reference to that, my mother's father whose name was Liebman was the first rabbi of Rodef Sholom Temple in Youngstown. He and my grandmother had 13 children, 11 of whom lived to manhood and womanhood Isn't that remarkable?

S: That is a good number My father is from a family like that. There were 13 of them, but I think only 10 managed to survive

C: I used to teach in the Sunday school. I have always been president of our Rodef Sholom Sisterhood. I feel very close to the temple.

S: Jack, your husband, was not Jewish, was he?

C: No. Jack was Catholic

S: Did that create any problems for you?

C: It did not create any problems at all God must have somehow blessed us because. . . . I was a very timid person. I never really planned on getting married. We went together for 12 years before we got married. Then we were married for 23 years They were wonderful years. We understood each other. Neither one of us ever wanted to change the other. I was treated with great cordiality and friendliness in the circles where he was affiliated. I would go to church with him on Christmas Eve. Other times he chose to go and he never missed going to the temple with me on the high holy days and many times on Friday night. Everyone welcomed him in the circle of our temple. His best friend was Dr. Sidney Berkowitz, the rabbi of Rodef Sholom Temple

S: Yes, I understand that he was a wonderful man.

C: He was a wonderful man. I was rather fortunate in that respect that Dr. Berkowitz and his wife, the first year that he came to Youngstown, lived right above us in a four-plex. We really got to know each other. During the time that I was

being courted, he and Jack became very good friends. We were really blessed. We didn't have any discrimination problems that people are always talking about. We seemed to be welcome wherever we went.

S: You said that you sort of delayed marriage and you went with your husband for 12 years before you got married because you were a little timid.

C: I mean that I have handled many divorces. Under even the most normal circumstances it isn't easy to make a marriage work. My husband was raised in a parochial school. His family, his mother and father, welcomed me into their circle so much that I just. . . . Nobody ever hurt me in any way. They seemed to want me to be a part of their family. My father and Jack worked together. Jack formerly had been in the mill. Due to his failing health, he had to change his occupation, so he went into the insurance business. In fact, I organized an insurance corporation. I almost got out of law practice because we got so busy in the insurance business. Finally I persuaded Jack to sell the insurance business because I really wanted to practice law. He and my father worked together for many years. They thought a great deal of each other. So we were very fortunate. We often said if only someone had objected to our marriage, we would have been married a long time before. The first year that we were married we moved out here to Vienna in the country. I have never lived in the country.

S: Was that a big adjustment for you?

C: I loved it. He did, too.

S: You grew up on the North Side of Youngstown?

C: Yes, I did.

S: What was it like when you were growing up? What was it like living on the North Side when you were a child?

C: When I started school I was living at 82 Bissell Avenue. That is the second house away from McKinley Grade School. All I had to do was roll down the hill to go into school. That was true for the first eight years of school.

S: That was convenient, then?

C: Yes, it was very convenient. I loved school. We had wonderful neighborhood friendliness. There were all kinds of people: Catholics, Protestants, Jewish people, and we celebrated everything.

S: That is a nice way to grow up.

C: It really is

S: It makes you tolerant. Sometimes I think that we don't know enough about each other. Maybe that is one of the problems that we have in this world.

C: I think so. When I went into high school, Rayen School, I had the first year down at the old Rayen. After that we moved up to Elm Street close to Gypsy Lane and the golf course where I got my best job. We had a very nice . . . I went into Rayen High and just loved every bit of it. It was wonderful. I don't know if everybody has had as happy schooling as I did. I had a very happy schooling.

S: You had made up your mind when you were 12 that you wanted to be an attorney. Did your teachers encourage you?

C: I didn't talk too much about it. It was a private matter. I didn't need any encouragement.

S: You had decided that this was what you were going to do?

C: Yes, I had decided. The only problem I had was I did not know how I was going to finance it.

S: That's a problem still today.

C: Today it is an even bigger problem although when I went to school there were no grants. At least I didn't apply to receive any. I had to do it myself. There wasn't anybody else who could afford to help me.

S: It takes a lot of determination to do that, to work all day and then go to school at night.

C: I had a system. I used to do most of my work in the middle of the night when it was perfectly quiet and there were no interruptions. I would go to bed around eight or nine o'clock and then get up around two in the morning and then work until it was time to go to school.

S: That is funny because when I went back to school that is what I did because it was the only time that I could work without my children interrupting me.

C: Is that the way? you found that to be true also? I think that it is a wonderful idea.

S: It works out very well.

C: Yes.

S: Could you tell me a little bit about your marriage? When you and your husband got married, was it a big wedding? Did you decide to have a lot of people there or did you plan a small wedding?

C: We planned a very small wedding; just family and the very closest friends, but it did not work out that way.

S: What happened?

C: We went down to get our marriage license on a Saturday just before noon thinking that we could keep it out of the paper until after the wedding. Our probate judge at that time was a wonderful fellow and he had a great sense of humor, Judge Clifford Woodside. When he found out that I was getting married, I guess I possibly had the reputation of being a confirmed old maid, he just could not stop talking about it. He must have told quite a number of people because the telephone calls kept coming in. Everybody was congratulating me. I began to realize that it no longer was a quiet ceremony that we were anticipating. It so happened that there was a meeting of the Mahoning County Bar Association on the day that we were being married. Judge Woodside had stood up and told all of the boys that Fanyerose was getting married. They had all stopped down and congratulated us on the way home. I had planned a small wedding. I had made all of the preparations myself. When I heard that he was telling everybody about the plans, I became uneasy. I decided that I better get a caterer because it was more than I could handle. So fortunately I did because we had over 250 people come in unexpectedly and uninvited.

S: How many had you invited originally?

C: We were going to have 16. We had planned to go out and have our dinner at one of the better restaurants.

S: That is a very interesting story. I know that you and your husband were very happy during the period that you were married. I can remember when I first met you that you were active in politics and he was also.

C: Yes. He was captain of the First Ward. I will have to tell you how I met him. It is kind of interesting. It was a real rainy day and I was a lowly precinct committeeman. Jack was captain of the First Ward. He asked all of the committeemen to meet with him early in the morning. I was the only one who showed. We sat and talked in the car. It was raining hard. We visited and sometime after that he came down to the office. He used to drop in. The odd part of it was that his father

was one of my clients. His father and I were very good friends. Then one day he asked me if I would go to dinner with him. I said, "Yes, I think that I would like to." We did and we started going together. I don't think that there was a day during the 12 years that we went together that we didn't see each other. He was an unusual person. God was very good to give me those 23 years that we were married and the years prior to our marriage when we went together. They were wonderful years.

The only dark side of it was his health was not good. I knew that he was going to have. . . . I knew that we were approaching the end. That was very hard. We worked together. The last five years when he was not able to pursue his occupation very much, I would come home from the office and he would have the table set and the vegetables cleaned. He would leave the meat for me to cook. We had a lovely home life together. We were very happy.

S: We are going to talk a little more about the Home Owners Loan Corporation. You said that you were very fortunate to be able to get that. Can you tell me just exactly what that was?

C: Yes. It was an appointment as an attorney for Home Owners Loan Corporation. The purpose of the corporation was to refinance mortgages. At that time during the Depression in the 1930s, many people were in the process of losing their homes. Their foreclosure actions had been filed or were about to be filed. The government set up this corporation to refinance these mortgages. The banks were cooperating. They had to cooperate. There was so little money around and the economy was in such very bad shape. I found that if you did a good job and were able to handle a volume of business, there was an endless amount of work there. A matter of months after I was admitted to the bar, I began to refinance these mortgages. I actually handled over 800 mortgages. It was a lot and I had to build up a staff. We had to search the titles. There was a great deal of work and it was constantly changing directives from the main corporation.

S: Was this a federal corporation?

C: This was a federal corporation.

S: Was this during the Roosevelt administration to help people maintain their homes?

C: Yes. It was one of the greatest programs that the federal government has ever handled because it is one program that they didn't lose money on. The day may come in the foreseeable future. . . . I don't think that the market can break the way that it did and not have a reaction upon banks.

and savings & loans because where are they going to make their investments and how are they going to get their returns? With the vast number of lay-offs, how are people going to be able to fulfill their contracts?

S: It is frightening today as it was then.

C: I think it is. I think if people understood it and the similarity of what we are passing through today with what occurred back in the 1930s, they'd understand. It is inevitable. The first thing every morning, I listen to the news and find out how much the market has dropped. Happily, I am not in the market. If this occurs during the current administration, the Reagan administration, Reagan would have to turn turtle. He would have to completely reverse all of his principles in order to handle it in the manner that it was handled in the 1930s by Roosevelt.

S: What do you think about the difference? He has always said that Franklin Roosevelt has been one of his heroes and yet he has been so completely opposite. Do you think that it is possible that Roosevelt could have been one of his heroes?

C: It is possible. He lived through the Depression. He couldn't help admiring the measures that were taken. We were really in the depths. People were living at such a low economy. Of course, they are not doing that right now. If the day comes that they have to give Welfare to more and more people, I do not know what is going to happen except that we are probably going to have to change our monetary system. That is going to be the next. . . .

S: Maybe we will go back to a barter system. During the Depression, my parents' doctor would charge them 50 cents for a visit and give them the medicine. That is hard to believe today, isn't it?

C: It is hard to believe. In fact, the cost of medical care is one of the disasters that we are facing unfortunately. I think many people who need it are afraid to submit and become helpless and not have any choice. A person who is unfortunate enough to lay in a nursing home can be wiped out in a matter of months financially. My own thoughts on this matter is that there should be more of an effort to keep people within their own homes rather than put them in nursing homes for care. I think that there should be indoctrination as far as families are concerned that they should take care of their own like the Japanese do. Their elders are respected. They would not think of putting them in a nursing home away from the family. I think that is probably worse than a sentence to jail. That has to be taught from when you are very young that we are a family. (end of side one--question inaudible)

I am still continuing to do a great deal of probate work both in Mahoning and Trumbull County. I like this very much. It is the type of work that I feel well qualified to do and the people that I am working for, the families and so forth, many of them are old friends. I built up quite a large number of wills in my safe deposit box that people have left with me. Some of them have instructions of what is to be done in case of their death. This has kept me very busy.

S: Probate can be very interesting. It is rather nice to not only feel that you are helping a friend, but actually be able to help them by taking care of things for them and keeping things for them and what should be done.

C: That is the way it is. In the case that you are dealing with people that you know, many of these people I have not known just for a matter of months or a short period, but from way back. I have administered some of their forbearers' estates. They call on me from time to time so that somehow it has become more or less a specialty. You really get into family life when you handle that. I have done a great deal of divorce work, but if you happen to be in Trumbull County and-- you work in Trumbull County, you just do not do any divorce work?

S: Not right now, no

C: It is hard to explain to your clients the limitations.

S: Your clients do not want to hear that the court is closed. Their problem is immediate. It is not going to come back again when there is more money.

C: Exactly. I have a client that the court order will end for her support in January of 1988. I do not know what is going to happen if they don't hurry up and open the court because there is such a tremendous volume of business pending that will take forever to get a hearing.

S: They are only open for emergencies, right?

C: Yes

S: Have they given you any indication of what an emergency might be?

S: I think the way that emergencies are handled is people somehow manage to get on Welfare. In some cases they do better than they did in the divorce court. I had such a case.

C: I think that the biggest factor involved is that if you happen to get onto Welfare, your medical expenses are covered.



- S: That means a great deal.
- C: That is the most important factor. I don't care what your condition is, if it's post divorce and you do not have hospitalization coverage, you are just not going to be taken care of if you are not on Welfare. If you're on Welfare, the sky is the limit.
- S: You have seen a lot of changes in families in practice and in divorce rates over the years. Is there anything that sticks in your mind as being different or similar between times past and times now?
- C: I think the trend is the parties in a marriage do not seem to make as much effort to preserve the relationship as they once did. It seems that people get married always with the idea of the raincheck. If it does not work, they will be divorced. It seems that they make that decision so readily and not realizing the terrible effect that it has upon the offspring. I think that it is very damaging when you have a father and a step-father and all of the differences and problems that arise. The next generation lacks the respect for the marriage relationship because their parents didn't respect it. They broke it.
- S: What about dissolution, how has that changed the practice of divorce?
- C: It just makes it faster and less expensive. In other words, they can't agree as far as the marriage is concerned, but they both agree that they need to break up the marriage. They agree on the terms and they do not have to go through a knock-down drag-out divorce.
- S: Do you find that they have to go through with a divorce if they cannot agree on distribution of property and custody and all of the other things that are involved? One of the complaints about divorce has been that people have had to lie and say, "So-and-so was cruel, he did this," and he said, "Well, she did this and she did that." Do you think that is true?
- C: Yes, to a degree. I think that it is very damaging, particularly where there are children. I think they become very mixed up as to what principles there are.
- S: Joint custody has been becoming more of an issue in the last few years. What do you think about that?

- C: if they cannot get along within the marriage structure, they are not likely to be able to peaceably exercise joint custody, but if the parties are capable of it, fine. I would say in most cases it would not work.
- S: In most cases the children would just become a pawn in a continuing battle.
- C: Yes, and they just carry information from one side to another and they always live in this atmosphere of separation and if not hatred. . . . Their parents could not live together. I think that the whole system is very bad where there are children. I used to regret so much that I did not have children. I wanted children very much, but it did not turn out that we could have them. I feel differently about it now. I just wonder whether I would have been capable of raising children in this age.
- S: Do you think that it is much different than when you grew up? Raising families?
- C: Yes. I think that as far as divorce is concerned, it is an alternative that they take too quickly and too easily. When I began to practice law, I never filed a divorce action without first trying to reunite the couple. I would make every effort. I have found over the years that these people were just bored to death with that. By the time that they went to a lawyer they wanted court action. They don't want anymore of this getting together and talking it over and trying to . . . When they got to the lawyer, they wanted you to file the papers. So I don't attempt to do that any longer unless they particularly request it. I think that people use the divorce alternative much too readily. I don't think that they make the effort to preserve the marriage as something sacred. I think it no longer is a religious function in which they feel an obligation to fulfill the terms of it. I think that they are in and out of it and think of it as any civil contract. I do not think that people feel deeply about the principles of getting married.

I think our moral laws have changed so much. So very often, by the time people marry they have had sexual relations for a period of time prior to marriage and the marriage puts the stamp of respectability upon it. I think that is all it amounts to. I had an interesting case in which a couple came into my office with their two or three young children. They had some sort of a civil problem that I listened to and so forth. In addressing them I referred to "Your wife" and "your husband." The woman said, "We're not married." I said, "You're not?" She said, "No." I asked, "Are the children both of your children?" She said, "Yes, they are our children, but we are not married. If I thought I had to have

a contract to know that he would be loyal, I would not want him. I trust him that he will take care of me and my children " It really happened.

S: I can believe it. I wonder if they ever held themselves out as man and wife I wonder if they were actually married common-law

C: They were very poor people. They had all little children. They just kept on having children and they were not married. In fact, one of them was married to someone else.

S: Then they were not free to marry.

C: They were not free to marry, but they put it on a principal basis that they were trusting each other. I think that is mostly window dressing

S: That is a lot of trust What happens to those children though in the meantime if they decide that they don't trust each other so much anymore?

C: I think that it used to be there was a stigma connected with children born out of wedlock and so forth I think that has disappeared.

I sometimes think the whole institution of marriage has gone out of style at least marriage as it is intended to be; a holy contract and a commitment to one another. The way people go in and out and so forth. . . I just feel that somehow the future is going to be rather different. There should be no stigma to children born out of wedlock because they had nothing to do with it and they could not help it. On the other hand, they should not suffer because of it, but many of them do.

S: Family has changed a lot and our social institutions have changed.

C: We're broke. The federal government is broke. I think that in the coming years they are going to reduce the commitments to these various agencies that take care of people that are in the lower capital classification and it is going to be a very difficult situation. I wish that I knew the answer considering the horrible things that are happening with religious leaders. They are being found to not live up to the principles that they espouse I can't say that religion is the answer and that religion will take over and teach people to live a better life and so forth. I don't know the answer. I just know that we are in for some very difficult changes maybe it will make a better life when it is all over because I think that the way things are now. . . . We are on a money

standard Perhaps we will have a simpler way of life and not feel that we have to have everything just because the style has changed I think the real weaknesses are that people don't have any principles to hold onto. many of them associate churches with a commitment to pay money rather than to build a life. When they are not able to pay they find themselves without that guidance that they had hoped to have.

S: Guidance does not necessarily come from the church.

C: No, it should come from their raising. That is what it should come from. You live through the experience of having your children and teaching them those principles that are important and they will probably turn out to be fine citizens

S: You hope, but you are never sure.

C: That is right, but at least they have had the chance because you've instilled into them some principles. I know of so many families where the only thing that the children have is the example of the parents, which is bad. So many of them unfortunately have overindulged in liquor and drugs Even those who haven't submitted to that kind of degradation do not seem to have instilled in the children the principles that the children need to live the right kind of lives, as far as their example is concerned. I think that divorce is preferable to constant fighting between parents. I think that is very harmful, especially when they show disrespect for each other. That must make a deep impression upon children. Someone who has never had any children knows all about how they ought to be raised. [Laughter]

S: I think that we all think that we are experts on child raising. We can always criticize someone else's but it is hard to criticize our own. I can tell all of my friends what they are doing wrong, but do not tell me. It is difficult. There is a lot of pressure on raising children today. Sometimes they think that you are very old-fashioned and sometimes they think that what you have them do is very stupid and no one else ever has to do that.

C: One of the hardest things is the matter of keeping up with the Jones' They should be dressed like somebody else and so forth. In other words, there is too much emphasis upon the material, rather than the principles. I do not think that the churches are doing their job When I say churches, I mean synagogues and all kinds of religious institutions. I don't think that they are doing the job that they should do.

S: many times it seems as though the money to keep going is much more important than the people who are in the church, the synagogue, or whatever. It sometimes seems as though they get lost in the material part of keeping going.

C: I think so. It is an old situation. For instance, whenever the girls get together who have been admitted to the bar, usually the chief topic of conversation is the discriminations that they are suffering and the unfair attitudes toward the woman as distinguished from the man. I have often thought that one of the reasons I never experienced very much of that--it never made any impression upon me--is not because I was insensitive, but because I was too busy trying to accomplish things. I could not sit around worrying about how so-and-so treated me. I had work to do. Don't you think so?

S: Your attitude has a tremendous amount to do with how you feel you are being treated.

C: If things do not go the way that I think they should have I blame myself. I do not blame so-and-so who is giving me a bad time. I blame myself that I did not put it across the way that I should have and I try to do better. That is what I think is the answer to that because I get sick and tired of hearing the women talk about discrimination. I do not think it is that bad. They have just as much chance as anybody else.

Another thing that I don't like is the advertising. I think that it cheapens the profession. It's not a profession anymore when there are hucksters.

S: Everybody selling their services.

C: Yes. I am resentful of that and I dislike it thoroughly.

S: I have seen some advertisements in the newspaper. I do not care very much for that or the advertising on television.

C: I do not either.

S: What about the legal clinics that have sprung up; store front legal offices in the malls and things like that?

C: They rely upon advertising. I think some of those who are associated with them are associated with them because they can't stand on their own two feet.

S: I heard people say that by the time they are finished they pay more by going to some of those places than they do.

C: I haven't had any experience in competition with them. I really don't know. I don't like the idea I don't think that is the way a profession should be operated. I don't know that much about it that I have a right to express an opinion as to whether they are doing a good job or a bad job.

S: That is fair enough. One of the things that interested me that we talked about a little bit before was when you were working for the Home Owners Loan Corporation, you said that a great deal of your work was with First Federal. You told a little story about the president of the bank. I wonder if you would mind repeating that story.

C: I was there a great deal of the time checking their records. Mr. Kanodle at that time was president of the bank. He was kind enough and said, "Fanyerose, I believe that we should give you an office up here because you have a lot of our work." He gave me a desk up in the balcony. From that time on, whenever they had anything that I was connected with they would bring the records there and I didn't have to be constantly bothering them I would give them a list of what I was going to work on the next day, then I would come up and it would be all ready for me. It was a very nice arrangement. Of course, I refinanced loans with the Dollar Saving and Trust Company and the old Union National Bank and Home Savings and Loan Company and even the old City Bank years back. It just happened that a lot of my work was with First Federal. They were so cooperative.

S: It was nice that they were that nice to you. It saved you a lot of time.

C: Yes. Later on when I bought a home, I took my mortgage to them. I took it to First Federal because I knew what kind of people they really were.

I have done all types of work. When you practice alone, you do what comes in. Some things I enjoy more than others. I have written many contracts and have handled my share of domestic relations. many things have come up over the years. I just enjoyed working in the profession and I hope I can continue to be a part of it for some time to come.

(Question inaudible)

At the time that I was admitted to the bar, there was a chief deputy of the Youngstown Municipal Court. Even though I passed the bar, I had absolutely no knowledge of how to work within the lowest court in the county, the municipal court. He was so generous in guiding me and helping me.

S: He sort of walked you through the court procedures when you were starting out?

C: Yes.

S: That is one thing that you do not get from law school, you get the learning about the law, but you do not get the procedures that you have to follow

C: Yes. I have always respected him and was grateful to him because he helped me so much. Not many lawyers have gone out of their way to help over the years. He was not a lawyer, but he was very kind and very helpful. When you are in law

school, it would be most helpful if there could be more of the practical side of the practice taught. However, I do not know what they do now. I got all of my education at a night school.

S: You have to keep up with the law, don't you? It is not something that you learn at once, it is something that is constantly changing.

C: Definitely, you have to be able to keep up with all the current decisions. That is a big order. I have them scattered around.

S: Have you availed yourself much of the computers that they have in the law libraries now?

C: No, I haven't. I think that is an area that I would love to explore, but I haven't yet. It is a very valuable technique. Today, I think it is quite necessary to be educated on computers in almost any profession you go into.

S: You have to know exactly what to feed the computer and that can be difficult sometimes.

C: It certainly is. I do not have that expertise.

S: (Question inaudible)

C: We have a conservative president.

S: Yes. He is trying to make the Supreme Court even more conservative it seems.

C: Yes.

S: It is rather frightening to think what might happen in the future, especially if you are in criminal law. What has been your favorite type of law?

C: I think the probate practice is my favorite type of law.

S: Dealing mainly with property, wills, and that kind of thing?

C: Yes

S: The probate court handles marriage licenses.

C: Yes, and they handle in some cases matters relating to custody and adoptions I find that very interesting. I am doing a great deal of it right now, and I hope to continue I have

many wills in my safe-deposit box of people who are still living. I like to feel that I can complete the plans that they made.

S: We started talking earlier a little bit about politics I remember meeting you at the Jefferson Democrat Club. You were always very active in that club as I remember.

C: That was in latter years I was first vice chairman of the Democratic Organization in Mahoning County when I lived in Mahoning County. I was very active politically at that time. I had only been in practice a very brief time when the election came up for a domestic relations judge. I thought I would like to get my feet wet and see what it was like to run. I ran for that office at that time. Naturally I didn't win. It was more for experience than anything else. Later in Trumbull county when the seventh district court of appeals was originally organized, I ran for judge of that court. In the nomination on the Democratic ticket, I lost by five votes in five counties After recount, I came close, but it was a great experience and I met many people that I did not know because I was born and raised in Mahoning County. It was a real wonderful experience. It was heartbreaking to have lost I did not feel that I had really lost because when I went up to Portage county in the room where they kept the ballots, I walked in there and there were open bags with ballots strewn over the floor. How could they make a proper count when they handled . . . Incidentally, I carried three of the five counties. I carried Ashtabula, Trumbull. I lost Lake and I lost Portage. I also carried Geagua Portage was the one where I really was cheated because they had the ballots strewn all over the floor Isn't that awful?

S: Yes

C: It could have had the effect of making me become embittered, but it didn't. I just went back to my job and worked harder on my own private law practice.

S: What was it like campaigning in that many towns?



C: It was wonderful and exciting. It's a big five counties. I would start out at seven in the morning and I would be liable to come home at one or two o'clock in the morning because there were so many meetings scattered around, and I drove. The wonderful guidance that I had in that campaign was from my husband. He was a real knowledgeable politician. He guided me all the way. I would not have known how to proceed had it not been for him.

S: That was really an awful schedule when you think about it

C: It was. There was something someplace For instance, one of the curious things that happened was of course, I went under my maiden name of Fanyerose Gancfried in my law practice even several years after I got married because I built up a practice under that name and I was hesitant to change it. Then when I ran for office I had to use my right name. So up in Trumbull county I was known as Fanyerose G. Cullinan. Down in Mahoning county I am more likely to be known as Fanyerose Gancfried.

One of the curious things that happened was I had never been up to Ashtabula county. So I went up to Ashtabula county with the name of Fanyerose G. Cullinan. Because they have a wonderful Irish Democratic vote up there, one of the common pleas judges took me in hand. I really carried that county very well, mostly because I had a good Irish name. [Laughter] This judge was a wonderful person who called me on the phone and he would say, "Fanyerose, get yourself up here. We are having a meeting. We are having a dinner." He was almost like a campaign manager. He helped me so much. I carried that county very well. Sometimes things that are hard to understand happen in campaigns. I am glad I had the privilege of running for office. It taught me a great deal about the elective process [Laughter]

S: It teaches you very quickly, too, sometimes.

C: Yes, it's strength and it's weakness.

S: Yes. You meet a lot of nice people when you are doing that.

C: You really do. I drove myself a great deal on all of these trips connected to the election. I always wished that if I was going to lose I would lose and know that I had lost. That didn't happen. I really did not lose that election. According to the record, I lost by five votes in five counties, but the way they took care of the ballots in Portage county before recount. . . . I had a recount. Those ballots

were all over the floor. I put the money up for all of these recounts. It was very expensive, but I thought it was worthwhile. It was. It almost turned out the way that I wanted it.

S: What about other campaigns that you have worked on? I know that you have been active in politics not only campaigning for yourself, but working for other people as well or working for the Democratic Party. What do you think about that?

C: I believe in the elective process. I think it is good. I find myself somewhat mystified on what the candidates that are running for president of the United States really are standing for. I listened to them the other night. That was very interesting. I do not know the strengths or weaknesses of the candidates. Nobody seemed to stand out. That was the impression that I got from it. I listened to every word that those six Republicans and six Democrats said. There was not any one that won my respect or that I wanted to back.

S: It is unusual to find a candidate who can deliver a coherent speech today.

C: I listen to the television and radio at night. By the time the day is over, I am very tired and I go to bed and then I turn on the news. I just couldn't believe my ears the other night when Reagan was being interviewed. He talked to all the world like a Democrat. [Laughter] All of the candidates of the Republican Party for president were angry at him except for the one who is his Secretary of State. Everybody else was angry at him.

S: Do you think there is as much delineation between the parties as there used to be in the past?

C: No. They do not run on principle.

S: They seem to run on personality.

C: I think so. Who's the best showman? Reagan was a great showman. He could make his mistakes and be forgiven. Those that liked him, liked him, whether he made mistakes or not. He got a little out of hand when he started selling guns to Iran.

S: That seems to have been the beginning of the downfall of Reagan.

C: The last interview that I heard was curious. For all the world, he sounded like a Democrat. Every one of the candidates were angry at him. They all thought that it was terrible.

I will be watching with great interest the business with the Russian representative. There is so much hokum on both sides. It doesn't really matter what they agree to. They may or may not follow through. Russia hasn't complied with the other agreements that were made

I feel that the Democratic party as of now, there is a lack of positive leadership. All of the candidates have certain virtues to commend them, but as for anyone who would stand out over head and shoulders above the crowd, I do not know who it would be. Do you?

S: No I enjoyed Cuomo because of his speaking ability and because he does write his own speeches from what I understand

C: If he would come out and declare himself a candidate he would perhaps be head and shoulders above the crowd.

S: I do not know if he is waiting for a draft or if he is waiting for more liberal times. Maybe he is waiting for the right moment.

C: I am interested to know what effect the depression that I think we are heading into is going to have upon the election. Just wait until they find out what different Welfare projects are being cut and people will have to do without. The states will have to take over so much that the federal government has financed. This is going to be quite a period that we are heading into.

S: It is going to be interesting to see what the revision of the tax laws is going to bring, too.

C: I think that the thing that stands out in my mind more than anything else is that they had simplified it. This is a hoax. There is absolutely no simplification whatsoever. At nighttime, they have an advertisement on the air to the effect that almost everyone needs help today in preparing tax returns. That is true.

S: I get things together and take it to the accountant and say, "Here It's yours." I have talked with her enough to know that she is not very happy with the way that things are going this year.

C: There have not been enough decisions on some points. It is just the opinion of the tax preparer. The courts may make rulings that will change that.

I thought you might find it interesting to know that when Eleanor Roosevelt was wife of the President of the United States, it was my privilege to chair a program which was given under the auspices of Youngstown Business and Professional Women's Club. We had Mrs. Roosevelt come to Youngstown and speak at Stambaugh Auditorium. She came into Youngstown on an ordinary train. I picked her up at six o'clock in the morning on the day she arrived and took her down to the Hotel Ohio where we had made a reservation for a room. She had with her a secretary. Later in the day, we made an appointment. She wanted to visit various places including the public housing and different institutions in the area of Mahoning County. I picked her up in my own automobile and she rode with me, and we visited those various public institutions that she wanted to see.

S: Were you trailed by secret service men?

C: No. We did it on our own. Then we had an appointment to visit the Youngstown Sheet & Tube Company, the mill. So we went down to the mill. By that time, we did have some secret service people following us. She walked through the mill and I walked beside her. She shook hands with various people and they took some pictures and we visited and talked. It was a real interesting experience because everybody was just delighted to see her in person.

So then I took her back to the hotel for a short time with the understanding that I would come down later on. So in an hour or so, I went down to the hotel and again, she was alone with her secretary, just the three of us. She was dictating her column that she wrote every day for the Vindicator. That was one of the papers that carried her column. I listened while she dictated it and while her secretary did it. We had a luncheon at the Youngstown Club. The arrangements were made by William F. Maag, Jr. who was editor of the Youngstown Vindicator. He arranged the luncheon. So we went over there and had a reception and one of the highlights for me was that I sat beside her. My mother and father were both present at the luncheon. Otherwise, everybody that attended the luncheon attended it as a representative of one of the communal organizations. We were limited in capacity. They gave us just as much space as there was, but a representative from almost every organization in the Mahoning Valley was present at this luncheon. Mrs. Roosevelt spoke and she participated in the reception.

After that, she wanted to go up to the Westside housing projects. At that time, people wore longer dresses. Her dress was almost down to her ankles and it was raining cats and dogs. She walked around at the Westlake housing projects and she never avoided any of the puddles, she just walked

through them. [Laughter] I was walking through them along beside her. [laughter] She really did not pay the slightest attention to the weather. It was coming down raining all of the way. Finally, after a very full day--I was with her probably every moment from six o'clock in the morning until 11 o'clock at night, when I delivered her to the train. It was fascinating. It was a very wonderful experience to see a woman in action with great determination. She just wanted to know the facts. She wanted to see it for herself. I think that she made a very great contribution to our country. I wish that we had an Eleanor Roosevelt right now.

S: So do I. She has always been someone whom I admired. What was she like personally?

C: Personally, she was a very plain person. There was nothing pompous about her. She was a person that gave you the impression that she was genuine; what she said, she meant. She was really concerned about people and how they were getting along and what could be done to improve their situation.

S: Do you remember what agencies you visited while she was here?

C: I remember very clearly the Youngstown Sheet & Tube because I had never been through the Sheet & Tube before. That was really the highlight of the day, and then the Westside Housing Projects. When we went back to the hotel, there were representatives of some other organizations. There was somebody there from the Campfire Girls. They wanted to give her a present. They did give her a present. She wrote her column and I left. When I came back she was still dictating her column. It was a very full day. I can't say that I remember any of the other places that she visited, but I do remember her walking through the puddles [Laughter]

S: What was Sheet & Tube like then?

C: It was important. It was the heart of Youngstown. The president and other officials were all present. Everybody was thrilled. At least they seemed very receptive to her visit. She was interested in everything. She walked up to different workers and put out her hand. Some of their hands were not very clean, but they shook hands with her.

S: Did that bother her at all?

C: Not at all. She was a down to earth individual.

S: I have heard that she was extremely gracious. Would you say that is a good description?

C: I would say that she was, but there was nothing false about her. She was a genuine person. That's the thing that impressed me the most.

S: You said that William Maag had given you a great deal of help when you were started.

C: Yes. I was the one who wrote and asked if she could come and visit us under the auspices of Youngstown BPW. Much to my surprise, I got a note from the secretary at that time saying she would be very much interested in coming. We arranged a date. Then I took it up to Mr. Maag. I showed him my correspondence. I said, "I want to do this thing right. Do you think perhaps that we should have a luncheon?" He was intrigued, and together. . . . I had a little bitty office at that time in the Dollar Bank building. He came down to my office and sat down and together we figured out a plan. All members of the Youngstown Business and Professional Women's Club were welcome because it was under their auspices, but all the rest of the guests were invited by representation. We extended the invitation to every public organization in the city. They could send one representative. I think that the only exception to that was I had my mother and dad.

S: Were your parents thrilled to meet her?

C: Yes. She was worth meeting. She was not a show person. She was just a genuine person and had such vitality. She had such long legs. It was not easy to keep up with her. She is very tall. She had a long dress on and all I could think about was the splashing because she would go right through the puddles, and it did not bother her a bit. She was quite a person, a very genuine person, no showmanship. I think that she was as much president as Franklin.

Later we found out that he had other ladies on the string and so forth. You wonder about those things. She did perform a wonderful service. It was marvelous having her here. I was so blessed from. . . . Except for about one hour when I went home to change clothes before the luncheon--after getting splashed all over the place--I was with her almost every moment from the time I took her off the train until I put her back on it. It was really a great experience. I would never forget it. I think that if there was one thing in my life that really I felt was a very thrilling experience, it was. She spoke at Stambaugh Auditorium in the evening and I had the privilege of introducing her.

S: That is quite a privilege.

C: It really was. I was very proud of it. The cooperation of Mr. Maag was very great. He called me frequently and asked,

"What do you think we should do about this?" Even the setting of the table and where we should place different people and so forth. I have some pictures of this.

S: That would be fascinating to see.

(END OF TAPE 1)

S: You said that there were some things about your family that you thought you probably should go into a little more detail about. You said you were afraid that you hadn't given your mother's and father's names.

C: I was afraid of that. I didn't think I had.

S: And you wanted to talk a little bit more about your early life?

C: I believe that the greatest influence in my life was my mother, because she was very ill but she always managed to take care of her family and her home. She never allowed her illness to prevent her from doing her job, and that was, to me, a demonstration of what life should be. It's influenced me very much at times when I thought I just couldn't do something because of one reason or another. I would think of my mother and how she always managed to do her job even though she wasn't well.

S: What was your mother's name?

C: My mother was Lily Liebman Gancfried, and my father was Harry R. Gancfried. They were married in 1904 and I was born in 1908.

S: I thought you weren't going to tell us when you were born  
[Laughter]

C: I was a little uneasy about that, but I guess that one should be proud; though also as one grows older, it's a little scary. You just hope that your powers remain with you so that you can continue to accomplish things.

S: When was your birthday? What month and what day?

C: April the 7th.

S: Your parents were a very positive influence on your life, and you said that they were always very supportive of anything that you wanted to do.

C: Yes, very much so. I think being an only child had a very strong influence on my life. I have to supplement that by

saying that I had a cousin, Joshua Liebman, who was more a brother to me than a cousin. He became one of the great Rabbis of New England; the Rabbi of the Temple Israel in Boston.

S: That's a very large temple

C: Yes, and he was very highly regarded. During part of his life, he wrote a book called Peace of Mind that has helped many, many people to straighten out their lives when they got confused. It's the sort of book that anyone can read and understand. It was very successful. I always felt toward him as a brother; we were like brother and sister, though we were actually first cousins. We used to spend the holiday seasons together. He would come to Youngstown and stay with us for a couple weeks as soon as his vacation came during the school year, and then later after he became rabbi. If he was anywhere near this area when he was speaking he would call me and say, "Meet me," and I would drop everything and meet him wherever he was. He was a wonderful influence in my life.

S: What about your parents? Were they originally from Youngstown?

C: My mother was born in Youngstown. I believe I mentioned previously that her father was the first rabbi of Rodef Sholom Temple. He was Rabbi Lipman Liebman and he married Fannye Hess Liebman, and together they had 13 children, which I think is somewhat unusual among Jewish people. Eleven of those children were raised to manhood and womanhood, and I'm sorry to say they are all gone now. He was an outstanding citizen and accomplished a great deal as far as building the principles of our congregation

S: Your mother died before your father, quite a few years, I think you said.

C: Yes, my mother died in 1940. My father and I lived together-- always were together--for 18 years following my mother's death. He died on December 24, 1958.

S: Your father lived with you all those years?

C: Yes, we always were together. Then, after I got married, my husband, father and I lived together.

S: You were very fortunate that you all got along as well as you did.

C: Yes, my father and my husband got along very well. My husband's best friend was Dr. Sidney Berkowitz, the rabbi of Rodef Sholom Temple. I think I mentioned previously that for



the first year that he was in Youngstown as a rabbi, he lived in a four-plex just directly above us. So we got to know each other intimately, and it continued all through his life. He was a wonderful friend.

S: You were very fortunate in both of your parents, that you were so close to them and they were such wonderful role models for you

C: I think I was very fortunate, and I think it's quite amazing that they could put up with me. I was a workaholic. I had a great deal more responsibility than most children had because my father traveled. He was a traveling salesman. Mother was not well and many emergencies occurred when I had to take over, regardless of age and ability and so forth. I did it

S: So you were fortunate that you had learned to take responsibility young, too.

C: Yes, as an only child, I guess maybe you are more inclined to accept responsibility than if you had someone else to share it with.

S: Your father was a little upset one time, you told me, because you were sent to jail for contempt of court?

C: [Laughter] He was greatly upset. I'll have to tell you about that. I was appointed prosecutor of the City of Girard I worked for over a year in that capacity. The judge who was sitting on the bench at that time was Judge Luardi. Do you recall his first name?

S: Joseph.

C: Yes, Judge Joseph Luardi Well, as prosecutor, I was called in many, many times for this, that, and the other thing, and he wasn't getting along with either the administration or with the police department, particularly. He apparently was afraid and wanted police protection at all times, and the police department was undermanned

S: What was he afraid of?

C: The people that came before him in criminal matters and so forth. He was definitely afraid. The police department didn't have enough personnel that they were able to send someone to him every time he opened court.

S: So he wanted a police officer to be in court the whole time that court was in session?

- C: Yes, he did. He also wanted the prosecutor to stay in court a full time, which was unreasonable because there was a lot of work to be done.
- S: That was a part-time job at that time?
- C: It was a part-time job and I had a law practice, yet those were his demands. Well, on this particular occasion a man was brought in who had been in jail more than two months and hadn't even been called up for a hearing, even an arraignment. He was not a very knowledgeable person. When I learned, as prosecutor, that he'd been in jail for so long and hadn't ever been brought into court to even enter a plea, I asked the court. . . I said, "I believe this is a situation where this man is entitled to counsel." And he couldn't afford counsel. He couldn't even afford a bond to get out of jail. He said, "We will not discuss this matter." But I persisted, and said that I did not feel that this man should be required to enter his plea and come before the court without having an attorney appointed to represent him.
- S: He would have had to have an attorney, wouldn't he?
- C: The law requires.
- S: And he should have had the right to a speedy trial. Two months in jail is a long time.
- C: Definitely. Well, he said, "I believe that you know the rules of this court. And the rules are that this is not a matter for discussion." I said, "Your Honor, I have a responsibility to see that this man is protected." And I said, "I'm not going to proceed with any prosecution until counsel is appointed for him." He said, "Bailiff, take this woman to jail." [Laughter]
- S: Just like that?
- C: Just like that. He said, "Take her to jail." This is exactly what happened. It's unbelievable. So I went down, with the bailiff, to the office of the Chief of Police. He invited me to sit down at his desk. I recounted what had occurred, and I asked if I could use his telephone. He said, "Yes," so I called up Judge Batton, in Trumbull County. I told him what had occurred. He said, "I'll be right down." So, in the meantime--I never did get behind the bars--the Chief of Police, who didn't get along at all with the Judge was very understanding. And just as long as it took to get from Warren to Girard, Judge Batton showed up and, as the police chief said, he "sprung" me. [Laughter]

S: He "sprung" you? [Laughter] It sounds like you were a hardened criminal.

C: Yes, and it very much angered the judge; he did want me to get behind bars. In the meantime, apparently, radio, television, everything must have been working, later in the day the newspapers said, "Girl Lawyer Goes to Jail." [Laughter]

S: Oh, my.

C: That was all front page. They made the most of it. But I never really did see the inside of the jail.

S: Well, I guess sitting in the chief's office is close enough for the newspapers to come out with that kind of headline when a judge has ordered you there.

C: I guess so. And thinking of my father, he of course heard this, and I guess he was just frightened to death--what is happening to his girl? So he rushed down and he was white and scared and so forth. I said, "Oh, come on Dad, this is all part of the job. Don't get excited about it." So we went home together. But that's the story of my jailhouse career.

S: You would have no choice, even as prosecutor, even though you're representing the prosecution, you're still an officer of the court, and you have to make sure that people have their rights.

C: That's right, and I had seen so many things that weren't done right by Judge Luardi. I was very displeased with the way he was handling the position. He never paid any attention to recommendations or anything like that. Sometimes people who didn't belong on the streets were released without bond, and people who had fine reputations and no criminal records were made to post bond. I knew that there was something wrong there, and I felt that it was my duty to expose it. So we didn't get along.

S: And Judge Batton was the one who came to your rescue, sort of.

C: Yes.

S: What would have happened if he hadn't come, do you think?

C: One of the other judges would have. It really wasn't right, but I was perfectly justified in demanding that this man have representation. To have left him in jail for a couple of months, without any help at all, and without a speedy trial, as you say, then bring him into court without counsel. . We had an arrangement at that time, whereby the Bar Association was supposed to furnish counsel.

- S: Everyone was called in turn, I think.
- C: Yes, that's the way it was But Judge Luardi did not adhere to that ruling at all.
- S: I wonder why.
- C: He operated that court in that manner for years That's a fact.
- S: Judge Batton was a good friend to you in other ways, I think. Would you mind talking about that?
- C: Judge Batton was a wonderful friend. When my husband died, I felt as though I wasn't any longer interested in life or my work or anything. I just went into a shell, so to speak, a depression. After a certain length of time, one day--it was a holiday--there was a knock on the door. I went to the door, and it was Judge Batton. He said, "How come you don't have a flag out today?" And I said, "I guess I forgot " He said, "Well, where is it?" I said, "I'll get it." So I went in and got the flag and he hung it out. Then he came in and sat down and said, "You've been missing from your old haunts. What have you been doing?" I said, "Well, I just haven't been doing anything." He kept after me over a period--he and his wife--and they invited me to go on their boat with them. They invited me for dinner at their home numerous times I was almost as much at home in their home as in my own. Finally one day, he called me on the phone and said, "Can you be in the office at eight o'clock tomorrow morning?" I said, "Yes, I guess I can " So I went to his office and you know, he shut off all his calls and he didn't see anybody, and he talked to me for four hours. Well, I don't think any therapist could ever have accomplished what he did And at 12 o'clock, he called in his secretary and said, "Fannyrose and I are going to lunch. How would you like to go along?" We all went out to lunch, and after that he appointed me to a couple of tough cases. [Laughter] I went to work and I got back in my stride. I really can thank him for helping me over a bad period.
- S: You had some other friends that helped you around that time, too, didn't you? Did Julia McClure help you a little bit?
- C: Yes, she certainly did Julia McClure was a very good friend. She made all the arrangements after the funeral, for our luncheon, you know. I really wasn't able to do anything in connection with that. Losing my husband was a very major thing to me. She was in touch with me continuously for many years. We were just very good friends I spent a lot of holidays in her home and she just never forgot about me, such a very good friend. I try to see her as often as possible. She's in a nursing home now. Her daughter has kind of taken

up where her mother had to quit because of her own illness, and I see her quite frequently. She'll come down and spend time with me. She and her husband are very good friends. I value them so much.

S: There's not anything that's more valuable in this life, it seems, than friendship.

C: Indeed, that's true. I think it's one of God's great blessings to have good friends. Having a good friend gives one courage. Also, you feel a sense of obligation to carry on. I have found that being alone is very challenging. I've never really liked it. One may say I've gone overboard with having pets. [Laughter] Not everybody has as many as I have. You see, my husband and I used to take in the poor dogs that were left out in the country to starve, and many of them were starving. Whenever we found one of them, we'd bring them in, nurse them, take care of them, and take them to the veterinarian, and all of those things. One time we had 26 dogs, and each one had his own house. [Laughter] After his death, I continued to take care of the ones that we had, that were left. The dogs were just dogs; they weren't pedigreed animals. I knew nothing about their history, they just needed homes. Right now, I have 11 and I cherish each one, and I hope that I live long enough to take care of them.

S: You feed them all every day, by yourself?

C: Yes.

S: That's quite a chore in itself, isn't it?

C: Last night, I didn't get home until almost dark, and I had to feed them after dark. It was cold! [Laughter] And the rascals wouldn't come out and eat off their plates, I had to put the plates into their houses in order to get them to eat.

S: You've practiced pretty much as a sole practitioner for all of these years. Did you ever have an opportunity, or did you ever think about going with someone else?

C: Yes, during the very early years in my practice, I had an offer to go into one of the big corporate law firms. I declined for the reason that I realized that I would be relegated probably, to the lower court practice, and it would continue indefinitely, and I wanted the opportunity to handle whatever cases came into my office. I liked very much practicing along. I had secretarial help. That is the way I continued for many years, all 58 years. But right now, I

think that I would be glad if I had someone to whom I could shift some responsibility. I find that I am very much busier than I would like to be at the present time. [Laughter] It is a genuine challenge.

S: You've had help in your life,, from both men and women Would you say that your relationships have been . ? You've worked pretty much in a man's world, law, all those years, was pretty much a man's world.

C: Well, they call it that. I think the women have a lot of influence behind the scenes. [Laughter]

S: I don't know quite how you mean that

C: They have a very subtle way of exercising it.

S: Have you felt that most of your support came from men or from women?

C: I really have never noted any material difference, to be very truthful

S: So you've had support from both?

C: I've had support from men and women. I've had very, very few instances of any behavior that I would feel was adverse to me I've enjoyed much friendliness, both from men and women, and that applies to members of the Bar. I can't say that I was ever really discriminated against. Of course, you know, I practiced during the years when ambulance chasing was rampant We had a fellow, a member of the Bar, by the name of Dominic Rendenell, down in Mahoning County. He was known as an ambulance chaser He was an ambulance chaser because I experienced it myself. I had an experience at that time, when I was representing a client who had been involved in an accident and had a claim, and was my client and I was proceeding with the claim when Attorney Rendenell somehow persuaded him that he was the person that should handle his case I went to the Bar Association about the matter, to the presiding judge, and so forth. It was very difficult. Mr. Rendenell seemed to have a great deal of influence. That, too, passed. The way that particular case came out I thought was so very unfair to the client. What happened was that the presiding judge said that Mr. Rendenell should have one-third of the agreed settlement, which was a very considerable amount, and that I should have one-third of the agreed settlement. Leaving the client with a third. I thought that was one of the greatest miscarriages of justice situations that I had ever experienced. That's what happened. Mr Rendenell has been long dead, and I think Mahoning County has been better off since he passed away. [Laughter]

S: Are you saying that there are some attorneys who shouldn't practice?

C: Yes, that's right.

S: Like any other profession, right?

C: Things in those days were wild. You just can't believe it. The Bar Association didn't do anything I'll tell you, I lived through the days--it might be hard for you to believe this, but it's true--when the Bar Association leaders were quite unusual. They would have their dinners and parties at the various country clubs, just like they do now. But the programs were, just speaking mildly, vulgar. I remember saying to my mother, "I just can't stand anymore of that business. I'm not going to any of their meetings " My mother said, "Oh, yes you are. You're going to go and do everything you can to change their programs " And what happened was that we elected an attorney from Youngstown, by the name of Ben Roth, and that was the end of this type of program.

S: When you say they were vulgar, what did they consider. . . ?

C: All they did was stand up and tell dirty jokes. The worst things that happened, that I ever saw, was up at the Squaw Creek Country Club. One of the members of the bar undressed a woman down to the waist.

S: You're kidding!

C: I am not kidding! That happened! And I observed it. That was the day that I said, "I'm just not going back to any of their meetings." But that ceased, and I don't think anything like that has happened in a long time.

S: I know that there used to be certain activities at some of the Bar meetings that were--I don't know how to say this--the Choir Society was rampant in Trumbull County, you know about the Choir Society?

C: Yes.

S: I said my husband couldn't sing.

C: Well, it used to be very disgusting, and I wasn't happy about it, but my mother was right, that I should hang in there and try to change things.

S: I think it's always better to do that.

C: Yes, there were very few women who attended those meetings in those days.

S: No, because there were very few members of the Bar who were women, and the wives don't go normally to Bar Association meetings. Special events, but not the regular meetings.

C: But their meetings were unbelievably disgusting in those days, but that's not the case anymore.

S: I know that it isn't; they've cleaned up their act quite a lot. If you had any advice for young people starting out today, what do you think it would be?

C: With reference to what?

S: With reference to employment, or how they should conduct their life?

C: I would say to always keep faith with your clients, and to do the very best that you can in each case. Trust in God.

S: I think that's very good advice.

C: You never know what you're going to run into, you know.

S: I'd like to thank you for taking the time to talk with us and give us information for this project. It's been a pleasure talking to you.

C: Thank you.

END OF INTERVIEW