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Interview with Julia Lamber
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JL: As I mentioned in my e-mails, I'm particularly interested in the early 1970's and your involvement in women's groups, but for the sake of the interview I thought we would start with a little bit of background, like where you're from and how you ended up in Washington.

AF: Okay, fine.

JL: I've read your book, so I know that. I loved your book [Arvonne Fraser, *She's No Lady*, Nodin Press 2007].

AF: I'm Arvonne Fraser, here in Minneapolis. I'm a senior fellow emerita at the Hubert H. Humphrey's School of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota.

JL: Where were you born?

AF: Lamberton, Minnesota, out on the prairie.

JL: So, you're a Minnesota girl.

AF: Southwestern Minnesota farm girl. I came to the university after I graduated from high school.

JL: You're a graduate of the University of Minnesota?

AF: And then the Monday after I graduated I went to work at the Humphrey for Senate Campaign in 1948 as secretary/receptionist. So I've spent a lifetime in politics. And I married Don Fraser, who first ran for the state senate, then for Congress, and then for Mayor. Unofficially, I ran his campaigns. His male campaign managers didn't like that very much. I was active in the DFL [Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party] as vice chairwoman. When Don got elected to Congress, unlike today, we all moved to Washington. 6 kids, the youngest was 3 weeks old.

In Washington I was very depressed because I had to give up my career back home in Minnesota and I was stuck out in the suburbs (Chevy Chase). Don wanted me to help him—so I found a sitter/ maid/ housekeeper [in Washington, they wanted to be called maids]. I worked in his office as a volunteer part-time. I was soon part of a network of staffers, and a neighbor got me involved with a lot of Washington Opportunities for Women and another friend got me involved with a civil rights group because we were going through integration of the public schools in D.C. [our kids went to the public schools].

I started a group called the Nameless Sisterhood; it was not, we said, a conscious raising group because that's what younger women did, and we were all professionals or wives of professionals. At the first meeting somebody said "you cannot introduce yourself in relation to any man." You know, you can't say, "I am wife of . . ." Another woman said, "this is the first time in my 20 years in Washington anybody asked who I was." A newspaper reporter from Minneapolis heard about our group and basically came to find out who the women were married to. And I wouldn't tell him; instead I told him

the story of going down to the bank in Minneapolis, that's now part of Wells-Fargo, having pledged some stock that I had brought to the marriage as collateral for a loan. And when I went to get the stock certificate, a man said, "oh we can't give it to you, we have to give it to your husband." Of course, I was furious, and so I told the reporter that story. Within a day the bank called me up, "oh, Mrs. Fraser, we really appreciate your business. That man who told you that is long gone, we don't do that," blah, blah, blah. And so I went back to the next meeting and told the members that story, and one woman said, "well, we're the Nameless Sisterhood." So that became quite a name for the group. The purpose was to talk about women's issues, because that was the big thing in 1969. A woman named Bernice Sandler had filed a claim under Executive Order 11246, about discrimination against women in education. I read about her in the *Washington Post* and asked her if she would come talk to our group. We were impressed with her and she asked me to start a Washington, DC chapter of WEAL [Women's Equity Action League].

The WEAL chapter that we organized had a number of Sisterhood members; we also had members who were active on the Hill. I knew a lot of staff members on the Hill, and knew, before I went to Washington, never underestimate staff members. They get things done; be nice to them. In part, this is because I had been a staff member, and I knew, you treat them nicely, they will give you information and help you, and I knew that they did a great deal of the work and were very influential in congressional and senators' offices.

WEAL had been started in 1968 by a Cleveland, Ohio lawyer, Betty Boyer. She didn't like NOW or the women liberationists groups who concentrated on changing the world and who didn't like the establishment; they didn't like hierarchy, so they didn't like organizations except their own. Boyer's original WEAL group was mostly lawyers; some of them old enough to have been active in the suffrage movement. So there was a generational gap in WEAL and we, in Washington, were the young generation. They were the older ones, and as I said, they were mostly judges and lawyers. All of us who were in the sisterhood and the Washington group we wanted to concentrate on changing law and public policy. A lot of us came out of politics and believed that's how you changed the world. And we were just following the civil rights movement. We got an awful lot accomplished in a decade. We worked with Bunny on sex discrimination in education. I was particularly interested in social security. Other issues were education, employment, economic issues and what was called participation in public life, what we called active politically or changing public policy. I wrote about all this in this book edited by Irene Tinker [*Women in Washington*]. My chapter was called, "Insiders and Outsiders, Women in the Political Arena."

At the time, Congress was liberal. The women we had knew how Congress operated. A woman named Mary Gerreau, who was an education lobbyist, came to us with the idea that we ought to do what we ultimately called the WEAL Washington Report, which was basically about what legislation was before congress and what did it do? Who was the chair of the committee? Everything you needed to know to lobby that committee or its members. Because we were more traditional and because we were, for the most part, on Capitol Hill, or in organizations that were lobbying for women, such as Planned Parenthood, we knew we had to teach people how to lobby and how to get this information out. Bunny Sandler was very important in this. And we had the support of the congresswomen at the time: Martha Griffiths, Edith Greene of Oregon, ultimately Patsy Mink, Bella Abzug, Pat Schroeder, and Shirley Chisholm. Following the civil rights movement, there was a momentum that we could build on. And

because we knew how the system worked and because we worked on Capitol Hill, we were able to get a lot done.

Congresswoman Edith Greene, who was on the Education Committee, hired Bunny Sandler to work on education issues. We helped her. She held hearings, we fed her information. WEAL became known for gathering information for committees. Originally, Bunny came to me and said, "I don't know how to do this," so we helped her. She developed the background for the committee hearings and ultimately wrote what became Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. We were especially interested in women faculty, and admission of women into professional schools (law schools, medical schools) and other graduate programs (engineering, science, etc.).

In the early 1970s I didn't think much about the women in sports angle. I often say that we didn't talk about it much, but clearly that was the big place when you talk about curricula, both at the college level and elementary and secondary level. That's where discrimination was very blatant. It was very interesting. My youngest came home one day from school and was so angry because in terms of soccer, the boys got everything and the girls didn't get anything. And now Title IX is almost thought of as the women in sports amendment.

JL: Let's go back and talk about the WEAL Washington Report. Did someone edit it for you? How did you produce that?

AF: The WEAL Washington Report was very good. There was also a group publishing a newsletter, Women Today. They asked if they could put the WEAL Washington Report in with theirs. In return they gave us an office rent free, so we got a Washington office and I didn't have to do everything out of my husband's congressional office.

I was known as the person on the Hill that you came to if you didn't know who else to go to about many of these issues. Carol Foreman was a lobbyist for Planned Parenthood. She put the newsletter together; I would type it up and mimeograph it. We sent it around to congressional offices to show them that "big sister is watching you." People began sending us stuff they wanted to get in. In the newsletter we also told whether the committee chairman was for or against it and if one of the members was friendly or not. I mean we gave everything, the title of the bill and details, and at the same time sort of teaching people how to lobby. We sent it around, of course, to all the WEAL members. We were also establishing a record.

Olya Margolin, the Washington representative of the National Council of Jewish Women, also came to the office to see me. Whenever we wanted a letter to all the members or the members of the committee that were signed, she would get the big women's organizations, Council of Jewish Women, Council of Catholic Women, AAUW, League of Women's Voters as signers of our letter. And when the congressmen got this letter signed by all these big women's organizations, they were impressed. I mean, WEAL could have sent it and it would have gone in the wastebasket maybe, unless there was a good staffer. But when it came in with these other organizations signing on, it really helped.

After we got Title IX, a young woman in Patsy Mink's office – the secretary (never underestimate secretaries) – came to see me with a bill to change curriculum, especially at elementary school level. The Dick and Jane books were universal then. One night we were up in a George Washington University room and we came down to the authorization point in the legislation. We were only going to do this for

consciousness raising and we were gonna have hearings, or that's what we thought we were going to get. So it came to the authorizing section and we made a joke, well, let's put \$30,000 in, thinking we would get nothing. We got \$10,000! and then the next Congress gave more. [Women's Educational Equity Act (1974) (WEEA)]

At the same time, my friend back in Minneapolis, Geri Joseph, wrote an op-ed piece: "Women's Rebellion against Dick and Jane." She was very well known so it got published in the *Washington Post* as well as the *Tribune* here. She did a fair amount of research and told people you know, we'll just (inaudible). Dick and Jane, the mother was a housewife, the father worked outside the home and the house practically had a white picket fence plus the dog and they lived in a small town or suburb, blah, blah. Anyhow, changing curriculum was part of the Women's Educational Equity Act.

Economically there was always the question – were women qualified? And one way in which women weren't "qualified" was as recipients of prestigious fellowships. Judith Nies and I started WEAL's fellowship program to challenge the male only policies of these fellowships. The Neiman Fellows were for journalists, and like Rhodes Scholarships and White House Fellows, were all almost exclusively, if not deliberately like Rhodes, male only. We decided the way to get at this was to take on the big ones and then the others will have to change. Judith Nies was particularly irritated about this. As a senior journalist known around Washington, she had this idea that we ought to break the barriers here. We concentrated on writing letters, getting our members of Congress to write the White House and say these ought to be changed. Draft a letter and ask the congressman, "would you please sign this" and he would look it over and say well, yeah.

Also, one of our sisterhood members, Linda Kamm, went to London with her husband on his sabbatical. She took this issue on over there. She had worked on Capitol Hill, and she interviewed members of Parliament and ultimately that fell. I think some groups had tried to sue Rhodes, because it had an explicit provision that it was for males only. And to this day I am so proud that the first female Rhodes Scholar from Minnesota, Lois Quam, came from my area, 45 miles from where I was born. So we got the Neiman changed, we got the White House Fellows and we got the Rhodes and then the others begin to topple.

We published two Women in Fellowship reports, one of in '74 and another in '76, and of course by that time we had a real network of women to send stuff out. Being an old politician, I know you lobby people with information but you make it so they will read it and can use it; you don't send them a stack of background material. And in the article I wrote it said that there was also a lawsuit over the granting of Rhodes Scholars and White House Fellowships. The women's movement was just getting started; change was "in the air." It was newsworthy; we got a lot of bad publicity, but bad publicity is better than no publicity. And it was wonderful because I would come home here to Minneapolis and women would whisper to me, "I can't say anything publicly, but keep doing what you're doing!" And the other one that I loved: "I'm not for this women's lib stuff, but I'm for equal pay!"

So it was fun. We were making things happen. And we were all meeting and greeting each other and there was kind of an exuberance. You could make jokes about discrimination and that's one of the best ways to make something happen, if you can lampoon it, or make jokes about it, rather than an impassioned speech. And of course, like the ERA [the Equal Rights Amendment] people learned, a lot of men had daughters and they understood. And the more you publicly educated everybody, they understood more.

We also started a WEAL Educational and Legal Defense Fund – totally copying the NAACP’s Legal Defense and Education Fund. You could get tax deductible money. So we started an intern project with ours, plus we were able to help many litigants, especially faculty women who were filing discrimination complaints, some in court and some using Executive Order 11246 [prohibiting sex discrimination in federal contracts]. With this Educational and Legal Defense Fund, we could give funds to some of these lawsuits. And one of the wonderful ones, here in Minnesota, involved a woman named Rajender; she was in the University of Minnesota chemistry department. There was a very active women’s group here at the university complaining about sex discrimination supporting Rajender and doing a lot of other things. The WEAL project gave Rajender a little bit of funds. The university spent millions trying to defend itself and lost. Miles Lord was then a federal judge; we all knew him. He was kind of a wild guy but he was a good judge. And he found against the university. Part of the settlement was that all existing faculty members for x number of years got a supplement to their salary called ‘Rajender money.’ When I came back to the university after ’78 when my husband was back here as mayor, I got Rajender money. And the first time I got that I laughed to myself. I loved it!

These lawsuits got a lot of publicity wherever they were filed, if the lawyer and the women had any sense. It’s probably still not perfect but they don’t have egregious salary gaps when there are people on the same kind of employment line.

WEAL probably got credit for a lot of things that we never did a thing about, except for coverage in the WEAL Washington Report. Because Capitol Hill was full of women staffers and once it kind of started it just grew. And committees began holding hearings, and I remember testifying on inheritance law. As I said earlier, my personal interest was social security, particularly a provision in social security that divorced women got virtually nothing. I want to say it was originally a 20-year rule; if they had been married 20 years or something, she could collect. We got that down to 10. Even though they were divorced, if they had been married for 10 years, they could take benefits based on their husbands’ earnings. We got a number of amendments like that. My particular interest in social security was the idea that you could consider it like taxes. It was joint income and so you shared it. Well that meant that men got less, so that didn’t go very far, but it was talked about for a number of years; the head of Social Security took it seriously.

About this time, Ruth Bader Ginsburg was working with the ACLU on the Women’s Rights Project, arguing sex discrimination cases in the US Supreme Court. One case she won, *Frontiero v Richardson* (411 US 677 (1973)), challenged a statute making it more difficult for a female service member to claim an increased housing allowance for her husband than for a male service member seeking the same allowance for his wife. Ginsburg argued the statute treated women as inferior. So we got parity, I guess; men could be dependents as well as women. Of course, she is now on the Supreme Court. There is a fun book about Ruth Ginsburg and Sandra O’Connor: *Sisters in Law: How Sandra Day O’Connor and Ruth Bader Ginsburg Went to the Supreme Court and Changed the World* (by Linda Hirshman, Harper Perennial reprint 2016).

And also, pension reform. My father-in-law [he was the Dean of the law school here] would tell me stories about the poor widows of the state Supreme Court justices and about faculty wives and others who were really indigent because the guy used up the pension and she got nothing, or got very little. We got pension reform so that now the pension belongs to the couple. And women have learned that if

they have a pension, they share it with their husband; he becomes the first beneficiary. There were also a number of lawsuits. Another helpful person was Marguerite Rawalt. She was one of the older women in WEAL, had been part of the original Cleveland group, and was part of our Washington WEAL group (she's long since died). She filed a number of amicus briefs on these lawsuits. She was sort of watching the legal end in terms of lawsuits that were being filed and would submit briefs in WEAL's name.

AF: I'm jumping around here because I'm trying to show the economic issues that we worked on. We identified what the congresswomen were interested in. For example, Martha Griffiths was the one on social security that was very helpful. In '74 as president of WEAL I also testified before the US Commission on Civil Rights on problems facing women in poverty and talked about my earnings sharing concept there. On inheritance I was passionate about that because my father gave more to my two brothers than us girls. There were three girls and two boys. In fairness he educated the girls better than the boys. And what I discovered later that I guess I sort of basically knew that women as a group were better educated as a group than men, but of course the men had the Ph.D.'s and so on. In my small town there were mostly farmers around there. And the boys would leave school earlier than the girls. They could leave school and get a job in all kinds of manufacturing and so on. Whereas I'm sure my father and many other fathers, and mothers, thought that the girls had to be able to support themselves "just in case," or until they found a husband. Remember, a lot of girls went to college to find a husband who would provide for them. Even my husband once standing in the kitchen in Washington with our daughter who was acting up and not going to school. He said, you know you got to get educated to find a good husband. And we all pounced on him!

Well, let me see, other issues economically. It's hard to remember all the stuff we got done because –

JL: Because you got a lot done, that's why.

AF: Yes and it happened so fast and we weren't the only ones, ultimately. We were the pioneers. NOW didn't have an office until a few years later. And then a group came along called the Women's Lobby, formed by two women, Carol Burris and Flora Crater (Carol was a younger woman, and Flora was an older one)

And, oh credit legislation. Remember, I told you the story about the bank. Women couldn't have credit cards in their own name or after a the divorce. I was divorced and the big fight I had to get a credit card in my own name.

Do you have some questions?

JL: How did the group decide what issue it was going to talk about or work on?

AF: We got volunteers; if the volunteer wanted to work on it, we gave our name and said fine, this is a WEAL project.

JL: There wasn't ever any, 'well, we don't really want to get involved in that issue' kind of thing?

AF: Well, the whole issue of abortion. WEAL had a position; we aren't going to waste our time on this. NOW can deal with that. We supported the legislation and court decisions, but we didn't spend a whole lot of time on it.

JL: I recall that one of the differences between NOW and WEAL was the abortion issue. Were there other sort of big issues? So did you work together sometimes?

AF: Oh sure, we worked together. And, it was really great if you had both WEAL and NOW on an issue. NOW was never really interested in legislation. Who was the person, let's see, who ultimately headed the office? It was sort of the same thing that they did; they had to find somebody who was kind of a self-starter. My view was the same as my wonderful friend Caroline Rose, a professor in sociology, who said, "women will get the ERA when they don't need it. They'll do it piece by piece by piece by piece." And I agreed with that. And it's not just ERA, a lot of things you go piece by piece by piece. My daughter, for example, out in California is working on pesticides and you could say you know, "we're anti-pesticide" or "you've gotta get rid of Roundup, and we want this part for it and this landscape."

And ultimately, our (University of Minnesota) regents professor, Sara Evans, categorized us as we were the legalists and NOW and a lot of other groups were the liberationists. And though a lot of times the media would think we fought each other. And there was some trashing and this whole question about leadership and institutions and so on. But behind the scenes we all worked together. The liberationists made the rest of us look respectable. And so we could get a lot done.

JL: Is there a reason it was Betty Boyer in Cleveland? Cleveland doesn't strike me as a hot bed....

AF: No, but again it was self-starters. This leads back to what I'm thinking about now a lot. What came to be called networks, but really it was friendships of a sort. And common interests, like the way I started the Sisterhood was interesting women that I figured were interested in this new movement or were interested in women's issues. Colleagues and friends. And I never quite understood this Cleveland network and Betty Boyer because I didn't have much to do with them. They were another generation and I think instead of being in the League of Women Voters (or maybe in addition to), they started this group.

Oh, the Business and Professional Women's Association. The BPW was huge; a lot of women were members, especially women who were career women and professional women. That was a very strong group then. And Boyer's people came out of that and Marguerite Rawalt was very active in it.

JL: I remember a conversation with Birch Bayh and he credited the Business and Professional Women with a lot of help to him on a lot of these issues. Which seemed very strange to me because, I thought, who are those people?

AF: That's worth a Ph.D. thesis.

JL: When you were talking about an issue, how did you decide on a strategy? You mentioned getting the staff involved, letters to Congress.

AF: Nowadays it's different. Nowadays I don't know what you do – you call, you e-mail, you lobby their local staff. I think we trusted the people who got involved. We didn't give our WEAL name to just anybody, somebody we didn't trust, or was too volatile. We figured she could get the job done. And we had a contrast, the liberationists; some of them could be pretty wild. We were the radicals in traditional clothing. And we probably worked that for all it was worth. And we knew because so many people worked in politics or government, they had a respect for the system. That was probably key because in another part of my life, in starting a women's political caucus, we had a whole convention in Houston

that came to no consensus about constitution because there were the liberationists; they did not want a constitution, they did not want leaders, so there was this whole question of leadership.

Jo Freeman, who's still around, wrote this article that said, if you don't pick your own leaders, the media will pick them for you. And she got trashed, because she talked about leadership. And at the Houston conference, I was chair of the constitution committee. There was no way we were going to be able to write a constitution. Ultimately I gave up and reported that to the convention. Instead, we went home and we ran an organization anyhow without a constitution. Probably figured out some way, because I was back here that summer, and though I did the constitution committee. You don't need a constitution to run an organization. You pick people, you maybe call them co-chairs or you do some kind of linguistic thing to get by. This whole question of leadership still drives me nuts – people are scared of leadership and yet they exercise it without admitting that's what they're doing.

But I was nice to them if I had to be.

JL: There's a lot of activity; did WEAL also do sort of outreach, like try to organize people in Indiana or other states?

AF: Half-heartedly. We had a nice chapter here because I was from here. There were lots of places that were already organizing and we just helped. Like the WEAL Educational and Legal Defense Fund. We gave little bits of money. And when I say little bits, I mean \$100, \$200, \$250 was a big contribution. Because groups were already organized; there were groups on campuses that were just there.

JL: Your mission wasn't to have local chapters?

AF: Well, it sort of was, but it never was successful. We didn't spend enough time at it. Essentially, I soon became president of WEAL, because WEAL became known for being on the Hill and as I said NOW came later. The Women's Lobby. . . .

JL: I don't think I've heard of the Women's Lobby.

AF: That's because it didn't last too long. I think it was really two women and they mostly had NOW people. I went on to be more political and then after the National Women's Political Caucus, I sort of encouraged one in Minneapolis, as well as the Washington one. Then when Jimmy Carter ran for office, I got hired by Carter to be his Midwest director. And I came home and then I moved over into politics. I went into the White House personnel office to recruit women for something called the plum book; do you know what the plum book is? Well, we were filling positions and I was both recruiting and recommending. I helped form the National Women's Political Caucus. People were always coming to me with ideas and I'd say fine if I thought they had thought it through and knew what they were doing.

And we did get more political. The women's campaign fund, I helped start that because a woman named Sandra Cramer came to me and said "you need a women's campaign fund," and I said, "fine, we do." Then because I kinda got known, I became the co-chair of the women's campaign fund. I felt very strongly from the caucus that we had to get more women into politics. In this state somehow (another Ph.D. thesis) both parties had both a chairman and a chairwoman, and of course the chairwoman was always second. But in many cases she was the power in the political district. I was interested in getting more people running for office, and obviously that was at the caucus, and we needed campaign money.

And what was so wonderful about this whole thing? It was bipartisan. In WEAL, a lot of these women, the older ones, were Republicans, and the rest of us were Democrats, but that didn't make any difference, except on the abortion issue, I think. In the women's campaign fund that we started, Elise DuPont was my co-chair; her husband was a liberal member of congress. A Republican from Delaware.

Then I went into the international work. My husband was on the foreign affairs committee, and one of the things that I worked on a bit was the Percy amendment to the foreign affairs bill. It basically said that in all of our foreign aid we had to give attention to women in all the countries that we were dealing with. And so I became the token Democrat on the US delegation to the Mexico City first World Women's Conference. I went to the UN to work on the preparations for the Mexico City conference. I didn't know what was going on but I decided this is politics on the international level, and I can learn this. And it didn't take long because once you decide, you learn their system. So that took me off into a whole world of international work.

JL: Let's go back to Title IX for a minute and athletics in particular. As you said, the point of Title IX certainly wasn't about athletics. But once it becomes a subject of discussion, do you remember whether WEAL talked about what positions to take?

AF: They got very interested in that and also women in the military. And I think made a real contribution. But by that time I was off in the Carter administration.

JL: One of the things that interests me about Title IX is that it ends up basically the one sole example of sex segregation where there's women's sports and men's sports in an era when everything was the other way. It was more about integration and I'm curious about how that happened.

AF: It's physical. Everybody understood, well, boys played sports and girls don't. But it was kind of like my own daughter, it was people all over the country. The wonderful thing about Title IX was the penalty was that if discrimination was found you would lose your federal funds. Well, every educational institution in this country depended on federal funds. I'm sure sports were probably mentioned in the hearings, but our real interest was getting girls in college and that the faculty got paid like male colleagues. Discrimination in athletics became a new field for WEAL when Title IX began to be enforced. And that kind of enforcement was really at the grass roots level.

Because with almost any legislation, implementation and enforcement takes place at pretty much the grass roots level. You can send out mandates but there has to be ferment at home. And of course, on college campuses they had a lot of women faculty. What was so interesting was at the same time there was this women's movement; there were also women like me – middle class women went "back to work" to support our families (so many of us had big families) and to get those kids through college, and even to feed them.

More women were preparing for retirement and, if you used your head at all, you knew that people were living longer and there was a big chunk of time you had to finance above what social security offered. And it's getting worse and I worry about the kids these days. All of my kids who are now in their 60s and 50s have pensions. Most don't. I think it's going to be the issue of the future. Remember we had to increase social security because of women and poverty, especially old ladies. When we get all these boomers retired, we're going to face the poverty issue all over again. For the middle class. That's why Donald Trump is getting so many democratic votes; they think he'll figure this out.

JL: Thinking about this period, before you moved into your international phase, thinking about the early '70s, what are you the proudest of?

AF: Well, one thing you would never pick out. When we first established that the WEAL Legal Defense and Education Fund, I got a Ford Foundation grant for an intern program. Because once we established that we could get foundation money. And what I insisted on was at least one paid internship because to this day, I think it is so unfair that affluent kids can take internships while poor kids can't. So I'm most proud of that grant. Later, I might be on the phone with someone in Washington who would say "I was a WEAL intern."

JL: Do you have a biggest regret?

AF: I don't think so. We got so much done. I also believe that organizations should only last as long as they work, so I don't feel bad that WEAL is no longer in existence. The group concerned with women in military, they were very proud, and I was very proud. I don't know everything that they did because I was out and there are very strict rules on what you can and can't do once you're appointed. You have to sever your connections. No, I don't really have any regrets, partly because I'm a pragmatist. You know, you aren't gonna create nirvana. Tell me more about why you're doing this oral history.

JL: It started out as part of a bigger research project I had with two other research collaborators. We were studying educational reform movements, looking at the last part of the 20th century. Title IX is a good example of one of those educational reform movements. As we were working on the project, we had these graduate students working with us, mostly women. When we would be talking about issues or stories about how things were in the early 70s, their eyes would be wide, often in disbelief. The world was really like that? So it made it clear to me..

AF: That we needed women's history.

JL: and that there is this whole story of women like you, like Bunny Sandler, like Holly Knox. Not necessarily famous people. You've written a book but not everybody writes a book and people get lost, and their stories get lost – wonderful organizational tactical stories.

AF: Marsha Greenberger and her National Women's law Center.

JL: Indeed, we did an oral history with her. You know the amount of work you got done was just incredible, and it's part of the story.

AF: Because there was a group of us, and we were small enough that we knew each other; everybody knew each other pretty much, in Washington. And in a way New York too. I'll tell you two stories. One of them is Ford Foundation, I think, got some of us together, I don't know maybe 20 years or so later. And Judy Lichtman suggested we were like entrepreneurs, and once you get past that it gets kinda boring. And the second generation you know, they're managers. And I've never forgotten this notion, the entrepreneurs.

JL: That's a good label. I was at IU in the early '70s with a small group of women. We knew everybody pretty much, and recently thinking about all the things we got done – starting a women's studies program, getting a women's affairs office, challenging curriculum. Entrepreneurs, I like that.

AF: Yes, entrepreneurs. And the second thing Irene Tinker and I learned, because we started a Washington's women's network. It was fun at the beginning, but pretty soon it grew. Everybody wanted to be a member. There was not the sense that you had to work to be part of it; it was too big. So we left and a lot of women left. It's very interesting. I gotta think about this some more, because I'm dealing with exactly the same problem right here with the women's group that I started. It is too successful and I don't even want to be part of it anymore. It's kinda all over the map and not doing much; it's just a way to get together and have coffee.

JL: I'm thinking back to what you said about the difference between working with friends and people who just want to network, meaning I want to be associated with you, but I don't want to do anything.

AF: Thanks for you saying it.

JL: Yes, women faculty members have a lot of experience with students these days who want to network and they have no idea what that means.

AF: it's a two-way street.

JL: Often, it's just can I use your name. Interesting.

AF: I'm a little tired of leadership programs because I don't think they talk enough about the responsibility of leadership; rather it's "how can I become a leader." For what? [I sound like an old lady; I am an old lady!]

I am becoming a grouchy old lady. I think we never taught in our organizations that with rights go responsibilities. In the human rights area, we got women's rights as human rights finally done. But the last article of the Universal Declaration says, you have to extend rights to everybody, but it also says you have to take some responsibility. Well, it's the same thing; it's a two-way street.

JL: Indeed.

Next steps. I will have somebody transcribe these recordings. I'll clean it up a little bit and I'll send you a copy before anything else happens.

AF: I really think that oral histories are very important. Our party here, the Democratic Farmer Labor party, is going to celebrate the 75th anniversary of its founding in a couple of years. And we are hoping to train a few people in oral history because there are stories out there that nobody will tell until they are about ready to die.

JL: One last question: is there anybody else that I could talk to?

AF: Ellen Hoffman. She was in Senator Mondale's office, and Mondale's office, because of her and that I was a friend of Mondale's (still am), helped us.

Oh, I forgot about Phinneas Indritz. I should have told you a little bit about him. Has anybody talked about Phineas?

JL: What a great name.

AF: Yeah. P-H-I-N-N-E-A-S. I-N-D-R-I-T-Z. I think he's dead but he was an absolutely crucial character for us because he had seniority on Capitol Hill. He was a good feminist. He didn't wait to be asked. He would call up and volunteer. I don't even know what committee he was with, but he was very helpful.

JL: Was he a congressman?

AF: No, he's not a congressman, just a staffer who knew everything about the law and human rights and cred deeply about both.

Carol Foreman I think is still around.

One other thing that I didn't mention that I've come to think is even more important. You've gotta teach these young people that probably the most important contract that they sign in their lives is the marriage contract. The reason there are two witnesses on your marriage certificate is this is a real contract. And well partly I think it's because of my international work in which questions about marriage and family were most frequently asked or complained about. I did a project here at the Humphrey institute continuing all this work and thinking about it internationally—the whole question of marriage and family law. Internationally, it is the biggest problem and people don't understand how crucial this is. So my former deputy, who is a lawyer, is trying to get a book written on it; it's a certain article on the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Almost everything flows from this view of marriage and family. What was your legal field?

JL: Civil rights, but I also taught family law.

AF: Our son is now a lawyer and did well enough that he can now be a judge and still put his kids through college. And he is in family court now. People don't want to do it, so each new judge has to take their turn in family court. He's finding it quite fascinating.

JL: It's a great subject to teach, but I think it's not a great subject to work in because you get emotionally exhausted. As a teaching vehicle it's fantastic.

I really appreciate your time.

AF: This was fun.