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Question: So you've been an active person all your life?

Answer: Yeah, I have. I don't know why, but I just jump from one thing to another. And you know, I got my -- when I came back from Service I got a bachelor's degree in nursing from Seattle U. And I worked at that, taught at Harborview for awhile. I went to the UW, got a Master's Degree. And then I had several teacher friends who were teaching school and at that time nurses didn't have too much to go on as far as future benefits and so forth were concerned, they said, Marie, why don't you change and become a teacher. And they used to tell me about how much fun it was, kids on the playground, you know and everything. So I decided, went back to Seattle U. Got a -- I didn't have long to go to get my credentials for teaching in public schools. So I did that. So then I went on and -- well, I had my Master's in nursing. So after I taught school for, oh, I don't know, I think I -- after I taught school for about four years, then I went to England and taught school in England. I was at the Army base in England for a year. And it was close to Manchester which was nice because that's where all the big plays came first, before they went to London.

Question: Wow.

Answer: So - Sound of Music and everything -- we saw that on stage before it even got to -- to London. So, came back and kept on teaching. And I became so interested in library work. You know, that was interesting. The kids -- that's when they were starting to do a lot of research and all. So, and I liked that. So, and I got to know all the students in the school and all the teachers and everything like that, which was really nice, you know. So -- then I got my degree, Masters in Librarianship.

Question: Wow.

Answer: And all the time that I was doing that, Mother was here. Of course she could take care of the house and she did the cooking and things like that which was a great help to me. And I would do, still, all the yard work and everything. So anyhow, I've had kind of an active life. You know, and once I volunteer at the Puget Sound Blood Center.

Question: One of my clients --

Answer: Really?

Question: Yeah, in fact, did you go to their -- not this year, but last year I did the video for the -- they do a thank you lunch. In fact they just had the one this year where they do a thank you luncheon for all the volunteers.

Question: Oh, we always have a wonderful luncheon.

Answer: And I did the video for the one a year ago. With Officer Ron Tuggle and I can't think of the woman's name but she was from the -- she had breast cancer and she was from the Food Bank in Seattle. The one was a State Patrol Trooper had been in an accident and had blood donated to him.

Answer: Oh, yeah.

Question: So yeah, huh.

Answer: Well, I work over at Tukwila at the Puget Sound Blood Center.

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Question: Yeah.

Answer: Oh, I've been with them for a long, long time. And just -- this is the first time I've kind of missed, you know, going on my turn. But anyhow, so I was doing all that and then with the Legion, you know, I've been commander of that post. I don't know about three or four times, you know. This is the first year -- I was the commander the last two years until this year, and I just thought they needed somebody new, you know.

Question: And the Legion is veterans from all branches?

Answer: All branches. Yeah, doesn't matter. It's the oldest veterans organization in the United States. And it's really a wonderful, wonderful group. We do a lot for the community, we do a lot for the veterans, you know, and all of that.

Question: Are there any other nurses?

Answer: Isn't it strange because in our post, I was the first woman for a long time. You know, in the post. Because my brother was an American Legion man and some of the teachers from the high school, especially Warner Newgar, people like that, were enrolled in the -- were American veterans -- the American Legion. So they got me to join. So this year will start, in September, will start my 28th year of being with them.

Question: Boy.

Answer: So I've had every post, practically, in the organization. So, and it takes a lot of time, too, but it's good, you know. You meet a lot of -- we've had such wonderful people. But we're all getting older now and we're all kind of dying, some of them, you know, quite a few of the fellows, and it's kind of sad in that sense. We need some younger people. But the people that served in Korea and Viet Nam are still raising their families and they're young, you know, and they don't have quite the time to spend, you know, taking officers and stuff like that. But anyway, so, anyhow. And I visit -- I have a little friend out at one of the nursing homes -- retirement centers in Federal Way. She'll be 105 in September. She'll be 105. And I go down to Ferrington Court here on Tuesdays and we meet with some of the ladies down there, say the Rosary. And, oh, I don't know -- I just find there's lots of things -- church -- there's always something to do for church.

Question: See, I think a reflection of your generation, I was thinking of that yesterday. I was at a small church in Olympia, a mission, St. Christopher's, which is just little, teeny, about a hundred people. But I was -- and I grew up in a big Episcopal Church. And I was thinking of the people over the years that have kept these running. Because there's the guilds that do the flowers and do the dressing and change from Lent, you know, and everything like that.

Answer: Yeah.

Question: And I think it's coming back but the generation that you grew up with, I mean you talk about how close your family was.

Answer: Hm-hmm.

Question: You took care of your mom and your mom took care of you and your brother, where the world's changed some since then.

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Answer: Yeah, you know, well, it's like Tom Brokaw's book, "The Greatest Generation", you know? I don't think we'll ever see it that way again. You know, that people are so giving of themselves. Because it seems like nowadays, people have to work so hard to make money. They want money and things and all that, you know, that's important. And it is important. But to, you know, would we be ready if we had another thing like World War II? You know would people be wiling to put their lives on the line and just pick up and go, you know. From out of high school. I don't know. it seemed to me the last few years our country has gone down so far as far as patriotism is concerned.

Question: It's finally -- there is this --

Answer: But we're coming up.

Question: -- ground swell that's in there. But you asked interesting questions because, again, it was a very interesting time that World War II happened. Here we came out of the Depression, and for a lot of people, that there became the patriotism but there also was, because there weren't jobs --

Answer: Hm-hmm.

Question: -- it brought everybody back together again. But you did have to give up a lot to go do what you were doing.

Answer: Well, I think so.

Answer: But then another great thing that happened to us, when we came back from Service we had the GI Bill. And you know, I think that's the way most of us went on to college. In our profession, you know, was to use the GI Bill. And we got such good benefits from that, which was wonderful, you know, for us. We took advantage of that and I wouldn't doubt but what three-fourths of the people that came back from world War II, you know, took advantage of the GI Bill and got out and made something of themselves.

Question: That's where you look at how much World War II, in a whole variety of ways, changed our society.

Answer: Hm-hmm.

Question: Because you had these young kids that went over and fought. So that changed their view of life.

Answer: That's right.

Question: You came out of the Depression, you had the ones that came back and got the GI Bills. Had World War II not have happened --

Answer: They wouldn't have had all that. We wouldn't have had all that, no. But because it even -- even the attitude changed, even at Viet Nam when -- of course that was a very bad war because we weren't there to win, you know. But I know that some of the young teachers -- men at our school and so forth -- if they had been drafted, they would have run to Canada. Instead of serving. Even though other people were putting their lives on the line to save and to fight for our country.

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Question: It's interesting, in World War II, there were people that ran to Canada, but they were running to Canada so they could get into the Service.

Answer: Yeah.

Question: Because they could get in younger up there. They could sneak into the - you know, 15, 16 year old kids --

Answer: Yeah, right. That's where the action was.

Question: Did you enjoy your time in the Service?

Answer: I loved it. I just -- I can never be thankful enough that -- that I served my country. That I went. I can never be thankful enough for all the people I met, for all the friends I had, for the attitude it gave me, you know, toward life. Respect for other people. I would do it again in a minute. I would. I thought it was the best thing I did in my life.

Question: How much do you think it changed your life? That's a hard one to --

Answer: Yeah, it is. I always had -- well, growing up in a small town in South Dakota, we went to Catholic school, you know, we had pretty good values. And I think -- I don't know, I would have gone on to nursing like I did, and graduated and so forth, but I would have had a job, I suppose, and just stayed in nursing for a long time, you know. This kind of opened up my world to me, going, you know. Because I -- once you get a taste of New York City and places like that, you know, you think, well, there is something out there. So I think that as far a who I am and what I believe and how I feel and so forth, I think we always had that. But I think it made it a little stronger. And appreciative, I think, to appreciate the things that our country gives us. There's no country like America. No country in the world like America. Where people can work together so well and become so united and in time of crisis, you know, that's when it shows, you know. But I -- I don't -- I've been to just about every country in Europe and all around and there's just no country like -- everybody wants to come to America. They do. We have so much. And I think the one problem with the young people today is that they have so much. Even the little kids, you know, all the computers and everything. Everybody tells me I should get one. I don't have one yet. And I should, I guess, to be with it. I might now after all this. But I don't know what they do if they had to go without the things -- the necessities of life as we did when we were growing up. They couldn't do it. And of course it would never happen again like that. There will never be another depression like that, I don't think.

Question: That's the big thing. I don't think. You don't know.

Answer: You don't know.

Question: It could happen but it would be different.

Answer: It would be different.

Question: Yeah.

Answer: They'd still have all these things. You know, in quotes, "things".

Question: What was the best part of being in the Service?

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Answer: The best part? I think -- that's a good question, yeah. I think the best part was the sense of pride in serving my country. I think that was how I could express it. I was so proud to be an Army nurse. I was. I should have stayed in, but I came home and, you know, after three or so years in the Service, you kind of thought, well I can find something new to do. But I should have stayed in. But I think that was the main thing. Just pride in being an Army nurse and serving your country. It would be terrible for me, now for me, to think that after I'm this old, you know, I'll be 81 in May. To think that I never had that experience. You know, if I hadn't had that experience, I probably would be as dim-witted about World War II as other people are today, you know, really. Because it's such an integral part of me.

Question: You're -- your mom must have been proud.

Answer: Mother was -- she had a struggle. You don't know how she struggled to raise us. She used to work, sometimes -- I can remember when I was -- I was only nine when my father died. My youngest brother was three, Gordon was six, I was nine, my other brother was 12 and my sister was 14. But she worked for fifty cents a day in a restaurant, you know. Is this interesting?

Question: Oh, yes.

Her parents came to South Dakota in 1910 and they settled in this little Answer: town called Isabel, South Dakota in -- out on the prairie. That was the end of the railroad line, then. The railroad was coming in and that was the end of the line. So they came out and they built a hotel right across the street from the railroad line. So, you know, people would come out homesteading and everything at that time, and that's where -- well, Mother grew up in South -- they were from Wisconsin, but Mother grew up in South Dakota. They were at other places beside Isabel, but they finally settled in Isabel. And it was so convenient for people who got off the train and wanted to stay overnight to come over to the West Hotel they called it, you know. And Mother had three brothers and she was the only girl. And my grandparents sent her to Sioux City, Iowa on the train for her music and voice lessons, you know. And so that was really great. And then she had a brother, we called him Uncle Will, his name was William. Uncle Will. He was a salesman of first class. And he used to take Mother with him when he was selling things, when she was a teenager, you know. So on one of her trips when they got down to Water town, South Dakota, apparently she met my father and he was from the Parker clan that lived near Watertown, and his parents had this -- well, I think it was one of the most beautiful homes in that part of the country there. And his father was very proud; he was English, very proud. His mother was Irish and she was as gentle as a lamb, you know. But he had three sons who had big farms all around him, you know, my father was one of them. But, and of course Mother met him, and I guess, the way she tells it, they only saw each other four times before they decided to get married. so they had this big wedding in Isabel, January 31st, 1913. And here she was, this beautiful musician, she'd never been on a farm in her life. And he took her down there and she was on this farm and you know, that was really hard for her. So anyhow, when my father died, she was left, you know, with -- with farm. And so we tried to continuing farming but eventually we ended up out at Isabel with her parents. And from Isabel, she worked every day, like I say, for about fifty cents a day. But then she got this job with the government, WPA, you know, in Timber Lake. And then from that she -- she became post mistress in the little town and she -- she beat several men for the exam. She got that job so that was pretty good. When she was -- when I was a junior in high school, Mother got really sick. She had very bad ulcer, and she was off work for about two months so I quit high school as a junior and worked in the post office, took over the post office for her with her helper, you know. Anyhow, we survived that. And then she -- so when she had the post office then, there was another family in town, Scherbers,

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Scherbers -- German. And so Martin, that was the father, he had three or four kids that were going -- we were all going to school together. It's funny, in that little town, we had a Catholic school, you know. And the nuns -- presentation nuns. So Mother and Martin kind of hooked up, you know. So they got married, just shortly after Betty's -- Lowell -- went in the Service. So Mother and he were married for about seven years and then he died of cancer. So Mother was left again. And she stayed there, Timber Lake for awhile. And eventually she sold out, she came out here and she was a housemother at Seattle U for about ten years. We had some Jesuit friends, you know, they're so wonderful, the Jesuits. And they were so good to us. So she was a house mother there. And then she eventually came out and we lived together and that was really good. Little difficult at first, you know, facing reality. But I was gone a lot

Question: Was she -- where was she when you went into the Army? Was she at Seattle U being a house mother or --

Answer: Oh, no, no, she was at Timber Lake. She was in the post office at Timber Lake.

Question: So do you remember telling her you were going in the Army?

Answer: Well, see, I was in Seattle. Gordon and I came to Seattle then. Yeah, I came out to Seattle in, well, that was early. My brother, Gordon, that's where he joined the Marines was from Seattle. He wrote home and told Mother he was going into the Marines. Well, she knew that this would happen. And then after he left and I was in Seattle a while, then I decided to join the Nurse Corps. So I wrote and told her I was going. But it was kind of fun because I went to Pocatello, Idaho, you know, air base, and Mother would come out. She came out a couple times, I think, to the air base. And of course she could play the piano like nobody's business, you know, and in the officer's club, we'd all get together and she'd play the piano and we'd all sing and everything, you know. So it was really good. So she didn't think it would be too bad, you know. Being in the Service. She hated to see us go overseas and she hated it when Gordon was in the South Pacific, especially. He went through one -- Tarawa, Saipan, Iwo Jima, all those terrible, terrible places, yeah. So he did his service then he just died two years ago in March. He was so proud to be a Marine. He would not put a flag on his grave until Bill Clinton was no longer president. That's right.

Question: I like your brother.

Answer: Right. He could not bear that. He would not let us -- he said don't put a flag on my grave till Bill Clinton is gone. So we all felt that way about him. But he had 15 children, he fathered 15 -- can you imagine that? Those two brothers of mine kept Mother and I busy. You wonder what I did with my spare time? But do you know, every one of those kids have been instilled with his philosophy and his way of thinking and like that they all feel the same way. Gordon's, my brother's kids. All -- he had 11 boys and four girls.

Question: Wow.

Answer: One little boy died when he was about nine months old, but other than that, there were 14 living children. And they just worshiped their father. And he's got on his tombstone, he's got Semper Fi, you know, with the Marine symbol.

Question: So the Service, it sounds like, was very good for your brother.

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Answer: Oh, well, he was so proud, too, to have served. Well, at that time, yes, it was very good. We had no idea what it was going to be like at that time, you know, in '43. It was just getting really good and hot over there in the Pacific. So when he went, it was really -- really something.

Question: What was the worst part of being in the Army?

Answer: The worst part? I think it was missing home. You know, you can't help but miss your home. Miss being with your, well, my mother, you know, I always felt that it was my responsibility to take care of my mother, anyway, cause I was a little child, you know, and I always took care of the boys when we were growing up, if Mother worked, I was the one that did the housework and washing, you know, and all that stuff. So I always felt I -- there would be a time when Mother would be with me. I remember the night before my father died, I was so young then, I was staying with one of my uncles whose house was maybe about two miles from his parents house. And my father had cancer of the pancreas and was in such pain all the time. But the night before he died, they took me to see him. Because he -- when he came -- he was at a political convention in November in Pierre, South Dakota. He was a Democrat then, we were all Democrats then. And he got sick while he was there and he came home and in January or February he went to Mayo Clinic in Rochester, and they diagnosed him with cancer of the pancreas and they couldn't do anything for it. They sent him home but he couldn't come to our house because we all had whooping cough. So he had to go to his mother's house, you know, so he was with his mother all the time until he died. But they sent me -- the night before he died they sent me up to see him, and he talked to me, you know like a father would to a child, I suppose, you know. Be a good girl, all that, you know. But I can remember he said one thing that always stuck with me -- he said, "Take care of Momma". So I don't think that that was hard and fast rule I had to follow. I mean I don't think he meant it that way, that I should, but he meant just be good to her.

Question: And you took that on as your -- your -- you took care of your mom for your dad. Yeah, I know how that is. I have the same -- cause my mom passed away two years ago, and I have the same deal with my mom -- that -- take care of Dad.

Answer: Yeah, it's -- so I think that, you know, it just worked out fine for us, after we got adjusted to each other. But you know, she was independent. She was a great visitor -- she loved -- I took her everywhere with me. She loved to go to the Legion meetings, she'd talk to all the guys and everything, you know. She was -- she was just a good --

Question: I see where you get it the.

Answer: And wherever she went, she was -- at the piano if there was one, you know. So anyhow, that's -- that was that little story.

Question: I can just -- the picture you described at Pocatello -- I can picture you and your mom and these soldiers that just -- there was a piece of home and this lady filling their life with --

Answer: Oh, and when they were all in uniform and they looked -- they always looked so nice, you know with those bars on their soldiers. Well, of course the nurses were in uniform, too, then. But you know, it was always so wonderful, you know, we were all so -- I don't know. It was fun. It was nice. It's always nice to have a songfest wherever you go, you know, just really sing out. We used to do that a lot in India at the club, you know, we'd sing.

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Question: At the club -- was there somebody in India that played the piano that you all gathered around or --

Answer: With, well not, unless we were -- I don't know if we had a piano at the club. I don't know. But the -- the GI band was there. The GI band, you know, was there all the time. And all the instruments and everything. But I can't remember if there was a piano there. I don't think so.

Question: But lots of singing though?

Answer: Lots of singing, though.

Question: Now was that after the -- that you shared that bottle of whiskey you

talked about?

Answer: Well, during, I suppose. During the whole time.

Question: That's kind of like the gentleman that was in England and he was talking about scrounging so he had to do some scrounging for the boys there to get them some good Irish Whiskey. Cigarettes were a good trading device, he said.

Question: Now, it's interesting, 'cause you now are part of the American Legion and you have a life experience that I'll never have, which was being a part of World War II, serving your country. And I view myself as being patriotic, but when you see the American flag, in a parade or whatever, what does that mean to you?

Answer: It -- it's a symbol of hope; it's a symbol of patriotism, it stirs your heart. You're so proud, proud, proud to be an American. That's why I can't understand people like Patty Murray will not vote for the flag amendment. You know, she thinks that's decrying free speech. But to -- that flag - look what - I gave you a copy about this little thing I have about Mike's flag. What some of these boys that were Viet Nam I prison, what the flag meant to them. That meant America. That meant our country. That's the symbol of our country, and they don't realize that, you know. I remember we used to have parades at home and everything on the 4th of July and all. Hats off along the street, there comes the blur of bugles, the ruffle of drums, you know that poem. The flag is passing by. And everybody used to almost stand there and put their hand over their hearts and just -- you know, you were just so proud to think that we were Americans. That's what I think. It stands for America. Land of the free and home of the brave.

Question: We talked to a gentleman that was in a -- a German POW. And in the camp they had taken scraps of material and they had sewn this flag. And he said, cause I asked him what was the best moment in that -- when you were in that camp. And he said they got up one morning and the German guards were gone from the towers. And he says he can remember them climbing up in the tower and raising this flag that they'd sewed together from all that and seeing -- seeing the German flag taken down and an American flag.

Answer: Hm-hmm. That's like this little poem I have in there, Mike's Flag. How he worked and worked in the Viet Nam prison, you know, the Hanoi Hilton, Jane Fonda's famous place. You know what I think of some of these people. But how he -- he worked so to make a flag out of practically nothing, you know, and how much it meant to him, you know. And I think once they got him -- found him doing that, and of course they tortured him and everything but he came back and started right over again. But the flag stands for America. There's no country in the world like America, I don't think.

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Question: And you've been through -- around to see it.

Answer: Yeah, yeah

Question: I mean, you've been -- now, did you didn't bring a special soldier home

with you? There was no Mr. Parker?

Answer: No deep romances.

Question: No deep romance?

Answer: Oh, I met so many nice fellows, they were all so nice and there were a few that I think, after the -- after I got home I went back to New York City because one was from -- the one that was in that picture.

Question: Oh, yeah.

Answer: Went back there and I saw him and it was nice, it was nice seeing him again. But he was wounded, you know, in combat. He was a navigator in a B-24 bomber. And so -- but we got to see each other, and I don't know. We just sort of -- I don't know why, at that time I was still kind of restless, having come home from India and everything, you know. So nothing materialized. But I've -- I've met a lot of really wonderful fellows. I, you know, I usually had someone around.

Question: Did you lose any friends in the war?

Answer: Did I? Well, except for those nurse friends, who else? I can't remember that anyone that I really knew directly that I was very fond of that died during the war. Oh, I do. Because when -- when I joined the war -- the Service, everybody in our high school wanted to go to war. You know, it was a little high school. And in my class, there was this boy, Claudius Kraft, and then there was a fellow ahead of us, he was an Indian boy. But anyway, Claudius was one of 17 children at that time. He was the nicest young man. And he joined the Army and everything, and he was killed shortly after -- over in Europe somewhere, shortly after the war had started. So that was really kind of tragic for us. And -- and the other boy, oh I know his name like I know my own. He was killed over Sardinia, the island of Sardinia. When they're boys, you know from home that get killed, you know, young boys, that's kind of too bad. You know, you feel that, pretty much, you know. From home. So those two boys died right off the bat.

Question: I know when Mom talked about when they had her 49th class reunion or 50th, I forget which it was, but it was interesting because there were all these men at the reunion but she doesn't remember them because they really didn't graduate with them.

Answer: Hm-hmm.

Question: I mean they got their diploma but they were over fighting.

Answer: fighting, I see.

Question: Yeah. So it was -- you know, she looked around -- who are these guys?

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Answer: Yeah. But it's funny how, quite a few of my classmates, there were 35 in my class when I graduated in 1938, but quite a few of those boys are dead now, and quite a few of them went to Service, you know, but they didn't die in Service but they've died since. But it just makes me feel that every day is precious on earth, more precious up there, I guess, but -- (laughs)

Question: You're going to enjoy where you're at.

Answer: Yep. But you know, you have to make the most of where we are. But it's kind of sad when you look in the picture. 1985, we had an all class reunion in Timber Lake, South Dakota. And there were about 5000 people came home to that little town of 600 people. It was really fabulous. And then we had class -- classes had reunions, you know. But when I look at that picture and I look and see how many of those boys are dead now, already. And they're just my age. I don't think I'm very old, you know, lot of people lot older than I am that are still very, very, very active. And I'm going to be, too.

Question: I was going to say, I think you're going to get that letter from the president for the -- for the 100 years. Well, thank you very much, it was a pleasure.

Answer: Well, it was so nice of you to come and spend all this time. But like I say, I'm not -- I kind of jump from one thing to another.

Question: We all do. That's the way we think.

Answer: Sometimes things come to mind and you think it might be of interest to someone else and like that, you know.

Question: See, it's interesting because history made -- and Andy Rooney dispelled a lot of this, but history made World War II this thing of heroes and heroism and yes, there were. but there were a lot of average, everyday people that just went and did whatever they had to do.

Answer: that's right.

Question: They weren't all on the front lines.

Answer: No, and that's in our little book, Missing Pieces, there's about 67 people that have written little articles about an experience or something when they were in World War II and it isn't just all the people that went to war that helped with the -- with the war effort. It was people that stayed home and went without gasoline or sugar, and worked on the railroad and stuff like that, and kept -- kept it going. and that's when they started, you know, Women's -- Women's Lib, really, when the women started to work in the factories and stuff, you know, cause the boys were gone and they had to keep going and so the women took it over. But that was good, too. You know, in the sense that it just kind of changed. After World War II, things began to change, you know.

Question: That was it a lot of the women -- see, my mom was a card carrying welder, and she made pineapple grenades was the part of what she did. But her dad had a foundry and --

Answer: Yeah, see, if we didn't have them doing that and building airplanes and stuff like that, we wouldn't have got to first base.

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Question: See, and that's where the -- the sad part was, is that the war was over and for a lot of women they said, well, than you very much, now go back to --

Answer: Being housewives.

Question: Yeah, exactly. You know, we talked to women pilots, you know they flew the planes that Boeing made and flew them over and tested them and did whatever, and then when the war was over, it was -- there were men coming back that had been over there fighting. And the women we talked to didn't begrudge that. They said, you know, they were over and saw serious action --

Answer: Hm-hmm.

Question: So --

Answer: Well, look what they did in Desert Storm. I think women were quite active over there in those airplanes and everything. I think that's -- I think that's a marvelous thing that they have the ability to do that, you know, really.

Question: That's where the world's progressed in a lot of ways.

Answer: that's right.

Question: It's interesting cause World War Ii changed not only women but it did a lot for racism because a lot of African Americans didn't live out in this area, but with the Service, they got spread all over the country, given different opportunities and then the world changed again.

Answer: Yeah, it sure did.