

Interviewee: Stedman, Susan Goodwillie

Interview Date: July 8, 2011

**UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON**  
**ORAL HISTORY OF HOUSTON PROJECT**

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Interviewed by: Debbie Harwell  
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Transcribed by: Michelle Kokes  
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DH: I'm Debbie Harwell and I'm here with Susie Goodwillie Stedman. It is July 8, 2011 and we are in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Good morning!

SS: Good morning! It's lovely to be with you again.

DH: Well I am so excited to be doing this and I have to tell you I thought last night was just fabulous.

SS: Good.

DH: Yesterday afternoon to be able to sit and listen . . .

SS: Well two very interesting women.

DH: . . . to the three of you.

SS: With very different takes on things. That was interesting to me. So . . .

DH: That's true. Yes. Okay so let's just begin here with question one. In general do you think that women had an advantage over men or the students working for change in the South and if so in what ways?

SS: Yes I do because as you have noted women could work for radical change, seeming to be doing ordinary womanly things like talking, organizing, planning without being radical and that's a powerful thing to be able to do and that's what Polly and Dorothy (and you) have recognized and what they recognized early on and really

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exploited (I think in the nicest sense of the word) women's ability to work for change without being confrontational and that's what we did.

DH: How would you answer critics who content it's a contradiction to say that women were the key to change and at the same time women were afraid to act?

SS: Who says we were afraid to act?

DH: Well in terms of the Southern women being afraid to act? That women, you know, to go down and talk to women that they were the key but at the same time . . .

SS: Well their lives were at stake often; their husband's jobs were at stake. I think that they did what they did, both black and white women, was miraculous, given the context in which they were operating. I think one of the things WIMS women did was to help the Mississippi women see what more they could do safely. They were still taking risks but we kind of expanded their horizons a little bit and you know; when they saw these Northern distinguished women sticking their necks out to be in the middle of this Mississippi maelstrom, it gave them courage as they gave us courage. It's interesting I hadn't ever thought of it quite that way but I think that happened. We just figured out

other ways beyond, besides demonstrating and rabble rousing and you know marching people to the courthouse to register that seemed to have accomplished other things, you know, we didn't get anybody to register to vote but we did other things. We got people to think in ways and discover how they could act in new ways. The whole, the

emboldenment (if that's a word) of the women on the education front and when they saw that integration was inevitable they . . . because their primary concern was the welfare of their children they rolled up their sleeves and said, "Alright this is going to happen. How do we make it happen well?" And that kind of earthy/soulful pragmatism I think we saw

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all the time. And that's what was so life changing for me was to see how these women did the Southern women did what they did.

DH: Just out of curiosity do you have a sense of what percentage of women were active for change?

SS: In Mississippi?

DH: Yes. Like the Patt Derians or the Jane Schutts.

SS: Oh they were few, they were tiny.

DH: Not even 1%?

SS: Oh golly . . .

DH: It's just that I . . .

SS: I really, well it grew and grew and grew. I mean look at Barbara Hendrix whose life was changed by that silly little business with Mrs. Meyner and I think that, there was nothing but incremental addition of people power to the effort. I don't . . . I mean even with the crosses burned on the lawns and you know the really scary intimidating stuff for the early leaders that was just, that fueled their fire (you should excuse the expression) but you know I think for people like Jane Schutt and others that made them see how important it was for them to fight for justice because this was the alternative and it was too horrible to think about going beyond their own front lawns. So I don't know maybe 1% seems tiny. But it was tiny, you know. We knew I think we knew every woman in Jackson who was even remotely interested (every white woman) in thinking about what they could do to be helpful.

DH: Was Jackson about 140,000 people at that time?

SS: I don't know that sounds about right. So what would 14 women be? .001%.

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DH: I think that's .1%.

SS: Yeah so maybe I don't know I think it might have been . . .

DH: Low anyway.

SS: Yeah it wasn't more than a couple dozen I don't think.

DH: Wow.

SS: Assuming that we knew everyone and I think that's fair because the local women, you know, made it their business to strength, you know gather numbers as much as they could. So and they were our guides and angels and stuff. So it was pretty small.

DH: Speaking of angels would you count Lillian Burnstein in with the angels? I'm having a hard time placing her . . . of course I had that question later on about her.

SS: Yeah you do. And I wish I could remember more. I think Diane dealt with . . . I think I had an unfortunate (not a totally successful meeting with her) in the beginning so Dion said, "Well let me try and she did eat meet with Laya Wiesner didn't she?"

DH: She met with multiple people but its interesting Polly talks about her as one who says, "No" but then she does it.

SS: Yeah.

DH: So she was continually saying, "No" to things but then she would sort of follow through.

SS: Be helpful yeah. That jives with my very, very foggy memory. I think she was deeply conflicted.

DH: And scared.

SS: And scared yeah.

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DH: That's good. Okay so how did the experience of Southern women differ from that of Northern women working for change in the South and how did this differ by race?

SS: Well of course Northern women didn't live it. So their job was to listen and learn and understand and to be supportive and helpful of Southern women's desire for change. (That is what I wrote on the plane.) It was hugely different. Again, because lives were at stake, husband's jobs were at stake and so forth. So that's, I'm repeating myself but I felt terrible and I felt very important, that it was very important for the Northern women to spend most of the time listening, and I think (and Polly and Dorothy did too) because the context of the Southern women's lives was just totally . . . it was another planet and indeed the situation of white women and black women was obviously very different but in some ways similar. I mean jobs were at stake on both, in both communities. Reprisals could be more violent and brutal in the black community certainly. But everybody, everybody was under . . . was threatened by reprisal and no one was really free. That was clear. There were other, different . . . somebody wrote about the difference for the . . . the differences for the black women. Well maybe it will come to me.

DH: Okay we'll go to the next one, and I'm going to read this just so it's on here. A member of Team 3 Mary Cushing Niles reported that you and Diane told them, "When we first came we decided if we could remain free from fear we could influence the system a little bit but if we too became afraid (like Mississippians) we could accomplish nothing." In reading your diary, I didn't get the sense that you were fearful (other than being discovered and hurting the project). How did you manage to stay above the fear or at least from letting it show?

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SS: Well it's not that we weren't fearful. I mean we were . . . you couldn't not be fearful. But I think we were committed to helping a cause we believed in and that, in itself transcended fear. It was . . . we were little cogs in the wheel and we also were far more secure than the black people and in some cases the white people of Mississippi. We had our cover (so to speak) and their courage gave us ours. Really did, here we were plunked down and we had Polly and Lou Cowen, and Dorothy Height, and the Justice Department, and Attorney General Robert Kennedy, and you know all this behind us and so we felt in that sense very protected. And we . . . I don't know it was exhilarating I mean there was . . . it was an adrenaline producing situation and I can... It really was thrilling and to look back on it and realize that I had that opportunity to be part of this bit of history of this country is very gratifying. And I remember one of the scariest times for me was at night watching the news on television and when national news about Mississippi and what was going on came on and there would be a black out. The Hedermans owned the television station as well as the newspaper. And you know, "There were technical difficulties" every night at just that moment.

DH: At just that moment!

SS: And then you got a feeling of "big brother" and of course the cross burnings and the guys running around in their pickup trucks with guns across the back and stop signs that changed so that foreigners would be brought out and I mean the whole state was paralyzed by fear. Everybody was fearful of something! But I think Polly and Lou and Dorothy were . . . they worried that I was so young and . . . they wanted . . . they didn't think and Dorothy lived with a family (which I couldn't do) so they asked me to find a friend and Diane was my beloved college roommate and had just finished her first year of

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law school (which I thought might be useful) and so, so we had each other too, and we had Mrs. Hewitt and Patt and Jane and who were our angels they really were. I don't know if that helps but . . .

DH: Polly commented that later teams were able to do and see things that the earlier teams could not. And I think we saw that a little bit yesterday . . .

SS: Absolutely.

DH: . . . talking about the integrated travel.

SS: Yeah.

DH: Do you agree with that assessment and why or why not?

SS: Yes I do. We were savvier. We had learned a few things from our early mistakes. And we . . . I think we just knew how to operate more effectively as inevitably you know you don't hit the ground running in a totally strange atmosphere and I think Mississippians also came to see as the summer went on that the state was not going to burn up in flames and go to hell because of Freedom Summer. And also, as more . . . you know when we were able to talk with white women (especially after the team had been out to wherever) and we'd come back and report what we'd seen and then some of the white women said, "Wow" and a couple I think went with us on later trips (local women) because in the beginning as you note in the JSH piece, they were all communist beatnik *prevert* Jews (you made it pervert but that's wrong it was "pervert").

DH: Prevert?

SS: Yes. You know there was this monolithic stereotype of who these kids were that was totally . . . you know they were all sleeping together and smoking pot and rolling around in the hay and they weren't doing anything useful of course they're northerners

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coming in to “arr arr rrr rrr rr!” So things opened up I think and we did take a few women with us towards the end and that, when they saw that these kids did not have tails and horns, it helped as it always does!

DH: It makes a difference.

SS: Yeah! So I think everybody relaxed a little bit and still you couldn’t believe you were in the United States of America. I remember thinking, “How can this be part of this nation that I understand is our country?”

DH: Okay, let’s go to number 6. You, Doris and Diane worked very well together but at times the stress (understandably) would boil over. How did you all manage to hold it together when circumstances threatened to pull you apart?

SS: I learned how to pray. I really did. Look again through the mists of time I think it was almost harder for Diane and me than it was between us and Doris (I may be wrong and I wish now that I had talked to Doris about this before she died) because I saw Doris as our leader, you know as “the team leader” I knew she certainly was more accomplished. I thought she was maybe 5 years older than we were however it turns out did you know she was born on the same day as my husband?

DH: No I didn’t know that.

SS: August 20, 1920.

DH: Huh!

SS: Which I discovered when I found her for Marian Edelman through the Tuskegee alumni office which I learned was alumni offices were very helpful places when I was trying to find all the women. Yeah Doris was one of the last I found. You know I had while I didn’t know where she was I ran down all sorts of blind alley’s trying to find her

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and finally I remembered that she had gone to Tuskegee, and I called them and they said, “Yes she is alive and we know where she is but we can’t tell you. So send us a letter telling us why you want to get in touch with her and we will forward it to her and if she wants to get in touch with you she will.” A few days later the phone rang and it was Doris and we talked for an hour and a half on the phone. Then I don’t know how I learned when her birthday was but I did and we of course saw each other at the CDF reunion which was in 2001 I think.

DH: That sounds about right I’m not positive . . .

SS: And so . . . and then when I think we were on a panel at Sarah Lawrence together and Bruce came with me and they just immediately fell in love and so in 2003 Doris and her family came to Maine for a week and celebrated their 83<sup>rd</sup> birthday together.

DH: Oh my how wonderful!

SS: I should send you that. I have a picture of Doris sitting on our deck with a bunch of balloons behind her and we had this big party and we invited the four black people we know in Maine I think there may be all of seven! And then lots of neighbors and friends. I don’t know if she had ever had a party like that. I mean she looks like a little kid at a little kid’s birthday party. It was so cute and we went to the beach . . . you know I took them all over the place and her brother and sister in law joined us and it was just wonderful it was so cute!

DH: Oh that’s nice!

SS: Anyway but in Mississippi . . . I had no idea she was so much older than me but she . . . I admired and respected her and I looked to her for guidance I mean you know I didn’t know what I was doing except following my nose! So maybe I’m sure there were .

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. . well just the difficulty in finding a place where we could meet itself was distressing.

But there was . . . it was Diane and I had some really rough moments and I think it's partly because we were so close and we loved each other so much but I was the paid staff person and I was the one who had been involved from before the beginning and yet we were peers and I mean she was already had finished her last year of law school so she felt equal to me and she certainly was if not more equal but I was calling the shots and I can be very bossy and it was hard and I remember going to bed one night and praying for grace and understand and patience and doing the right thing so Diane would be happier or for working through this difficulty because if we were at odds, then we really were in trouble. And my prayer was answered. I mean we just somehow we worked it out and came to a new understanding and I don't know what I did or she did or whatever but it was resolved. I remember feeling this could be a serious crisis and a serious problem for the project, you know, if we weren't in sync with each other. So it was a big hump but we got over it. We had to. There wasn't a lot of wiggle room.

DH: That's true you did. Where were you going if it didn't work out?

SS: Yeah. I made some more notes last night.

DH: At one point you and Diane debated with Doris about the wisdom of traveling interracially . . .

SS: Who was on which side? Doris wanted to travel interracially or?

DH: At that time I believe she wanted to and you all did not. I didn't bring that with me. I think that was when you had written in your journal about making baby steps that you felt that you had to bring things on a little more gently. Okay so you didn't make the change at that point to travel in integrated cars but then later you did.

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SS: We did.

DH: So why did everyone agree to change at that point, do you remember? Had conditions changed in Jackson?

SS: Well I wrote I believe so or perhaps we felt we had more locals on our team who could come to our aid if trouble occurred. I don't remember the debate. So I'm sorry, but that's what I can imagine.

DH: Here's the . . . I thought I brought this with me. It was from your diary on July 27<sup>th</sup> and you were at lunch together and they kind of got at it. Doris wanted to know why, you said she was hungry. But Doris is really . . . there is something that I can't tell what it is. "Then Doris is really sold on the idea that the white community cannot be saved until it is willing to meet with the Negro community period over and out. We feel that there are certain baby steps that need to be taken before the giant step is made."

SS: Hmm well . . .

DH: Diane carried the argument.

SS: Diane the budding lawyer. What else does it say?

DH: I'll let you read it.

SS: Diane was built like a Parker 51 [pen] and ate constantly. She was always hungry! She ate and it drove me and I have been fighting fat all my life, and that was hard! Oh dear, oh my, "head on collision." Oh this is interesting yeah, "Better for our women to talk with the local women after their visit. . . . helping with the junior size trauma's like meeting four lovely white women from New York who gave them hell . . ." hmm.

DH: Was that after team 5?

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SS: Well 27 . . . no that's too soon.

DH: 27<sup>th</sup> would have been.

SS: I don't know.

DH: Team 5 probably would have been right after that.

SS: Oh wait a minute . . .

DH: I didn't bring the list of dates with me.

SS: July this was just before, this was just after Team 3.

DH: So that would have been the Washington team.

SS: It was the Washington team and just before the Minneapolis team, and we'd had  
New York and Boston. So but the New York was the first team and that was Polly and  
Dorothy and . . .

DH: I don't think they did that.

SS: They wouldn't do that no. No they didn't do that at all and then Boston team  
didn't do that, and the [Washington,] D.C. . . . Hetzel was a bit of a problem.

DH: I think I have her in that other set of questions for us to talk about.

SS: Flaxie Pinkett, she was a piece of work.

DH: Is Hetzel the one that fell in Patt Derian's pond?

SS: I think so.

DH: That's a funny story.

SS: Yeah. But hmm . . . hmm oh gosh.

DH: Do you think the change to integrated cars just happened because the team  
members felt, the later teams felt safe doing it? I noticed it was different yesterday, you  
know, Gerry [Kohlenberg Zetzel] who was on Team 2 obviously felt that sense of fear

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and in her report she talks about the paranoia that sort of creped in. Whereas Priscilla [Hunt] who was Team 7 said she didn't . . .

SS: Piece of cake.

DH: . . .feel fearful.

SS: Yeah.

DH: Or it could be like you said a few minutes ago that people in Jackson were realizing (or people all across Mississippi were realizing), the world wasn't coming to an end.

SS: Yeah, it was a combination of factors, and I think we you know we had to, in part, take our cues from the personalities of the teams (each one was different of course). . . . We had at the end, we had white women, Mississippi women, coming to lunch with the whole team at the Sun and Sands motel which was unthinkable at the beginning of the summer. And then of course in '65 the white and black staff kids lived together, Oce[ola] and Caroline. I mean that was just light years different.

DH: Right from what you did.

SS: From the summer before. So . . .

DH: Who would have ever thought, huh?

SS: Yeah right I mean it was amazing. It wasn't always successful. But at least it was possible!

DH: And it was a big step.

SS: Oh huge yeah!

DH: Okay so let's go down to I think we are on number 8.

SS: Yeah.

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DH: How did you negotiate taking the white women to a black church rally or even

Clarie Harvey's home without being suspect?

SS: The black community knew us and knew that we were on the side of the angels, and they trusted us. And as far as the white community was concerned, I think we could pretty much stay under the radar when we did those things. I mean we were careful.

There may have been . . . (certainly in the beginning) there was police surveillance at the Negro rallies. But, yet again, gloves, grace, class, and gentility befuddled them. They didn't know what to make of us. We obviously weren't going to be throwing bombs and so we just kind of, you know said, "Good evening sir" and walked past. We're here to tell the tale!

DH: It's almost as if you became do-gooders!

SS: Well we little old ladies and we were innocuous. I really do think that had a lot to do with our ultimate power.

DH: Okay in listening to the debriefings for Team 5 . . .

SS: Wait a minute you skipped 9.

DH: Oh I did?

SS: Yeah.

DH: Oh I'm sorry! Oh that's an important one! You and Diane had little contact with the COFO volunteers or members of SNCC you had met in Ohio. Please explain how you managed to keep your distance and how you felt about that.

SS: Well we had contact every week in the sense that we would call ahead to the COFO kids in the city we were going to visit with a sub following week's team to find

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out you know to set up the visit and find out what they needed so that the ladies could fill their suitcases with crayons or whatever, or bagels and lox . . .

DH: Isn't that a great story?

SS: Yeah it is a great story especially since the kids who answered the phone was Australian or something. You know, "I don't understand this but this is what they said." So but these weren't necessarily people who we had met in . . . at Miami [University]. But we did have contact and, and whenever friends like Paul and Rachel (they weren't Paul and Rachel Cowen yet) or Geoff Cowen or other people we knew came to Jackson we, you know they would come in the back door or whatever but we tried to get together with them. As I said yesterday it was . . . there was a tension for me because I . . . I identified way more with the kids than I did with the old ladies (who weren't old at all). When Gerry said she was 36 . . . at 22, 36 looked like 50.

DH: Right, right. But she was one of the younger ones also.

SS: Yeah I think she was. But again, you know we had to be careful. We had to remember who we . . . what our mission, what our job was. Who we were that summer and regardless of our sympathies we had to, but did I see Al [Lowenstein]?

DH: I got the impression you really, that you refrained from fraternizing in your free time with COFO people in Jackson.

SS: Yes we did.

DH: Would that be a fair statement?

SS: That is true, that is true . . . but it was not our preference. I mean we would have loved to have spent more time with them, but we had to be careful in Jackson, yeah. Yeah they were clearly "the enemy."

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DH: Well even in your free time it was all about appearances.

SS: Well yeah, and we worked all day long every day to make contacts and to nurture relationships and to . . . I mean some of it was lovely lunches and stuff in pretty homes with nice genteel ladies, but it was sort of a 24/7 job. We were young and resilient.

Thank goodness!

DH: Okay now we will go to that next question.

SS: Okay.

DH: In listening to the debriefing for Team 5, which is New York to Ruleville, I noticed they often disagree in evaluating what they saw in Mississippi and unlike the other teams they are frequently talking over one another. So I wanted to know did this come across while they were there, and what is your sense to how the different teams seem to gel with one another?

SS: I . . . what I wrote was all I know is in my journal. I don't really remember that particular team, but what I do remember is how grateful I was for the briefings they had by Polly and Dorothy and whomever before they went . . . I mean they really were well prepared and that was critical, that really was. Because you know to swoop in for three days into this alien planet that was Mississippi and accomplish anything, they had to have been well briefed. And getting off the plane and going their separate ways to Doris, and us having been together from the beginning was very hard (as you read from team members reports). So I don't . . . I wish I remembered more about this particular team, but I don't.

DH: I think the team comments, too, verify what you said that they did feel well prepared. The only times that there were issues were usually when the team, when a

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team member had not gotten to come to the orientation. I think the only thing I saw that they would have liked more would have been to have shared bio pieces on each other.

SS: Ah yes . . .

DH: Before they came.

SS: yes that would have been helpful . . .

DH: That could have been different from team to team as well because some team members already did know each other and in other cases they didn't.

SS: No that would have been . . .

DH: But that's the only thing I saw . . .

SS: That was missing.

DH: In any of the reports. Other than that everyone was so complimentary of how it was organized and how you all handled it and everything once they came down. And they wrote letters and said how wonderful it was while they were there with you. Okay in the letter your father wrote to your grandfather, your father was really almost ahead of his time in acknowledging the ramifications of white privilege, and it was evidently a shift for him politically. Do you have any theories as to why he came to those conclusions?

SS: [Points to herself] Well he . . . yeah as I mentioned last night he was a rock-ribbed Republican. He had . . . and his father who was, you know, hopeless. He really was very conservative. When the summer before I announced I wanted to go to Africa, they were appalled and my father for Christmas my senior year at Stanford (mom was out, mom came out and did her Master's degree my senior year and we graduated together).

DH: Oh how fun!

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SS: Yeah it was great she was 53, and they had split in 1960, and this was '62/'63 academic year. So at Christmas mom and I were having Christmas with dear friends in Oregon, and daddy's present to me was a one way ticket to Paris on the understanding that my graduation present the following June would be the return, which was a fabulous present then (and still would be). I knew I could see him thinking, "Now what is the most glamorous exciting wonderful thing I can give Susie?" and it was that. But I had learned about Crossroads Africa and I called him from Oregon and said, "Daddy I can't thank you enough for this fabulous present" (and the value of the ticket was just about what it would cost to do Crossroads), and I said, "Could we convert the destination to Tanganyika?" I did not need the telephone to hear the bellow from across the country to New York. "What!" I had this little epiphany right there on the phone. I thought, "Susie you have six months . . . cool it." And I said, "Well we can talk about it some more" and I just backed away. Anyhow, he finally came around but he was, you know, when he was in his skin he was beside himself, and my grandfather was just appalled, just absolutely appalled (and worried and concerned and you know I'd be eaten by cannibals and stuff). So off I go, and I have this fabulous summer that changed my life and (it was a period of a lot of life changing summers) and then come back and then the following spring say, now I want to go to Mississippi and this particular summer, which made Africa look like a walk in the park.

DH: Right.

SS: So, you know, I was an only child. Daddy was proud of me and loved me dearly, and I think when he saw the way I was leading my life, he may have been appalled but he had to think about it, and he did. And as he said in the letter, you know, "I don't want

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Susie to do this anymore than you do, but we've raised her to be a responsible young lady and she is free, white, and over 21, and I can't stop her." In a way, I'm grateful for Grandpappy's letter because it got Daddy to think about more deeply what was going on in the world, what his daughter was doing about it, and what it meant to him. And I didn't know about that letter until years later. He never told me about the exchange (either Pappy's letter or his). In fact, I think I discovered it after he died in his papers. But it's an amazing letter isn't it?

DH: It is. It is a very amazing letter. Very nice and as an only child who came from very protective parents I can appreciate how difficult that was . . .

SS: for him.

DH: . . .for him to accept that and for your grandfather too.

SS: Oh yeah. I was his only grandchild because Daddy was an only child. So yeah I give them, I give Daddy a lot of credit.

DH: Okay in your diary you question whether or not you're making a difference; upon your return did you feel that you had accomplished what you set out to do?

SS: Well immediately upon our return, you know, we just totally just chilled out on the beach in Nantucket. I mean I don't think I . . . I remember just feeling shell shocked and mush. I really I had to work my way back to what was my reality (which was so different from what it had been in the summer). I think the November meeting in '64 when key, when we invited key people from Mississippi, and I think some team members, and some government people who had been involved watching the whole summer whatever and the Mississippi people said, "Please come back. You did make a difference." That was very affirming. And we really went into that meeting not . . . (at

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least I didn't have a position) I didn't then, still I think have a clue whether anything had really happened of value. So, so that was good. And the following summer was too, though . . . (what did I write?) I didn't have a real sense of what we accomplished until you and others started researching, analyzing and writing about this story. Thanks! And Marian [Edelman] saying, "I want to use this as a model for CDF" because she was very skeptical, you know there were a lot of snick people you know, "These do-gooder ladies from the North . . . please!" So having her affirmation that many years later was helpful. Who knows? We probably accomplished things we hadn't intended to and didn't some of the things we had, but I hope overall it was a positive effort. I think it was.

DH: Alright. How important was this kind of witnessing to changing how others both inside and outside the South listened to the needs of African Americans?

SS: Well I think the Northern women who returned home to write and/or speak about their experience certainly affected how people around them thought because they were influential and credible, and women who people respected. So, you know, some were far more vocal than others and those I think, those vocal women, the circles in which those vocal women ran certainly had a much better understanding about the situation for everybody and particularly for African Americans. Well, again, inside the South . . . I'd have to let southerners speak for themselves. To the extent that we could get people beyond the stereo types of the COFO workers and the black community and open their eyes a little bit, and open their ears a little bit, and open their hearts a little bit, sure we made a difference. You bet!

DH: Okay so that sort of leads in a little bit to the next question and that is whether or not you believe WIMS opened lines of communication?

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SS: Yes, we saw it happen before our own eyes. I mean we . . . we were the little catalysts, and a whole lot more women within the white community were talking to each other, and more joined the core group of leaders, and when white women and black women began to make connections and I think that was hugely enhanced in '65 (which I know less about because I was in New York). I was still working with Polly that summer but I, you know, I was sort of managing the thing from New York and I did have to take a couple of trips down to trouble shoot. God I remember one day, Debbie, I woke up in Jackson, Mississippi, I went to Greenwood or Greenville, one of the "Greens." I don't know if there is anything about this in the archive and met with share cropper families and you know just dirt poor people about how NCNW could help. Then I got on a plane and flew back to New York, and to the Cowans' incredibly beautiful triplex apartment on Park Avenue for a briefing of the next group going into Mississippi. I mean talk about a schizophrenic day! It was amazing. That was, this is off the subject but . . .

DH: That's okay.

SS: Another extraordinary thing about this project, the worlds that it brought together. You know for me to be in those two places in the same day was, was a really "mind blowing experience" as they say. And to feel the rapport with both and feel a tiny bit useful to both, you know, I mean that was a rich part of this, it really was.

DH: I'm sure team members felt the same way when they would go to the projects which I'm sure then is a lot of what precipitated them to go home and become active. If you had just gone to Mississippi and you'd only met with the white women . . .

SS: Oh it wouldn't have been the same.

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DH: If you hadn't gone to see the Freedom Schools and the community centers they wouldn't have had same . . .

SS: . . .and the conditions in which the kids were working and the people were living in yeah. And being followed by self-appointed sheriffs and having bombs thrown at you, you know Molotov cocktails . . .

DH: That's a bomb!

SS: Yeah. It was a rich experience, it was!

DH: Okay what do you think was WIMS most significant accomplishment?

SS: Oh gosh! Well that, opening lines of communication and giving both black and white Mississippi women a sense of all that they could do to make change. I mean to validate what they (the courageous ones) were already doing and to encourage and support them in thinking about what more that they could do, and opening up to each other, and finding the strength there was in being more inclusive on both sides. And as I say that, I realized that was the essence of what happened at the May meeting in Atlanta when Dorothy put the city women, the different city women together, and the Mississippi women the four white women in Clarie, you know had never met, had certainly never broken bread together, and when Clarie stood up and said, "We have never met and we will never be separated again!" That was what this was all about. That was what the whole thing was about. And it worked. I mean it happened, it happened slowly and increment . . . you know in tiny ways but I think it happened.

DH: In Marline's interviews she spoke with a woman named Dorothy Stewart who was an African American woman that worked in the public schools in Jackson and in her interview she says projects like WIMS were very important to showing women (not so

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much like Claris Harvey, although she is one of the ones that she mentions), but Jessie Mosley and Unita Blackwell and some of those women, that there was a world outside of Mississippi, outside of their piece of Mississippi outside of the bigger picture and outside of, you know . . .

SS: The state as a whole . . .

DH: And even the country.

SS: Yes.

DH: And that these projects that brought the black and white women together are what illustrated that.

SS: And what gave . . . yeah and what helped them see they weren't alone.

DH: Okay let's go to the next question. You had already committed yourself to social justice prior to working with the NCNW but do you feel that your efforts for WIMS impacted your future activism?

SS: They absolutely deepened my commitment and because of the courage of the Mississippi women I worked with. They showed me the way and that has stayed with me all my life, it really has. I think back on it often. If they could do what they did I can do anything! I really believe and I just . . . they've, they are like muses to me (both black and white). I'm sorry Ann Hewitt is gone because she was a key . . . we couldn't have done it without her. We really couldn't have. And at so many levels . . . she navigated the treacherous shoals of Mississippi society for us and she, of course, introduced us to all the people we worked with practically and her, the clarity of her vision for what Mississippi could be through the murk of what it was extraordinary, just extraordinary.

She was a . . . she was very bright but she was not well educated, and she talked, my God

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could she talk! (Which sometimes drove us crazy) but . . . and she had this sort of glass shattering voice . . . but no matter. I mean she was solid gold, she really was and so many others and alas I didn't get to know the black community, the leaders in the black community as well as Doris did, or as well as I would have liked, because I couldn't be seen with them. So (in daylight at least) so their influence was more symbolic and ephemeral and stuff but I knew they were there and what they were doing and what they had to live with and the potential repercussions of what they were doing and they did it anyway! Well that's powerful stuff it really is.

DH: Speaking of Ann Hewitt, she seemed to (or maybe it's just not written up) but she seemed not to put people off like Jane Schutt. For example, I remember reading the women saying about Jane Schutt, "She's sweet as she can be but I wouldn't be caught dead walking down the street with her" and I didn't hear, or at least I didn't read any comments like that about Ann Hewitt.

SS: Ann was much less visible in the local community as an activist. In fact, she wasn't thought of as an activist at all which was her secret weapon, you know, Schutt was out there. Everyone knew she was a "radical integrationist" and bless her heart, she suffered for it, she really did. I remember going to see her at the end of the summer and she was . . . her eyes were sort of sunk. I mean she was drained, just drained... physically, emotionally, spiritually . . . her, what she had done really took its toll I'm afraid. How, do you know how we found Ann Hewitt or she found us? Because she was not at the Atlanta meeting.

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DH: I want to say someone gave her name to Polly but I could be wrong about that.

I'd have to go back and . . . I'd have to go back and look. When they came down in May .

..

SS: After the Atlanta meeting.

DH: After the Atlanta meeting when they came down in May.

SS: To get blessed.

DH: To see . . . right, someone either gave her, gave them her name and they . . .

SS: And they went to see her?

DH: Or they saw her, I can't remember I'd have to go back and look up in the files, but that information about that May meeting is there, and a lot of it is notes or a report kind of a thing that Polly wrote. I think there may be one that Shirley wrote.

SS: Yeah . . . do you have a list of women who were at the Atlanta meeting?

DH: I don't have it with me.

SS: Okay I don't think she was there because that would be an obvious . . . she was, she was deeply involved in her church and I think she might have been a United Church Women person, which was one of the sponsoring organizations. But I don't know. But that would be interesting to find out because she really . . . as I say I can't imagine doing it without her.

DH: Okay.

SS: And then, you know, she moved to New York to be closer to the Cowans.

DH: Did she really?

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SS: Well I think there were other reasons, but that was . . . that she became a very, very important ongoing member of the Cowan/Height family, so to speak. And she lived in New York for many, many, many years.

DH: I don't recall the New York but I do recall seeing that she continued to be active in what was going on.

SS: Oh yeah, and I think she spent a lot of time at the U.N., she really branched out. She was a formidable woman in her quiet, southern, wonderful way. To look at her, you wouldn't imagine what all that she had in her and that she gave to the world, she was amazing.

DH: First of all I wanted to ask if you were aware when Prathia Hall contacted the NCNW that she had inspired the phrase, "I have a dream."

SS: No certainly not.

DH: And what memories do you have of her?

SS: Well I took that call.

DH: Did you?

SS: Yeah and I thought that I was at the National Woman's Committee for Civil Rights with Shirley and that she called us, and I answered the phone and I talked with her (and it was clearly an emergency situation in Selma). I don't know if Shirley and I put her directly in touch with Dorothy or how that happened, or maybe I was at NCNW and she called there first. But I'll never forget taking that call. Because this was like October (wasn't it?) of '63.

DH: In very early October.

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SS: I started working on October 1<sup>st</sup> so this was, man you're in it. This is really from the front lines and I don't . . . did she come to the Atlanta meeting? I think she did.

DH: I think so.

SS: And that's really the only other time I saw her because I never spent time in Selma. But I remember she was an amazing young woman whom I would have loved to have known better. But I don't really have more memories of her than that. She did . . . she was at the Atlanta meeting and she did speak out on behalf of the situation of women and girls in jail in passionate ways but that's all, that was the last time I saw her.

DH: She's someone who would make an interesting dissertation for another person down the road.

SS: Absolutely! Is she still alive?

DH: No she passed away a few years ago.

SS: Oh gosh.

DH: Like in the last . . . well I think I started working on this in '05 or '06 and it was maybe a little bit before that.

SS: Too bad.

DH: Okay is there anything else you want to tell me?

SS: Yeah why don't we, let's do the specific questions and then come back.

DH: Then come back for that?

SS: Yeah because I have, I don't know if there is anything more I want to tell you but I have some questions for you.

DH: Okay alright.

SS: And I'm afraid there's not a lot I can . . .

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DH: That's okay, that's alright. The first one is about the meeting at Polly's house when you all came back from the COFO training, in the paperwork there is a discussion of . . . before the meeting it said this gentleman, Bob Luney or Lunney . . .

SS: Lunney . . .

DH: The president's lawyer committee was going to be invited and he was going to be encouraging people to take a part but I can't find anything that tells me was he really there and the reason I'm curious about that is because in between the memo or the letter or whatever it is that says he's going to do that, is when Schwerner, Chaney and Goodman disappeared, and I would suspect (although I don't know that unless you can tell me) that the meeting and the mood would have changed, in terms of encouraging people to come. So I wondered if he actually was present.

SS: Yeah well . . . I have no idea. I'm sorry I just don't remember. But I do remember conversations about . . . I mean there was never a question that we were not going to go. Of course we, it made it all the more real what we were going into. But it also made us all the more determined. You know the enormity of the cause that we were part of was both terrifying and supporting, and it just sort of put air under our wings in a way. And Mrs. Sidney Poitier, I vaguely remember that that was spoken of but I don't know what happened.

DH: Okay and then do you remember was Mrs. Jeffrey Wilson of Washington . . .

SS: And that's G-E-O I believe.

DH: It is?

SS: Mrs. Geoffrey Wilson of Washington was a wonderful woman, Judy by name, who showed up at the National Woman's Committee for Civil Rights one day. By that

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time Shirley had found a person of color, (God I can't remember her name) and Dorothy had given me back part time as the NCNW's gift to the National Woman's Committee so Shirley and I, and this (it will come to me I can see her face) were working away, and there appears in the door this beautiful, elegant woman with pearls and a Chanel suit—I mean she was just perfect—and "Wondered if she could help." And we pulled up a chair and we talked with her and that was Judy Wilson and her husband was (see that was "Lady Judy Wilson" her husband was British, "Sir Geoffrey") and he was, what was he doing? He was at The World Bank I think which is why they were in Washington. She was American but she had married him. Anyhow and she joined our team as a volunteer and was wonderful. And I remember her as being, peripherally and she felt she couldn't be a team member because she had young kids, and Geoffrey didn't approve. He was sort of a stuffed shirt, and they subsequently split to all of our great delight! But I don't believe she would have tried to dissuade; me she may have, and I think she was a little bit fearful herself. There were a lot of women who didn't go who thought about it and you know were spiritually drawn to the mission, but then, thought about their children and what would happen if something happened to them and so forth. So I'd say there were as many women who "almost went" as did go. And she was certainly one of them. I don't think she would have . . . I don't remember her trying to convince me to drop out.

DH: Well I wondered because Polly mentions it (and I don't remember where else it is mentioned but it is mentioned) that after the disappearance of the three young men that the Washington area coordinator tried to convince you all to drop out, but you . . .

SS: And are you sure . . . and she?

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DH: Well then in other paper work I found her listed at one point as the Washington Coordinator. So I don't want to put those two pieces together.

SS: Not necessarily though . . .

DH: Because it could have been, you know there could have been someone else.

SS: Well it could have been her.

DH: So if you're not sure I'm just going to leave it as . . .

SS: Don't know.

DH: A person, an unnamed person who tried to.

SS: Yeah. I can't I'm sorry I just don't remember if she was the coordinator and/or if she tried to convince us. She could have been both, I mean it could have been but I don't know.

DH: But if we're not sure I'm not going, I won't, I don't want to use that. Okay and do you remember . . .

SS: I don't.

DH: Jeannette Boddie?

SS: No.

DH: You know I didn't think about asking Gerry or Pricilla if they might have known her.

SS: Was she Mrs. Julius Rosenwald?

DH: No, no. It's just that the only reason I put that is because she and Julius Rosenwald gave the same amount of money and they were the largest . . .

SS: contributors.

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DH: Contributors by an individual not by a foundation. And she did attend at least one debriefing, so she was somehow involved but she could have been a friend of Polly's who knows.

SS: Yep.

DH: Okay when team members checked in at the hotel did they use their actual address and northern cities?

SS: I have no idea. I assume they would have had to. You mean because they might have been afraid to?

DH: Well I didn't . . . first of all I didn't know what was procedure.

SS: Right.

DH: At that time in 1960's, maybe you didn't even have to do that.

SS: Yeah.

DH: You might have been just signing a register.

SS: Does the Sun-n-Sand still exist?

DH: As of three or four years ago Rebecca was down there in Jackson she sent me a picture of it, Rebecca Tuuri.

SS: Is it . . .?

DH: It wasn't open but the building was still there. And about a year ago I think it was still standing then, but there was a possibility it was going to be torn down soon.

SS: There was another hotel that we used.

DH: Heidelberg.

SS: Yes.

DH: And The King Edward.

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SS: King Edward? I don't remember that one.

DH: I think you might have only used it once.

SS: Huh!

DH: Interesting I was telling, I think I was telling Geraldine this (or maybe it was Pricilla) anyway it was one of the two of them. Anyway, I just recently found a thing that was a newspaper article from the *New York Times* and places where they were talking about these men that came down and checked in to the Sun-n-Sand and the other two hotels the Heidelberg and the King Edward and right after the law had passed.

SS: The Civil Rights Act?

DH: Yes. A big fanfare about how the accommodations were open, and they interviewed the manager of the Sun-n-Sand and he, "Yes we don't like it but it's the law and we're going to abide." So the newspaper writes up, "Okay all is well."

SS: Everything's fine . . .

DH: Well I'm so glad I found that because now I have that to contrast with Dorothy's story . . .

SS: Our real life story.

DH: What happened a few days later when the cameras weren't rolling and the news paper reporters had gone home.

SS: Yep.

DH: Oh and the other thing I had about that question about checking in at the hotel was I wondered if they were signing in with their northern addresses, if that put the staff off as opposed to recognizing them being with WIMS? Do you see what I'm saying?

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SS: Well, yeah it's a good question, and you know I have no ideas because of course we made these weekly reservations all coming from Diane or me for these different, these women from northern cities. We must have developed a relationship with the desk people at Sun-n-Sand and never had a problem as far as I know. I mean apart from the burning and everything, all that. But you know in routine reservations it didn't seem to matter.

DH: Okay and then in addition to Team 7, Team 6 indicates that they stayed in white homes and that they were at the homes of Miriam Ezell, Power Hearn, Mrs. Power Hearn and then . . . who is it, Sylvia Weinberg, I think stayed with Nussbaum.

SS: I, this is news to me I'm afraid. I'm sorry.

DH: That's okay.

SS: No it's critical! But I, I really thought you know in my (obviously doctored memory) the Hendrix possibility was the first breakthrough. But what team was . . .?

DH: But you know what? She was Team 7, and Susie it's quite possible that you were making those arrangements for Hendrix at about the same time because these two teams were the last two and Hendrix might have fallen through before these were lined up. I mean that's a possibility.

SS: Okay so who's . . . where did you?

DH: I wish I had brought that with me. I know that I think it's Jean . . . it's one of the Davises stayed with Ezell along with Lucy Montgomery. Lucy Montgomery I'm almost positive Montgomery and one Davis stayed with Ezell, and then the other Davis and another white woman (who else would that have been?) Narcissa Swift King stayed with Hearn, and Weinberg who was the only Jewish woman stayed with Nussbaum and

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Weinberg writes about no matter what you do, don't say I stayed with Nussbaum. Say I stayed with a prominent member of the Jewish community.

SS: Right to protect her.

DH: Because she was afraid for him. And then Ezell and whichever Davis it was corresponded for quite some time afterwards.

SS: Yeah I vaguely remember that.

DH: And then . . .

SS: Are both of the Davis' gone?

DH: Yes.

SS: Oh shoot!

DH: Then the other Davis talks about the Hearn family. I think I have those names right in terms of who stayed with who.

SS: Who with whom yeah. Well this . . . boy I was so excited. I mean this was one of my goals all summer. Because I knew how much richer the black woman's experience was because of their home stays (obviously) that was way more fun than the Sun-n- Sand. So this was something that I dreamt about, and I'm troubled that I don't . . . that I haven't retained this.

DH: Don't be troubled. Be happy to know that you achieved more than you thought!

SS: God!

DH: Okay do you recall how or why the League of Women Voters and the American Association of University Women were added as sponsors after the Atlanta meeting?

SS: Yes well first of all what do you mean by sponsor?

DH: In I think it's in one of the reports . . .

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SS: They are listed as such?

DH: They are listed.

SS: Well I think probably what happened was that they got wind of the Atlanta meeting and the five organizations involved and wanted to play too. Why they weren't from the beginning, probably has to do with who Dorothy . . . Dorothy had already been (Dorothy and Shirley) at the Women's Committee had already been working with the United Church Women and the Jewish women and the Catholic women and the Y and of course Dorothy was a staff member of the Y. They were the natural organizers and they were, they were the women . . . they were the organizations whose members were invited from the seven hottest cities to the Atlanta meeting. So they were . . . and their presidents were all at the Atlanta meeting and sat at the table at the dais with Dorothy for that last lunch when she said, "Put the women by city" and said, "What can 'we' at the national level do to be supportive when you go home and deal with this?" So I think, I don't remember specifically, but I can only imagine that the League and the AAUW heard what was going on and wanted to participate and indeed were very helpful in suggesting team members from among their ranks in the seven cities.

DH: Okay this next question, now . . . this next question has to do with when Polly and Dorothy came for the hearings. Do you remember anything about the fire or potential fire?

SS: I do, I remember that it happened, and you suggest varying accounts here.

DH: The team members came and went and listened to the hearings.

SS: Yes right.

DH: It was Team 4.

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SS: Ah, so it was right in the middle of the summer.

DH: I'm pretty sure . . . well I assume it was these same hearings. I know that Team 4 did go listen to hearings because I remember specifically it's Maxine Nathanson who was so sick to her stomach she wanted to throw up she had to leave. So I know that there were some hearings at that time. But I'm more concerned with this discrepancy about . . .

SS: Right the story.

DH: About the story of the fire.

SS: Was this in Dorothy's book? Yes?

DH: I don't remember it being in the book. I looked, I looked and I didn't see it. But the NCNW did a little film, it's a little 90 minute film on her life and she . . . when they are doing this part of the interview she's sitting with Shirley Smith.

SS: Shirley.

DH: But I can't see either. Now it's not impossible, it's certainly something Shirley would have come down for, but then other accounts don't say she's in the room with Polly and Dorothy.

SS: I can't help you I'm sorry. I just, I obviously wasn't there . . .

DH: Right, right.

SS: I just don't, you know I remember that it happened and I don't have any details.

DH: Okay. Alrighty. Okay well regarding Shirley not wanting to speak at the Selma rally, did her arrest as a Freedom Rider make it possible for them to extradite her from Alabama to Mississippi? I just wasn't clear on why she was afraid . . .

SS: I think it was . . .

DH: Did she think she would be put in jail if she spoke?

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SS: Was that the reason or was it because she felt she needed to have authority from Pat Harris?

DH: Well it was both. Well let me put it this way. Both are mentioned.

SS: . . .mentioned. I can't imagine. I mean she was a Freedom Rider in '52 or '53 so this is 10 years later.

DH: Okay.

SS: Or was . . .

DH: Well the Freedom Rider like the one they just did the documentary on, that was '61.

SS: It was? Well then maybe I don't know.

DH: Okay. Did Kate Wilkinson have an official role with WIMS?

SS: Well nothing was official. She was a friend of Ann's and she was certainly helpful and she became a friend of ours and she was certainly informally supportive. But I don't believe she had an "official" role, nobody did really. I mean you know Doris and I were paid staff but Ann (as I've said) we couldn't have done it without Ann but she didn't have a "title" or an official designation and certainly Kate didn't either, not at all, not at all.

DH: Okay and then this last thing just came up recently. I get this magazine Pi Kappa Pi.

SS: I wondered what PKP was.

DH: It's a history sorority, you know academic fraternity thing.

SS: Yeah.

DH: Anyway their magazine had this article about Dorothy and in it . . .

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SS: Michelle Cowan advised . . .

DH: She's mentioning Polly and then she gets down further and she talks about Dorothy being advised by Cowan not to participate in the Million Man March (which of course which was 20 years after Polly died) and then said afterwards that it was the right decision for her to do so. So then in the book I went . . .

SS: The right decision for Dorothy to decide to march?

DH: Yes to support the, whatever, the Million Man March.

SS: I see.

DH: But obviously she wasn't talking about Polly because Polly had been dead for 20 years and I went to the book and in the book you talk about Michelle Cowan.

SS: We do?

DH: Yes and I wonder if you...

SS: Gosh I'll have to go back.

DH: . . .knew who she was?

SS: No I think . . .

DH: She's not a relative.

SS: I've never heard of her where does she appear in Dorothy's memoir?

DH: In talking about the Million Man March.

SS: Ah, which was a coda put on after I left the project. I was no longer involved.

DH: Okay.

SS: That was part of the Public Affairs publishing house update.

DH: Okay, alright. Then I had a couple other little things I wanted to ask you about, and the first one I'm going to try to be really delicate about how I ask this question.

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SS: You don't have to worry about being delicate with me.

DH: Okay good. Well it's not . . . I've met Edith Savage Jennings, lovely woman.

But...

SS: Hard edges.

DH: Here's her report from 1964 and then she did an interview for Holly's project and then she did an interview for a woman in Memphis when the National Civil Rights Museum did their little thing. And memories . . . change.

SS: Change.

DH: And in the report she's talking about how she can't believe like many women had commented, kind of the beauty of the place versus the ugliness of the people. But then years later in an interview she said people spit at their feet when they got off the plane. I have not seen anything anywhere that indicates to me that anybody was spit on when they got off the plane.

SS: I don't think so.

DH: And I think that would have been in the 1964 report . . .

SS: If it happened.

DH: If it happened. Okay. The other thing is that she said (and I corrected this in the piece that was written for the Memphis *Downtowner* because I told the woman I thought this was wrong), she said John Kennedy.

SS: The president?

DH: Yes John Kennedy the president, along with Robert called her personally and asked her to go down with WIMS. Now I've . . . my theory on that was John Kennedy

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couldn't have even known about WIMS because WIMS hadn't even been created yet when he was assassinated.

SS: That's right.

DH: So I don't know, do you know if she had any personal contact with Robert Kennedy?

SS: No I don't and I doubt it very much frankly. I mean I . . . certainly the John Kennedy part can't be true as you suggest, and I don't think so. He knew . . . Bobby Kennedy and the Cowans were acquainted, and Polly took advantage of that relationship to make sure that he knew what was going on. But she worked much more closely with underlings at the Justice Department. You know John Doar and Jack Pratt and those guys (was it Jack?)

DH: When Rebecca interviewed John Doar he didn't remember WIMS.

SS: Really?

DH: I thought that was interesting.

SS: Yeah.

DH: Well for him it was a little piece . . .

SS: A little blip.

DH: In the great big . . .

SS: Mess . . .

DH: Picture. Okay that's all I have.

SS: That's all you have. Okay I came across (this is so weird) as I was preparing for this I wanted to find a yellow pad (I live by these things) and I had run out. All my yellow pads have one or two pages left. So I was going through piles on my desk and I

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found this yellow pad and I pulled it out and it was a draft on the top page was a draft op-ed (which I write occasionally) about the black community questioning whether or not Obama was “black enough” and that just made me crazy (you know for all sorts of obvious reasons). So I read it and at the end in sort of a digression from the point of the piece. . . . Oh, I know, I was talking about Obama becoming a community organizer, having been raised in a white family to become a community organizer to understand what the black community the American black community is all about. And I said, “Similarly, though not for as long, I went to Mississippi in 1964 and '65 on the staff of the National Council of Negro Women to help lead a project that tried to build bridges of communication and understanding between black and white women in that beleaguered last bastion of the segregated South. Why did I do it? For several reasons...” Anyhow . . . would this be of any interest to you?

DH: Sure!

SS: Alright well I'll make it legible and send it to you.

DH: Okay that would be wonderful. I'd love to have it.

SS: Because you sort of alluded, “Why did you do this?” Questions and this was what I thought a while back.

DH: Good!

SS: Alright my questions for you: what inspired you to pursue this story? I think you answered . . .

DH: The book, what you wrote in the book. And I have to tell you that along the way everybody that I would say, give them the skeleton of the story, everybody was enthralled by it.

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SS: Really?

DH: Everybody!

SS: Why is that?

DH: I think for the same reason that I was drawn to it, and essentially maybe in some ways the same reason Marlene was drawn to it, although not exactly the same between me and Marlene. But for me, I had no concept that middle class white women were doing that sort of thing. It was certainly completely foreign from my experience or anyone that I knew. Of course I was twelve then, but certainly it isn't anything anyone in my family would have done, either my family in Pittsburgh or my family in Houston.

And when I taught, I taught when we were in Memphis I taught women studies, at U of H, the intro class, I mean at University of Memphis. And you would be amazed how many students I had even African American students that had no idea white people worked for civil rights.

SS: Really that's interesting.

DH: And . . . but this idea of the middle-class proper women, you know loads of people heard of the snick . . .

SS: kits.

DH: But not this piece.

SS: Of course we were incognito, so to speak, so I've always thought that maybe one of another reason for the interest, continuing interest, is that no one knew about it at the time. Do you think the WIMS model has any relevance for today?

DH: I think it does. And I thought Gerry's example yesterday about the abortion debate had never ever crossed my mind and it really should have because especially when

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I was in Memphis I was pretty actively kind of involved in that because we had a lot of demonstrators, that came, you know, people that would have the big posters.

SS: The pro life people.

DH: Yeah. But I think it does have some relevance. When I look at this like when you were talking about that Pink Iftar group.

SS: Right well the Arab-Israeli.

DH: Right. I think that is the key. The problem is so much attention goes to the loud and explosive pieces and people, that we probably lose sight of the fact that the vast majority really don't feel that way.

SS: I'm going to send you, if I can find the literature about the Women for Peace.

DH: Okay.

SS: Because I think it might be, it might be an interesting new or additional dimension to what you are writing about.

DH: I think it would be to draw it into here's something. In fact in the '70's at one point in the WIMS thing I've come across something that said in the 1970's there were some people that went to Ireland and tried to . . .

SS: Right.

DH: But I couldn't find any.

SS: There's a lot of this going on Debbie.

DH: Follow up on it.

SS: I think there is a huge amount going on. But it is under the radar.

End of Interview