Interview with Kathleen Sullivan

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Interviewer: Mark DePue

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DePue: Today is Wednesday, December 14, 2011. My name is Mark DePue, the Director of Oral History with the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. This morning I'm delighted to have Kathleen Sullivan on the phone. Good morning Kathleen.

Sullivan: Good morning. Thank you very much for this opportunity.

DePue: Well why don't you tell us why we're not doing this in person, which is the way I like to do things.

Sullivan: Well, it certainly would be an honor and a pleasure to get together on it, but I'm at the point in life where traveling around does not appeal to me any more, though I **loved it** when I was younger. We moved here to Naples, Florida nine years ago and the last couple years traveling has become more difficult. I appreciate very much your being able to do this on the telephone.

DePue: Well, and I think Naples, Florida is probably a much better place to be today than cold, windy and a little bit wet Springfield, Illinois today.

Sullivan: Yes. I cannot tell you how absolutely gorgeous it is down here. For probably 320 days a year it is just magnificent. We have beautiful weather and it just seems strange that more people don't move to South Florida.

DePue: Maybe we all are headed in that direction eventually. We are doing this interview because you have an important story to tell about your involvement with the Equal Rights Amendment fight, and a perspective that we don't oftentimes get, the perspective of being one of Phyllis Schlafly's lieutenants. Would that be a fair way of putting your relationship?

Sullivan: Yes. I would say that's very fair. In fact, I felt very honored to be an apprentice to somebody as outstanding as Phyllis Schlafly. She is one of the most talented people I've ever, ever had the privilege of meeting, and she was an **incredible motivator**. And not just teacher, but she gave us the just nudging and very logical reasons to take on things that we might never have attempted on our own.

DePue: Well, having said that as an introduction to this interview, today I doubt we talk at all about Mrs. Schlafly, because there's so much to talk about in your early life as well. As we always do, we like to start with when and where you were born.

Sullivan: I was born in Port of Spain, Trinidad. Port of Spain is the capital of the little island. It is only roughly about sixty miles by forty miles, basically a square with two little peninsulas on the northwest and southwest end of the island. I was the fourth generation of my family born in Trinidad. My ancestors were French, English, Irish, and had gone out to Trinidad for various reasons: some were merchants, some where in agriculture, worked in the cocoa plantations and cane field developments.

My dad and most of his family were in the shipping business. Trinidad was the very early discovery of oil in the new world and actually, prior to the oil, Sir Francis Drake discovered what is called the Pitch Lake. It's a natural asphalt lake where the asphalt just bubbles up from underneath the ground. My dad worked on the camp that did the shipping of that asphalt. So it was a very unusual but beautiful setting, very much like South Florida here; on the beach, palm trees, and we ran around on this natural black asphalt lake as a playground.

DePue: Did you mention your birthday for us?

Sullivan: I haven't yet, but my birthday is January 22, 1934.

DePue: 1934

Sullivan: Right.

DePue: How hard did the Depression years hit Trinidad?

Sullivan: I'm not really too familiar with the details. I remember my parents talking about the business then. My mother's family for instance, had a jewelry store in Port of Spain; they were French descent. And I remember them saying that

was very hard to get through, and that's natural. In depressions, people do not seek buying jewelry and china and so on as an absolutely necessity. So that was hit hard. I remember them talking about that.

But by the time I was conscious of things in the late '30s, early '40s, Trinidad was making quite a comeback as a shipping port. There were a lot of convoys that would assemble in what's referred to as the Gulf of Paria on the western end of the island, and these ships would assemble there to convoy across the Atlantic during the early days of World War II. My dad was very involved in that, so my early memory is very much on the war situation and the rather important role that Trinidad played because of the shipping situation. There were British but also American and Australian shipping operations there and by then, the oilfields on Trinidad were really very, very fast moving and developing. One was Texaco Company, and we lived on that camp for a while. So it was a very busy little island and **very** cosmopolitan.

DePue: Before we get too much farther, can you give me your father and your mother's names.

Sullivan: My dad's name was Gerald with a G, Gerald Taffee, (pronounced taff) T-a-f-f-double e, O'Connor. My mother's name was Dorothy Marie Barcant, a French name, B-a-r-c-a-n-t.

DePue: B-a-r-c-a-n-t?

Sullivan: Correct.

DePue: Was your father's last name an o-r or an e-r?

Sullivan: o-r.

DePue: Well that sounds pretty darn Irish to me.

Sullivan: Yes. His father and grandfather were Irish. They were from Ireland but actually his grandfather went out to Trinidad in the British Army. He was the doctor with the British Army and he decided to stay in Trinidad.

DePue: And that was several generations before you came along?

Sullivan: Yes. I was the fourth of that line and the fourth on my mother's side also.

DePue: Well this is during a time when Trinidad is still part of the British Empire.

Sullivan: Yes.

DePue: Would you have considered your parents, your father especially, as being part of the ruling class at the time?

Sullivan: No, because there was a definite distinction between the British administrative level, the Colonial British authorities. They went out there for a certain period of time, whether it be two years, four years, six years. Those of us who lived there year round—and from one generation to the next—actually considered ourselves Creoles. We were European descent, but we were definitely very committed and bound to the West Indian—Trinidad and Tobago, the second little island—and we first and foremost considered ourselves Trinidadian. We lived in a British colony but we considered ourselves Trinidadian, not English or British.

DePue: Can you tell us more then, about the demography of the island.

Sullivan: The island has three sets of mountains. One goes across the very top, which is the tallest; one in the middle and one in the southern end of the island. [Christopher] Columbus discovered the island, I believe on his third trip to the New World; as he came toward the island from the east there, and seeing these three mountaintops as he was approaching them, that gave it its name of Trinity, Trinidad. That's where the name originated; Columbus himself called it that. Then several years later, as Sir Alfred Drake and the British Navy came out more often and did more of the actual establishing of businesses there and brought people out, I don't recall the years or how it corresponded with the American migration but it probably was along the same timeframe.

DePue: How about the breakdown of the population when you were growing up?

Sullivan: The population was a third India Indian. These were from the sub-continent of India and came out as what was referred to as indentured slaves in the early days. That is, they came out to work in the sugarcane and different industries—cocoa and also in the shipping—and they came for a certain length of time. I remember them talking about the contracts being three years, five years, whatever, and then they had a choice of going back—the Indians did.

I do not know what reason actually was given or why the ones that came from Africa were very different contracts, they were outright… They came to Trinidad and they stayed there. They didn't have the option of going back. I would imagine that had to do with whoever the leaders were of the, you might say, representatives back in India and Africa; it was probably set by those people as to just how they wanted to arrange. Did they take them back, did they want to have them stay in Trinidad?

India, as far as we can observe in a century or two, they did an awful lot of inter-education. For one thing, they wanted to speak English also. And I feel very strongly that probably one of the greatest things the British Colonial Empire did was to teach English wherever they went, because in today's world, especially with the communications we have, it's amazing how many jobs are handled now from their own continent. They can work in business—

enter communications with anybody anywhere in the world; to a great degree, I think that's because they are fluent in English.

DePue: So you mentioned one third Indian, about one third or more of a black, African population?

Sullivan: Yeah, there were about a third that were African descent, and the other third was really very mixed. We had a large population of Orientals, Chinese mainly. I can't recall too many Japanese, but a lot of Chinese, Indonesian. It was just all mixed up. There was quite a bit of intermarriage between all the different people. The whole population, when I was there, was under one million people, so it was not an extraordinarily heavy populated little island. We went to school together. It was quite integrated.

DePue: How large was the white population?

Sullivan: Oh, about a third. The Indians were a third, the African descent were about a third, and the other third was just a mixture of everything.

DePue: You mentioned the mixture of everything. You're 100 percent Caucasian it sounds like. How large was that population?

Sullivan: Oh. The Caucasian population was only 3 to 5 percent.

DePue: How did the economics between the various demographic groups break out?

Sullivan: Well that was very interesting because each group had sort of their specialties. The Indians were into small business. They were merchants and they were in all different… They had pretty much their own individual villages, separate from the African. There were two or three main towns back then and the Indians were not that many in the main towns; they kept to themselves more. By the way, it was a Hindu religious affiliation for these Indians, as I remember. I just remember observing it. I don't know what was prevalent other than Hindu, at that time, but the ones we had in Trinidad with that were definitely Hindu.

The African descent had their own villages also, but they would be more in the main towns also. The Africans were more into the general workforce; my dad's shipping department for instance, hired mainly African descent. Now, it could be that physically that was hard labor, and they really could do it. I remember my dad—they loved him. He would take me down on the pier and I would walk up and down and go onboard the ship and so on, and I knew a lot of the stevedores. Dad was their boss but he was their friend. He was very personally attentive to them. If they had problems, I remember them coming and you know, Boss, I spent my whole check and so on and I have nothing to live on, and dad would help them out. That was a common occurrence.

So I did not grow up at all with a feeling of segregation. When I came to the States, it seemed so strange that there was the amount of antagonism that I observed, different to what I was brought up with. I remember when I went to visit in Trinidad one time, it was the height of the Black Power movement in this country. We had one radio station down there then in the '50s—Radio Distribution Trinidad—and they were giving a news item from America, talking about the Black Power movement. I remember laughing with my family and saying, Well, we don't have to worry about that down here; that's all we have. And it was true. There were very well-to-do Indians, as well as Africans. We had a big Syrian population too, I remember. We all lived next door to each other in Port of Spain and we went to school together and so on.

DePue: Would you consider your family middle class then, growing up?

Sullivan: Yes, yes. We were not at all wealthy. My older brother actually paid my passage for me to come up to New York. He paid part of it and my uncle paid the other, because he wanted me to come up and help. He traveled a lot. He wanted me to come and help. I was an au pair for his five children; we did a lot of that, helped out each others families and so on, and it was a marvelous opportunity for me to come to America. I think I mentioned to you, it didn't faze me at all that I was going to miss the final senior exam. The opportunity superseded that.

DePue: Well that's a little bit ahead of the story. I'd like to take you back to your time in Trinidad. Tell me a little bit more about the neighborhood that you grew up in, Port of Spain. Was it a mixed neighborhood?

Sullivan: Oh yeah, very much so. It would be equivalent to suburban. The houses were on, I'd say hundred-foot lots. Rush Street was the actual location that I lived in town; it was just to the west of a big park that they called Queens Park, a big public park there and people went walking around the park. It was a big social get-together and yes, there were all different races. One thing I remember for instance: the Syrians had many relatives. They not only had several children, but they would have relatives living with them; there were two houses with like fifteen living in each house. That's just their custom. They owned two stores—general goods you might say—and were fairly well off, but they lived one block away. I was with their children a lot. We went to the same school together and so on. There were also Indians, everything you could think of, including some Americans by the way. (chuckles) It was really quite amazing.

DePue: I wonder if you could tell us a little bit more about the grade school and the middle school that you went to. Was it a private or a public school?

Sullivan: Basically, we thought of it as a private school. I started at San Fernando, which is the second largest city. The school down in San Fernando, as well as

in Port of Spain, was called St. Joseph's Convent; they used the English term, convent. It was a girl's school. And the boy's school was right across the street, so we did have some, let's say interaction, but as far as classroom and so on, they were separate.

DePue: Does that mean it was a Catholic school?

Sullivan: Yes it was. But then as I was nine or ten, I realized it was not completely, but about 80 percent subsidized by the government—tax money. So it was quite phenomenal. The taxpayer paid for it but the nuns running the school seemed to have quite autonomous control of the school. We certainly had religious classes, we had math, we had benediction, we wore uniforms. It was beautifully structured; the school was divided into what they call four houses. Each class, each grade had a group of say eight or ten that belonged to each of these four groups, and that was the intramural competitive situation, whether it was for learning or for sports and so on. So we had our own intramural operation within the school. I was a prefect at one of the four groups for three or four years. The last three years I was there, there were only two of us Caucasian girls in a class of forty-five.

DePue: Was English the only language or were there other languages that were spoken on the island?

Sullivan: Only English as far as I knew. There probably were some others, but that would be like newcomers that came in. In general, everybody spoke English. In the stores, in business, in my dad's work and so on, English was the language.

DePue: What I'd like to turn to next then is whatever memories you might have about what was going on in Trinidad during the war. Maybe I should start with this. What was your parents' view towards the British Empire? Did they see themselves as proud members of the British Empire?

Sullivan: Oh yes, very much so. Many of our young people who were in their late teens or twenties went to join up with our Royal Air Force, the British Air Force, or the Canadian Royal Air Force. I remember those two particular, because both were Air Force. The others did go into the Army. I'm not real clear of memories to do with British Navy situations; it's kind of curious there because of Trinidad being so involved with shipping, but the shipping was more in the merchant type of shipping and in the supply routes. My dad was involved with the arrangements and the assembly of these convoys which were carrying ammunition and merchandise back and forth.

DePue: Well, it sounds to me like those convoys would be a nice fat target for German subs, and I know the subs were working in the western Atlantic.

Sullivan: You're right. So they must have had the support troops around these convoys looking for the subs. I just am not clear. I don't recall the people from

Trinidad going over to join the Navy, but we certainly were immersed in the shipping end of the whole war effort. A lot of my relatives and a lot of people I knew did go over to England and joined in the Air Force and in the Army.

DePue: Would the citizens of Trinidad at the time have been subject to the draft as well?

Sullivan: I don't think they were. I do not recall any draft being discussed. It's only after I came up here that I realized there was such a thing as a draft.

DePue: Did your father think about joining the military at all?

Sullivan: Well no, because for one thing he was quite a bit older. He was born in 1902, and in the First World War, he was at school in Ireland; he had to stay there I think, a year longer than you normally would because he couldn't get a passage back to Trinidad. So he was in his late teens then, in the First World War, but by the time of the Second World War he would have been in his forties or fifties; it was the younger ones that were going, not the ones of forty and fifty.

DePue: It also sounds like he would have been very important because of his role in the shipping industry at the time. Was that right?

Sullivan: Yes. Particularly in the merchant shipping situation. At one time he worked with the Alcoa Company. Trinidad was a terminal for bauxite. Bauxite is the raw material of aluminum, which was just really beginning to get used in many, many things. He worked at that terminal for several years, and I think that was probably at the height of the war years.

DePue: How significant was Trinidad's oil industry at the time?

Sullivan: My memory is, it was quite large, but I really have no idea, because I didn't have any concept of comparing it with what else. I know Texaco did build a big refinery in Trinidad; they would bring the raw material over from Venezuela to refine it in Trinidad and trans-ship it. That's when they discovered the use of the residue of the oil industry, the bitumen—I think I explained that to you—that's when the asphalt lake[1] became not as important as it was before, because this residue from the oil refineries was easier to use and move around for roads and so on, than the asphalt. Ever since, bitumen has been one of the main products of the oil industry. A lot of people don't even realize how big a product that is, but all the roads and everything in this country now is that residue.

DePue: Yeah, they drive on it every day.

[1] In Trinidad there is an enormous lake of naturally-occurring asphalt, a derivative of crude oil. The costs of the extraction, movement and use of the asphalt make the bitumen from oil refining economically attractive.

Sullivan: Yeah. (chuckles)

DePue: I wanted to talk a little bit about the political views of your family as well, if we could.

Sullivan: Yes. My recollection—that's where I mentioned to you—Dad took me around to a lot of the meetings with the unions, with the political activists and so on. The Indians and the Africans were the two main political parties, and the other third sort of worked with both groups. The competition was more between the Indian candidates and the African candidates. As things went on and after I left the island, the Indians got, I would say a clear heavy majority in the administration and the government. I don't know exactly how or what caused that, but it probably was their involvement with the business end more and the leadership. I kind of lost track of just who the different ones were, but they had some characters that were hauled off for different unsavory things. It's been sort of a very challenging, tumultuous thing, I think ever since.

Trinidad now, I understand, has a lot of problems with the drug trafficking—not that they grow it in Trinidad so much—but they trans-ship it from different Latin America countries—the local people there. It's a big problem I've been told. I still have some relatives there but I'm not in constant contact with them, let's say.

DePue: How close is Trinidad to the northern coast of Venezuela?

Sullivan: There are two points—one from Trinidad and a peninsula from Venezuela, and it comes within like about three miles of each other.

DePue: This is very close. It's very easy to get the boats across those straits then.

Sullivan: Yes, but that part of Venezuela is almost uninhabited, or it was at that time, and I'm not sure why that is. There wasn't much going on for fifty miles of that northeast part when I was young. What it is today I'm not sure.

DePue: Okay. I want to take you back to those years right before you came to the United States and you're still a fairly young girl. This would have been after World War II when independence movements throughout a lot of places in Great Britain were building. Was there some talk about independence during that time?

Sullivan: Oh yes, yes. Trinidad and Tobago became an independent country, I think in the late 40's, three or four years after the war.

DePue: I don't want to make too much of this. I read, 1962 on one website.

Sullivan: Was it that late?

DePue: Well again, that's what I read. Do you know if either the Indian or the African population would have been more inclined, pushing harder for independence?

Sullivan: Well, I really don't remember.

DePue: What would be your family's views towards the subject be at the time?

Sullivan: See, I left there in '50 and then left permanently in '52, but my recollection is that it was sort of inevitable. And all the islands. Jamaica became this independent country and different ones down the West Indian. Now, we still were connected with England for defense purposes. I think even today still, they have that agreement, and certain trade purposes. So there is still—it's not completely independent. There's still some contacts.

I don't recall which of the two main groups was more influential or more forward than the other. In general, the Indians were more assertive and the African groups—this is my recollection now, things could be completely reversed or upside down—the Africans were more laid back and kind of went along. As an example, African descendants were great in celebrating things. The famous carnival, which is a highlight in Trinidad. They party and the steel bands and so on, goes on for two months before carnival date.

DePue: Is that Easter, the Mardi Gras?

Sullivan: The Mardi Gras, yeah, which is the weekend before Ash Wednesday.

DePue: Right.

Sullivan: Monday and Tuesday is a general party across the whole island; everybody celebrates. But it's more so among the African descent and the third that are all mixed up. My recollection is the Indians didn't particularly get into that Mardi Gras spirit.

DePue: Well, I would think in part—I don't want to speculate too much—but Mardi Gras was very much tied to Easter, which is very much a Christian holiday. Hindus probably would not have been interested.

Sullivan: Correct, correct. I think it was the religious connection probably had a lot to do with it. But the rest of the island, you heard steel band music just around everywhere for a month or two before Mardi Gras. The competition would be such, down in the camps, so we had tons of it. In other words, they are very party-oriented. We were all in it. I organized the big float for teenagers when I was fifteen and it was sort of the thing to do.

DePue: Well it sounds like you had some fun with it.

Sullivan: We did. We had lots of fun.

DePue: Was your family religious?

Sullivan: Oh yes, yes. We were very faithful Catholics. Actually the schools did a wonderful job, not just as far as the religious faith being taught, but in the actual education level. We had many what they call Cambridge Scholarships awarded to each of our schools. There was one Presbyterian school I knew of, there were two or three Episcopal Anglican schools, the Catholic school, and there were some that were just government schools, that I remember. And bear in mind the three main towns; the rest of the island at that time were really just villages. So the schools in those villages were very localized. For instance, I don't recall them busing kids from village to village or into the towns. I'm not really sure. I wouldn't be surprised if a family didn't move into the towns as the kids got older and they wanted to have the kids in school. But the schools that were run were exceptionally good. It was interesting to me, when I moved to America, that my level of material covered and so on, was really the equivalent of not just a full high school degree but even from college content.

DePue: How else would you feel that schools in Trinidad were different from American schools?

Sullivan: Their discipline was very strong. Now I don't know what it is today but back then, the discipline was very good.

DePue: I'm talking now about your high school years, and this would have been in Port of Spain. Did you get involved with any extracurricular activities?

Sullivan: Oh yeah. I played basketball. I did artwork. I was painting and drawing—the club. My best friend in that area—I painted with her a lot—was a Hindu gal. We were very good friends. I was into a lot of sports with my dad and my family. They played in this big public park. We didn't have the intramural school sports that they have up here, because there weren't that many schools, period, but I did go to a lot of things with the adults. There was much more interaction between teenagers and adults than you find here. It would be very usual to have multi-age groups at functions. Whether it was a wedding or any family function and so on, the kids were definitely included to a much greater degree. We didn't have separate teenage type of activities the way we have here.

DePue: Did you enjoy the academics of the school?

Sullivan: Yes I did but I didn't appreciate how good it was.

DePue: What subjects were you drawn to?

Sullivan: Yes, definitely didn't appreciate how good. Someone who had made an incredible impression on me was one teacher we had for one year. She was the daughter of the governor of the island.

DePue: Do you remember her name?

Sullivan: Oh my, I have it written someplace but I don't recall it offhand. I can visualize her though, and she spoke with a beautiful English accent and so on. She taught us about English literature. She taught two classes on the sonnets and I thought, What are they? I've never forgotten, because she would keep saying, Some day, years down the line, you're going to remember what we're talking about here today. Now I don't remember exactly what it was, but I sure remember her. She gave you—she gave me anyway—a desire to look into history and what people said before, and were they applicable, and what could you learn from it and what could you try and copy from it. So we had some very outstanding role models, I guess is the bottom line. The situation here is there's just so many more people and everything, but I sure wish today that we had more stress on terrific role models for the kids.

DePue: Did you work while you were in the high school years?

Sullivan: Yes. I was a very good seamstress. I made clothes. At ten and twelve, I was making clothes for myself and my family, and I actually developed a sewing business and was compensated for it. I made wedding dresses. I was trying to remember what we charged for that at the time, but I don't exactly. I think some of the ball gowns—because there's lots of socialites down there—that would run about thirty-five, forty dollars, which in those days was pretty good income. I loved it. I enjoyed it thoroughly. We didn't have the facility, the stores, to provide fancy things and so on, so the homemade or handmade things were appreciated. I took advantage of that because I really loved doing it.

I made clothes for my six kids just for the fun of it. They grew up with mom's prom dresses as part of their growing up.

DePue: You mentioned this one teacher that had a powerful influence on you. Who else in your early years had maybe the strongest influence on you?

Sullivan: There were two or three nuns. One was a local Trinidadian nun and two others were Irish. Their dedication—and you might say prodding—to grow up, to be mature, was very… One actually taught me a lot of the sewing too, so I had great respect for her. She also taught home economics, which I loved, and I've thanked her for fifty-eight years for that, because I still do all our cooking. (chuckles) Things like that are very valuable in many ways. Besides saving money, you can show a tremendous amount of attention to your spouse and children and grandchildren by doing something special for them. That's not done very often up here now, I've observed. It's much more, Let's throw a pizza in the oven or let's go down to the closest drive-in. But fixing a special meal and knowing the basics of cooking has been a real, real joy for me personally and for our family.

DePue: I wonder if you can share a story or two, of your years growing up in Trinidad. Any come to mind?

Sullivan: Oh my. In general, it was very good memories. My mom and dad did not get along very well. My mom was a worrywart and she didn't share dad's general interests in the sports and different things. I was the oldest of three girls. I had an older brother but I was the eldest girl, so I filled in there. That was probably one of the greatest assets, because by sharing with my dad's interest in leadership, I think gave me extraordinary confidence of dealing with adults. That really helped me once I moved up here and got very active in civic things and so on. I was familiar with working with grownups, of being in on organizing and making plans and so on. In a way, it was a very beneficial opportunity for me, out of what you might say was a negative situation. I feel sorry that my mom did not share more of it, but had it not happened that way, I probably wouldn't have had the opportunity that I did. So it's a positive thing that came out of what was not a very good situation.

Today they call it a dysfunctional partnership, but there never, never was any thought of separation or so on; they just battled with words. I didn't like it at all. In fact when I got married I made a vow to myself, when I was walking up the aisle, that I would never, never, never argue or fight with my husband, and after fifty-eight years we never have.

DePue: I'm not sure very many couples can say that. I want to ask you just a couple questions. While you're in high school and specifically, what you saw as your future, what you aspired to.

Sullivan: Getting married. I absolutely wanted to marry a wonderful man, taller than I was, and a good Catholic, that we were on the same wavelength thinking-wise. Fortunately, my husband felt the same way. He is quite a bit older than I am—thirteen years—but as soon as we met, we sort of knew. In fact, I think he knew faster than I did even. That was just the most wonderful thing in the world, having a partner and sharing life with somebody that just fit what I was looking for.

DePue: Okay, well that's probably a good place then, to talk about the decision to come to the United States, even though—as you mentioned very briefly before—you didn't really finish high school. So walk us through that process of deciding to come to the States, and how you decided not to finish high school.

Sullivan: Well in Trinidad, if you had the opportunity to come to the United States, that was a premiere opportunity. You really looked at it as something unique and everything else could be postponed, put aside, whatever.

DePue: Why such strong feelings about coming to the United States?

Sullivan: Because America was recognized—and I still recognize it—as the most wonderful country in the world. That doesn't mean it's perfect, but we dreamed of the opportunities. And remember, my dad worked with many American companies, so I did have exposure to American business. Some of my relatives were up here in Canada. My older brother had gone to school in Canada. At the time he helped send me up, he was working in Venezuela at one of the oilfields, and he had funds that he could do it when my mom and dad did not. They had three younger ones still at home. And when this opportunity for me to come up and help out, I had no idea if I was going to just be here three months—I came on a visitor's visa—but while I was here, I began to realize how valuable a visa was, and what I needed to do to change it from a visitor's visa to an immigration visa.

When the summer was over and my uncle came back from—he was out in Bahrain, in the Middle East—it was getting cold up north. I didn't like the cold at all, so I went down to Brownsville, Texas, to live with a family who were the American Consul in Trinidad a few years before. They had three daughters about my age, and they invited me to come down there and spend the fall semester there, which I did, and I was able to sign up in a junior college down there: Texas Southmost College. They didn't care whether I had a high school diploma or not, I was such a sort of new type of individual that they didn't meet many of. Oh, came from a British colony and seemed to have the lessons that they considered equivalent to high school, so they took me in. I went to one semester of college down there; enjoyed it thoroughly.

DePue: What was the college again?

Sullivan: Texas Southmost College.

DePue: Southmost?

Sullivan: Southmost.

DePue: Okay, interesting.

Sullivan: It is the most southern college in Brownsville, Texas. I lived with this family and he was the Consul in Matamoros on the border. So he got me an immigration visa, instead of my visitor's visa. Then when it warmed up up north, I went back up north to my uncle and aunt, and spent the second summer there.

DePue: Well, I want to take you back and put you on the spot here. You said you just were very much interested in going to the United States, because it was such—I don't know if you used the word wonderful—but I wondered if you could be more specific. What was it about the United States that was such a lure for you? Was it that it was such a wealthy place or was it the political freedoms, what was it?

Sullivan: Opportunities, yes. If you tried something and it didn't work out, you tried something else. I realized by seventeen that Trinidad was very limiting. By then I pretty much knew everybody that was down there, not just socially but even business-wise. I was not going to go into… Well, I didn't think about civic activity or political life there, because women didn't do that down there at all, and being a Caucasian woman, you simply wouldn't have got voted to be anything. So realizing that, Trinidad was limiting, so America was the land of opportunity. I mean, we knew that. We read a lot of American magazines, literature, by then shortwave radio had come in and it was just that emigration tug and I wanted to go up and see what it was all about.

DePue: When we had our pre-interview you mentioned the difference in the way you graduate from high school in Trinidad versus the United States.

Sullivan: You didn't have a graduation—let's say—event. You took the Senior Cambridge Exam in July and you heard in about November, because their school year was January to December, by the way. You took the exam in the summer and of course it's summer down there all the time. You heard in about November, December, if you passed on that and if you got a grade one, two or three. Well, I left in April, so I didn't even take the exams, and then I spent two summers up here.

Now, bear in mind, and I'm very happy to say this. All the time that I'm here for the summer up in New York, I'm looking around to see if I'm meeting a possible spouse. There's no question about that.

DePue: And you would have been seventeen, eighteen at the time?

Sullivan: Yes. Seventeen the first year, eighteen the second. That was my goal, but it was going to have to be somebody that really fit my dreams. I wasn't just going to get married to get married. The thought of getting married just to be able to stay in the States was not there; that's something that's very different.

DePue: Well I definitely want to ask you more about meeting Jerry and how that relationship started but again, it's a little bit earlier than I wanted to, because I'm interested. You came—it sounds like to—was it New York?

Sullivan: Yes.

DePue: I want to hear your first impressions of the United States, having these very definite views of why you wanted to come here in the first place.

Sullivan: Well, my very first impression was looking out the airplane window and seeing that thread of magnificent light called New York. I thought wow, never dreamed of anything like that. Back then we didn't have jets. It was a nine-hour flight from Trinidad, a long time, but it was just a dreamland. You know, it's like a kid going to Disney World today I guess. It was very, very extraordinary.

My aunt and uncle were very good to me; they took me around. When my uncle was away on his travel, my aunt took me around, introduced me to a lot of different women's clubs and church groups. I was into the adult associations right away, and that partly was because they knew me and they knew I was accustomed to that. Looking back, probably that was maybe the most unusual thing in my case, that I may have been young in years, but I was probably five years more mature than my actual age. I was an avid reader. I really started going into taking advantage of all kinds of things.

I even went on some of the game shows in New York. That was absolutely hilarious, you know these—oh, I forget the first one I went on now. It was interesting that those people thought my accent, which was more pronounced then than it is now, was unique. They liked having somebody on that had an unusual accent and spoke about coming from a little rock of an island down off of Venezuela. Most people never heard of it. And the fact that I was educated was probably a surprise to them, because back then, they didn't even know what the West Indies were—except for the few that go on, tourists and so on—the rank and file. And remember, TV was just starting up. The TV was six inches in my aunt and uncle's neighborhood, and not too many people had them. So to go on a game show in those days was unique. I never won a huge, big prize but it sure was fun.

DePue: Did you have a sense of the size of the United States when you came here?

Sullivan: Yes, because geography was one of my favorite subjects, so I loved to just peruse maps. So yes I did, and I was familiar with the different states. When, for instance, I got invited to go down to Brownsville, Texas, I realized that was practically opposite, or the southern end of a triangle, about as far away from Scarsdale, New York as if I went to California. It was years later before I ever got out to California, but yes I did.

Also, my very first summer up there, I really started paying attention to the governmental structure. I remember going to meetings in Westchester County, which at that time were far more—let's say traditional, if not conservative—where today Westchester County is very, very liberal.

DePue: What was it that attracted you about American politics of all things?

Sullivan: I think it was the opportunity to interact and have a voice. I just really was drawn to that.

DePue: In a way that you wouldn't have had that opportunity in Trinidad?

Sullivan: No, no, because back then, particularly in foreign countries, women did not emerge in leadership positions. In Trinidad, I don't think they've ever had any Caucasian women elected down there, because the sheer numbers just don't work out that way. Women are involved and they are active, but not necessarily in elected positions. And it's not that I was aiming at being

elected, but rather aiming at having a voice, getting in on discussions and so on.

DePue: Okay. Well in the next session we'll probably talk a lot more about getting involved in a much more meaningful way in American politics, but a couple other subjects I would like to kind of finish up with today. The first one is to have you tell us about your experience as an au pair. Am I pronouncing that right?

Sullivan: Yes. That was a natural for me.

DePue: Tell us a little bit about your uncle to begin with here.

Sullivan: My uncle was very close to my dad. They went to boarding school in Ireland at the same time. He was a manufacturer's representative for one of the oilfield companies in America, from Texas. I forget the name of it now.

DePue: What was his first name?

Sullivan: Dermot O'Connor. He would come down and visit us in Trinidad a lot. I knew him. His wife was from Louisiana, a very delightful, wonderful lady. Taking care of children was a natural for me. When my youngest brother was born, I practically raised him. He was twelve years younger and he was like my toy, and he was crushed when I left Trinidad. I left him behind. So I knew how to take care of kids. I would go after school… Come to think of it, you asked about after school activities. At least once, sometimes twice a week, I would go and help another aunt and uncle from my mother's side of the family with taking care of her children. She had three altogether. I would take care of them as they arrived. It was a natural for me, to know how to handle babies, take care of little ones, as far back as I can remember, seven, eight, ten years old.

DePue: How old were your uncle and aunt's children?

Sullivan: They were like ten, eight. I think ten was the oldest, and they went down to a year and a half. There were five of them. So it fit in very well. I was seventeen then and they knew I knew how to take care of kids, besides the fact I could cook and I could sew. I was a mother's helper.

DePue: Were you expected to be teaching them some of their lessons as well?

Sullivan: I don't know if I would say expected, because they were in school, but I certainly helped them. We just did things that were learning experiences, and painting was one of them. The eldest daughter actually became quite an artist and has done fabulous things. She's now in her sixties. You know those sort of things we just did more of, because of the intergenerational activities, which you don't see as much of today.

DePue: Did you attend church services with them as well?

Sullivan: Oh sure, yeah.

DePue: Did you feel like more of an extension of the family than an employee of the family?

Sullivan: Oh, definitely. In fact, I don't remember that they even paid me. I was just part of the family, and they gave me the opportunity to come up here. I lived at the house; I had a room. They had a Cape Cod type house, I had a room to myself, and so my compensation was they're providing for me and giving me the chance to come up here. Then I got a job the second summer working at a department store in White Plains, and was making the grand salary of thirty-six dollars a week. Isn't that fabulous?

DePue: Were you a clerk there?

Sullivan: Yeah. In fact, the joke in the family was I would get pink slips because I'd spend more than I earned every week. So there was very much more interfamily and intergenerational communication and help and so on. It was not based on financial compensation nearly as much as it is today.

DePue: When you first came here, was it your intention to go back to Trinidad?

Sullivan: Yes, yes, but it was open ended. I had complete faith that the good lord was going to put somebody in my path that was meant for me and all I needed to do was keep looking around.

DePue: Well, this is a perfect opportunity then, to turn to that subject. How did you end up meeting your future husband?

Sullivan: Well that really is a storybook situation. He was visiting his sister who lived across the street from my aunt and uncle. Sunday morning I came out to have my uncle—I thought—take me to Mass, and instead Jerry's brother in-law was pulling out of their driveway. So my uncle said, Oh, can you take Kathleen to Mass? He said, Oh sure, have her get in. So I got in next to John, my husband's brother in-law. Then out comes Jerry. In his version of the story he says, "I walked out of the house and here's this gorgeous thing sitting in the car that I was supposed to get into. Oh, well, who are you?"

Now he knew my uncle and aunt, and so that's how we met, going to church. I went to Mass that morning, that was a Sunday. At that time, I had some relatives that were up in New York and their oldest son was in the hospital for surgery. So Monday, I went into the hospital.

Oh, I skipped Sunday afternoon. He had his sister call up my aunt and uncle and say,Would Kathleen O'Connor like to go out to Long Island with me? He was going to go meet a friend from University of Michigan where he went to graduate school. And they asked me and I said, Oh sure, that would be great. So we went out and had dinner with his friend and went to a place

where they had a little dance floor. Jerry wasn't the world's best dancer, but he was very impressive. And we went back home. That was Sunday night, the day we met.

On Monday, I went into New York City to see my cousin who was in the hospital. Unknown to me, Jerry kept meeting every train from 5:30 in the evening. I finally came out on the train at 11:00 and this voice said, "Kathleen." And I turned and here was Jerry and I said, "Oh." He said, "Well, I thought you weren't coming home tonight. I've been meeting every train since 5:30." We laughed and he said, "I'll drive you home," which was about a mile away, to my aunt's house. On the way he said, "Would you like to go out for a drink?" Now this might sound horrifying to you. I was seventeen, eighteen actually at that point. I said no, I'm really very tired. But the night before I had gone out to dinner with him and I had a drink and that was perfectly fine. My mom and dad would let me have a drink of champagne at certain occasions in Trinidad. It was no big deal.

On Monday, when he met me at 11:00, I said no, I'm really tired, to hear him tell the story now it's rather funny. He said, "Boy, was I deflated." Here I had spent all these hours and she said, No, I'm too tired. So he took me to my aunt's house. He said, "I suddenly mustered enough courage to say, 'Can I write to you?' because I was leaving." He was leaving to go back to St. Louis the next day. I was leaving to go back to Trinidad at the end of the week. He said, Can I write to you? I said, Oh sure, sure, and gave him my address and off I went, back to Trinidad.

We wrote each other about once a month and after about six months, my side of the story is, well, I dated just about everybody that was eligible down there and I needed to make a decision. If I was going to hold onto my immigration visa, I should go back to the States and renew it, and besides, I think I'll go back up and meet that Jerry Sullivan again and see what he is really like.

So I did come back up in—let's see—again the end of April, which was two years from the first time. I guess I was nineteen by then. He took one week's vacation after I was there about ten days, and came to New York. We got together four or five times at our relatives' house, and we had one big date out: went down to see "The King and I" on Broadway. His side of the story is, he says, After that date, I had so much invested, I had to ask her to marry me. And my side is, Oh, I knew I had you completely lassoed, and that was it.

Well, he didn't ask me before he left at the end of that week, but the next day he called up on the phone. He was with a friend in St. Louis and he said, You've got to excuse me, I have to go make a telephone call. He called me on the phone and asked me to marry him and I said yes. And I knew at that point that that was the way it was meant to be. So it's very, very wonderful, looking back on the situation we have had, but here's a key thing. Having both

grown up in the same faith-based atmosphere, we both feel is the foundation of our compatibility. We've never had differences of basic thinking and values and morals. Those nuns out in Trinidad did a fabulous job of imparting what was important in life.

DePue: Were your parents at all concerned that Jerry was thirteen years older than you?

Sullivan: No, because I think they too knew that was going to happen, particularly my dad. They were in England at the time we got engaged. They were going to be coming back through New York in August and going back to Trinidad, so we said, Why don't we get married on their stopover. That was a surprise to them. Do you really think you should get married that fast? Maybe you should come back to Trinidad. I said no, no, no, we'll come down and visit after we're married. It just seemed simpler, and so we got married at my aunt's house.

Actually, I had two aunts and uncles that lived in Scarsdale and I would sort of go back and forth between them. It's a real wonderful, wonderful life, a wonderful story, and a real melding of cultures and showing that in a nutshell, I would say the value of dreams, because if you do have strong beliefs and strong dreams, you can more work toward that than just sort of waiting for things to happen. That's what we've tried to instill in our kids and it's worked fairly well, but we've had some roundabouts. But they're doing very well and we have thirty-four grandkids now and ten great grandkids.

DePue: You said you had six children.

Sullivan: Yes.

DePue: I wonder if you could tell me a little bit more about Jerry. You mentioned that he had to go back to St. Louis. Does that mean he wasn't from the New York area when you first met?

Sullivan: That's right. He was just visiting there. He is an actuary and was working in St. Louis. He had just moved to St. Louis while I was back in Trinidad, so he'd only been in St. Louis a year—or less than a year I think—when we got married. Before that, he worked in Chicago and South Bend, Indiana when he first got out of graduate school. To go back before that, when he finished high school, he was in the Jesuit order for six years and got out of that—left the Jesuits in '44, quite a while before we met even.

Today, I think we're both very pleased. My side of the story again, is that he went into the Jesuits to keep you out of circulation until I grew up. He doesn't disagree with that, but also, the confusion in the church, and particularly Jesuits today, would have been very difficult for him and

obviously, the lord had other plans. And so our life was a storybook, a story that was meant to be, and we are very, very blessed.

Now, transferring that—which would be the next interview probably—into my civic activity here, was almost a natural. You meet somebody like Phyllis and you can see where we hit it off right away.

DePue: Well let's finish with this question then. Give us a little bit more—paint a picture of Jerry's personality and his character.

Sullivan: He's very much of a thinker. He's a mathematician type of thinking person, so that's his base. He's very sound and reasoning. He had a very sound educational background and had morals and values, so I respected him right off. There was no question that he was the mature person I was looking for, besides the fact that he was six-foot-four and very good looking. (laughs) You'll see that from some of the pictures I sent you. We just made a great partnership, because his work, an actuary, it's rather a boring job. He worked mainly in pension plans, not insurance which is where most actuaries work. But he'd say he came home from work to find out what went on in the world today, and he thoroughly enjoyed all the sports activities, his kids, his four boys, our four boys were in, but I did too. So we enjoyed our kids, we enjoyed their activities, that was the main thing of our life. We both enjoyed the civic involvement. He was very encouraging to me, to keep involved and to do things.

He jokes now about the fact that one of these days he's going to get me to go back and get my GED. And I said no Honey, it's the college of hard knocks. I did get to be a delegate to the electoral college for [Ronald] Reagan, in '84, so I have that certificate mounted. I tell the kids, "Besides your six degrees, here's my degree." So we have a lot of fun and joke about that. We're just very compatible, which believe me, I realize is most unusual today.

One observation that I think has hurt that partnership goal or ideal, is that somehow the competition between spouses seemed to develop to where it has become more paramount than getting along. It's your job and my job and you do this and I do that, so it's a competitive situation and even starts out that way. They don't get married as young, because they want to get their own personal this, that or the other first. I think that's very unfortunate, not only from the fact that I've lived the other, but also just observation. I mean a good partnership and marriage is doing for the other one, and if both do that, it just works out beautifully, rather than competition.

DePue: This is a good place to finish off that part of your life. We can certainly pick up these themes the next time we meet, but to close the loop on the whole story of you as an immigrant to the United States—and we don't need to take too much time on this—but I wonder if you could reflect on when you thought

of yourself more as an American than a Trinidadian—I think that's the term—and when you became a U.S. citizen.

Sullivan: I became a citizen within a few months of moving to St. Louis, after we were married. No, it might have been a year. I think we had our eldest son before I became a citizen. I thought of myself as an American from the time I decided to move back here and marry Jerry. Now, the question, what if the marriage didn't work out? Would I have stayed here? Probably, but the two sort of went together and there wasn't any reason that it shouldn't or wouldn't, so that didn't really seem like a major thing to think about. I just was extremely happy and eager to take advantage of all the opportunities, meet people, get involved, and make a difference. See, we were raised with the idea of, You did the best you can to make the world a better place than when you arrived.

DePue: I think that's a great way to finish for today. The next couple times we meet it's going to be talking about how you specifically sought to make a difference.

Sullivan: Okay. So you'll get some of the pictures.

DePue: Thank you very much. Okay. I'm looking forward to seeing these pictures now. Thank you very much Kathleen.

Sullivan: Okay, thanks Mark, bye-bye.

DePue: Bye.

(end of interview #1 #2 continues)

Interview with Kathleen Sullivan

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Interview # 2: January 10, 2012

Interviewer: Mark DePue

DePue: Today is Tuesday, January 10, 2012. This is my first interview for 2012. My name is Mark DePue, the Director of Oral History with the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. Today I'm delighted to have on the telephone Mrs. Kathleen Sullivan. Good morning.

Sullivan: Good morning Mark. It's a pleasure to be with you.

DePue: And you are where again?

Sullivan: In Naples, Florida. We moved here nine years ago; actually yesterday would have been nine years ago. We were retiring, but it seems retirement has been as busy as the rest of my life.

DePue: Well, this is one of the things that's keeping you busy, but we're thrilled to have the opportunity to talk to you eventually about the Equal Rights Amendment fight in the 1970s, and I think we will get to there today; But you had an important story to tell in the first session we had last month that dealt with your time growing up in the island country of Trinidad.

Sullivan: That's right, it was a very unique experience, and I do think it was a good preparation—probably quite different than most people think—of growing up on the islands in the West Indies. It was really a very, very good preparation for all my activity that I got into once I moved to the United States.

DePue: And that's what we wanted to talk about today, especially getting into the variety of different activities you dove into as a young wife. We finished off last time talking about your marriage to Jerry Sullivan, which I believe was in August of 1952? No,'53. Let's talk about those early years of marriage and what happened, and especially having a family and the other activities. So we'll start with that. Where were you living at the time?

Sullivan: When we first got married we lived in St. Louis. My husband Jerry worked with a company that he's an actuary, and he specialized in pension plans—that sort of thing—pension plans and so on. It was pretty much a dream come true for me, in that my goal in life was to get married and have a family, and be very active in the community and different things. I always, from a very early age, felt that that was the great advantage of being a woman, that we could in fact have multiple types of interests, and because of having a diversified schedule, we could do many things simultaneously.

To take that forward a big step—which I will just mention and then go back—I think that recognition of the woman's ability to do several projects simultaneously is probably what was intriguing to the business world to hire women, that in fact we are capable, and you might say open to, doing several projects. Having the kids around, being involved in education and school and community, as well the priority of home base, really equipped us for multiple tasking.

DePue: Well, if we were talking about young women getting into society today, they would be telling us where they wanted to go to school and what they wanted to be majoring in. Did that factor into your equation?

Sullivan: Not at all. It was there, I was aware of it, but in Trinidad, unless you were really going into one of the, let's say more technical professions, whether it was law or medicine or engineering or something, most of us didn't go to college. We did get through a very wonderful equivalent of high school. In many ways the British school system in those days—I don't know exactly what it is now—but it provided, in what was referred to as the Cambridge Program in British schools, it is true that a lot of studies were in many ways equivalent to early college, so that we had a pretty broad exposure to learning and understanding, particularly history and the world situation. Didn't really think in terms of college unless it was aimed at one of the more technical degrees and needed training.

DePue: And how about any kind of a career path?

Sullivan: My career was being a homemaker. That was my goal. I was definitely set on, you might say, finding Mister Wonderful, which in hindsight I sure did. But we worked at making it work, and we have had fifty-eight years of extremely, let's say productive and wonderful relationships, enjoying each other's not only company but interests and activities, and most of all our family. We have six children and thirty-four grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren. So I'd say our career results were very worthwhile. Fortunately we've been very blessed to not really have had major illnesses and roadblocks. We've managed to be able to keep going and cover quite a bit of ground.

DePue: The timeframe that you were a young woman and a young wife starting to have kids, was in the 1950s. Of course, after World War II, most women were

stay-at-home mothers. That might be over-generalized, but certainly over the next two or three decades that changed dramatically, and the number of women getting into the workforce. What was your view about that trend? Was that a good and healthy thing, for women to pursue their interests outside the family structure?

Sullivan: I think it certainly was—let's say more attractive—to be a full-time mom in the '50s, where we were all sort of helping each other in a neighborly manner to a much greater degree. We knew the neighborhood. Most neighborhoods were younger children, and new communities were popping up all over the country, but particularly in the suburban areas. So we had a lot of community support, a lot of neighborhood support. I remember living at one end of a four house block and our backyard was like a preschool area. Whoever was available at the moment, or home at the moment, took care of the kids from the four houses while mom did other things. So there was a lot of mutual support that we lost as the pull started in the '60s and '70s to entice women to be more in the paid workforce.

I like to make a distinction, because the paid workforce was where the change came. We were always in the workforce, say moms. Full-time career moms did many jobs and each of our jobs at home was a very crucial and important aspect. That seemed to become not too attractive as the years went by there, and the paid workforce unfortunately became more attractive to women, pulled them out of the home, and I think they were misled. During that time—where they were being enticed into the paid workforce—was where a lot of our problems started developing as far as home life. The no-fault divorce became very much on the scene and finally was installed, and women lost a lot of security and a lot of rights during that period. Then the ERA got going,. What was supposed to be Equal Rights Amendment many of us felt was indeed taking away women's rights.

DePue: I don't want to go too deep into that, because that will be something that a little bit later we'll go into in great depth. I want to get your reaction. If somebody were to ask you what do you do, and the phrase, "Oh, I'm just a housewife." Your reaction to that.

Sullivan: Oh, I never used that phrase. That phrase annoyed me way, way back. In fact, I had organized a group of us under the title—we were career homemakers—Career Homemakers—that meant, as we talked to people in civic life and legislative life and so on, we represented the home voice, the Career Homemaker who was interested and active in all aspects of the community and the country. We were fighting a major opposition to get that title picked up, but thinking back, that's really what we were. We were definitely a very large group of individuals, the Career Homemaker, the full-time homemaker, but I wanted the word career in there to give it stature, which is really what it was. We were educators, we were our children's first teachers. Now you hear people say, Oh, I can't have a child unless I can afford or get nursery care and

preschool care. Turning the child over to someone else to raise became a magnet, and yet from our point of view was a deterrent to having children and experiencing that marvelous joy of raising that next generation.

I think mothers today, and fathers—but mothers to a greater degree because of the time spent—they lose that joy of seeing those babies grow so fast, become toddlers, learn to speak, to influence them. Turning over your child to someone else to go through those years, looking back on the development of it, I think has been a very unfortunate thing for the young people. They are more distant from the joy of motherhood. Yet I think it's beginning to come back; they're rediscovering it. I hope that the late teens and twenty year-olds of today are going to find this is really worthwhile; we can do with a little less. Number one, you don't end up doing with less. You actually end up with more, because what you do by being at home full-time makes up for what you have to pay somebody else to do.

DePue: This is obviously a subject you can speak on with great passion.

Sullivan: I certainly can. I really would like to stress that no real studies have ever been done on the economics of it all, and if there were studies showing the savings of what a career homemaker can contribute to a marriage and home, it would way outdo what the salaried income would be.

DePue: Well I'm going to ask you then, if society generally—this might be overstated—demeans the role of the career homemaker, the stay-at-home mom, the housewife. Was that in your opinion a function of the way a male dominated world viewed society, or was that a function of the way some women in the '60s and '70s started to view things?

Sullivan: You see again, I never thought of the male as dominant, because let's face it, that phrase that I think is still true but was quite well-known, "Behind every successful man there's a woman." And by the way, behind every man who really fails, there's usually a woman also. I think that's a very misleading thing, this idea of male dominance. All of us who fought with Stop ERA for instance. We would talk about the fact that businesses produced items that really made the life at home and helped the women at home. They made machines, washing machines. They made all electrical appliances, all these products that helped make home life more efficient, more really attractive, and so that the dominance was not oppressive.

The dominance was, we were happy to have the men go out and do those things and be the provider. I mean, there are very few women even today in my husband's profession of actuary. Let me tell you it's a pretty boring job; figuring out tables of mathematics and longevity and all that is pretty boring. We women have a much more interesting and exciting life. He would always say he came home at night to find out what went on in the world today, because I could keep track of things. I knew what was happening

and we had lots to talk about. But as a 9:00 to 5:00 career, it made pay a substantial financial compensation, but frankly, I wouldn't want it and I was extremely grateful that he was willing to do it, to be able to take care of the family.

DePue: I wanted to ask you then, your opinion about one of the seminal books in the women's movement—at least in the 1960s--and that's Betty Friedan's 1963 book, *The Feminine Mystique*. Much of that was written from the perspective of the frustration that women have, being locked in homes and locked in the roles that you're talking about with such joy.

Sullivan: Well, see that's the real core of the difference of thinking. I really feel very, very sorry for Betty herself and people who were in that position. I don't think she ever experienced the partnership, the satisfaction, of working together and so on. I think she unfortunately had a very negative personal experience, yet she was obviously a dynamic, outgoing person. She tried to paint her personal experiences and grievances on the rest of the female population, and it wasn't true to begin with. The thought of the female population—particularly back in the '50s and '60s and so on—were very happy and very rewarded by being Career Homemakers. But we didn't have a voice until Phyllis [Schlafly] came on the scene, that is.

I think Betty Friedan's thinking catered to the development of the birthing of that thinking in the media that women were suppressed. And the women that got into the media and started writing and speaking on radio and then television, were the ones who—my theory is—had unhappy personal situations, because you very seldom, even today, hear of female announcers and so on, talk about their families. It's sort of we just don't acknowledge that. Now, many of them are married and have children. They hardly ever talk about it and they certainly don't hold it up as a role model, because they may be pounced on by the feminist career women, so they have to separate their career roles in the media from their personal happy family. It's very difficult to get the benefit, the reward of a Career Homemaker, out there for the public or the younger people to even know about. And then you turn to, let's say, the more extreme thing; they try to make us seem undesirable and miserable. Believe me, I had references made to me personally, "You must have a very unhappy home if you spend so much time doing political work." And when I heard it I said oh no, no, it's quite the opposite. I have such a wonderful home, I want to protect it. I don't want you to take that away.

DePue: Okay. I'd like to have you talk a little bit on the specifics about the family, having the children, and when that happened and the names of the kids. Take us up to the early sixties if you could.

Sullivan: Our first son is Christopher and he was born in '54. He went to the Air Force Academy, and that was interesting. As he went through school—it was the late '60s and early ''70s—it was the height of the antiwar, anti-Vietnam

situation, and here he was, aimed at going to the Air Force Academy. The book circulating in school then was *Up Against the Law: Your Rights under 21*, put out by the ACLU [American Civil Liberties Union]. Basically it was a listing of where you could go to avoid the [military] draft and places to go in Canada. I was not a happy mom when I came across that, because there were other things in that book that were absolutely outrageous, that my sixteen year-old son has been given.

Then a year later I had a miscarriage; a little girl was born at six months pregnancy. That was a heartbreak because I wanted to have several kids. Of course, the fear then of, Am I going to miscarry others and not have any more, was very difficult to overcome. There's an interesting side story to that, which came back to my memory.

Three days ago there was an article in the paper down here about this particular drug. After I lost that second baby, when I got pregnant again a year after that, I started to have problems with bleeding; they gave me a drug to stop miscarriages. Now this is back in '56, and at the time, you take it, it's something new on the market. It turns out, it was a drug similar—this article talks about DES, D-E-S, DES drug—that they took off the market ten years later. But it turns out that I didn't take trademark DES itself, but another manufacturer's name, which I'm going to go and research, because that drug caused sterility in our next three sons. I am very fearful and concerned about drugs that are given out to youngsters, including the most current one, Gardisil, and they have no idea what it's going to do to these growing bodies later on.

Fortunately, our three sons, between them have ten adopted children. Now that certainly is an enormous blessing for our family, but it made me very aware of these experimental things. Again, as a Career Homemaker, I started watching medical situations and drugs and things. That in itself, I could go on for hours on what has happened. Now the DES controversy is centering around, they have found out that it caused uterine cancer in female offspring. This article that came out three days ago was talking about evidence of breast cancer in the forty-year-old female daughters of mothers who took this drug. It doesn't mention what it does to the males. In our case, our two daughters have not so far been affected, but the three boys—that has been documented—that this drug caused sterility among the males. And yet, it's very, very hard to get any written documentation, any research. It just isn't talked about.

DePue: Okay. So that's the first child and the first miscarriage. And after that?

Sullivan: Then we had a second son, Kevin, which he is an ophthalmologist. Our eldest son is a pediatric orthopedic surgeon. He's head of a department at University of Chicago Hospital, in Chicago. He really loves teaching and he's the head of that orthopedic unit.

Our second son is an ophthalmologist, was a very, very bright student. I had an interesting experience with him. Because of his older brother, he was one, Anything he could do I could do better, so he wanted to do everything. Anxious to go to school. He spent a month in kindergarten and was very upset because he wasn't learning anything. He kept persecuting me at home to teach him more, and so I went and talked to the kindergarten teacher and she said you know, you ought to teach him how to cut out better—small muscle development—and she was giving me all this typical education type of stuff that was coming on the scene then.

I then took him over to the Catholic private school; he was tested and taken into first grade. He graduated at seventeen from high school. He then went to Northwestern, did it in three years, and he got an MD at twenty-three. So here, he's an eye surgeon today, after the kindergarten teacher telling me to teach him how to develop his small muscle control. He did it on his own. So, I had some very interesting experiences in simply keeping in touch and being on top of things as they were coming out.

DePue: Okay, so that's two, we've still got four to go.

Sullivan: We had twins who were born when Kevin was eighteen months old. So I had four under four, and it was absolutely marvelous.

DePue: I assume they are not identical twins.

Sullivan: No, a boy and a girl. They were a fabulous experience, because we witnessed how girls develop much faster than boys. Kerry taught Barry how to speak. At two years old she would make him practice: "Barry, say choo-choo." And he knew how to say, "No!" (chuckles) And they would go back and forth. They're very good friends today. He's a nuclear engineer with the Department of Energy and she's married and lives in Wisconsin and has nine kids. Her husband is a lawyer with corporation business law.

And then came Andy, who was an early tech guy. He works with UPS, he has for years. He worked through college there, went into the Navy. Our four boys were all in the service, and it was an extremely beneficial opportunity for them. I thank the taxpayers for sending the two first ones through medical school. Chris was in the Air Force, Kevin was in the Army, Barry and Andy were in the Navy. Andy is still with UPS, lives in New Jersey and has three wonderful kids.

The youngest one, Lori, is in Connecticut, and she has ten children. So I think we have been extremely blessed. I can't emphasize enough that so many more people would be a lot happier if they simply gave more thought to the benefits of having family, because that's where the ERA really changed our culture.

We're very close to our kids, the grandkids. One of the greatest joys is having the grandkids in college call and say, Nana, I'm running this conference. Who would you suggest I invite to speak at Georgetown University?" That's pretty incredible.

DePue: Well you're obviously very proud of the whole family. I want to take you back again to the 1950s. I know the family moved up to the Chicago area. When did that occur?

Sullivan: We had the two first boys then. Jerry moved to another job in Chicago in '57, and just to show the difference in the financial situation, I think we left St. Louis making $8,500 a year. A year, that's right, $8,500 a year. And we moved back to Chicago at $13,000, and we made it work. Now along the way, I became a decorator. I learned how to upholster. None of our kids ever went to a barber shop until they got married or left home. I learned how to cut hair. You just did so many things that were cost-saving. The fun parties, the neighborhood. The teams were invited over after a ballgame; that was our social life. It was wonderful.

DePue: Was it Chicago that you lived in?

Sullivan: We lived in Mount Prospect eleven years, at Glenview thirty-four years.

DePue: Once you got to Mount Prospect, what other activities did you get involved with outside the home?

Sullivan: Oh, that was fast. I got involved with a Republican organization and became the president of the Women's Republican Auxiliary within about a year—that's a township—of the township. You're familiar with the divisions in each county in Illinois. These were the suburban townships northwest of Chicago in Cook County.

DePue: Which township again was it?

Sullivan: Elk Grove. And I had an interesting situation develop there. I became a friend of the then-Congresswoman, Marguerite Stitt Church, and also of Bill Scott, who was, I believe, Illinois State Treasurer at the time. The Committeeman of Elk Grove Township, Carl Hansen, became the campaign manager for Chuck Percy. I did not care for Chuck Percy at all, and told him I was going to support Bill Scott, to which he was not happy and said, Oh no, you can't do that, you're the president of my women's club. This was a male-female situation that may be of interest to you. And I said, Yes, I'm the president of the Women's Auxiliary, but I don't have to support the person in a primary that you're supporting. And he said, Oh yes you do—that's our custom.

I don't think there was anything in the bylaws. I wasn't that familiar with bylaws at that time, but I did go and take a course in parliamentary procedure in Evanston pretty soon after that. I had a real encounter with him.

He unfortunately was in an automobile accident right about that time and was very ill; at a meeting of the organization he had the president of his township group ask for my resignation. I just point blank refused to resign. I just told him no, I wasn't going to do it. Well, they had never been stood up to by a woman before. So I had my encounters in that area. I was putting on a fashion show—a fundraiser—for the women's group in a couple weeks. He said, You can't do that. You can't have that function and be the chairman and come out for a different candidate. And I said, Well, I'm going to do it.

So I contacted Mrs. Church, who came, and I contacted Bill Scott, and they came, and let's say I defied them. They were pretty amazed I think—amazed more than upset even—because in a way they respected me and they realized that I had good reasons. We were, let's say, at different ends of the spectrum for a few years after that. But then we became very good friends again, and Carl Hansen became very conservative; he was delighted when I really was involved with [Ronald] Reagan and so on.

DePue: First of all, what year were you talking about here and what was your objection to Charles Percy at that time?

Sullivan: He was liberal; he always was liberal. Charles Percy was the first person I ever heard have this one child policy. That predated the custom developing in China. He was part of what we thought of and knew to be operating the Trilateral Commission, the Foreign… Well, the Rockefeller entourage within the Republican Party. Foreign relations, not the committee. It wasn't an official government committee; it's a business-international interest group, and Chuck Percy was very prominent with them. He was not at all conservative, pro-family.

DePue: What was the year again, that this incident you just talked about occurred?

Sullivan: About '62. It was before the [Barry] Goldwater campaign. The main thing I was involved in however was after that. In '69 when Donald Rumsfeld became head of the Office of Economic Opportunity. But he was our Congressman and he resigned to take over this position in Washington. So it was a special election to be held in December—in-between year '69—and we supported Phil Crane, who had moved into our district. He used to be from Southern Illinois. Are you familiar with Phil Crane at all?

DePue: Yeah, I certainly know the name, yes.

Sullivan: He was an extremely good candidate. He was a good legislator too, but an exceptional candidate. He's like a talking encyclopedia. He was a history teacher and he was just very, very persuasive and convincing and knowledgeable in government and history and the whole thing. I was one of the first that got behind Phil, organized the eight townships across the northern tier of Cook County. Phil had won one of the eight outright and came

second in the other seven, and beat the favorite, who was Sam Young at the time. He defeated six other candidates in the primary. There were seven in the race and he won, I think with 27 percent of the vote. My husband says it's 23; I'm not sure. Well, even if it was 23, he beat the six others. He served for quite a few years until redistricting, and then he moved out west and finally lost after serving about twenty years I think, into the '90s.

I pretty much was the main one that organized Phil's campaign. I didn't really have a title, since we had the… let's say more professionals actually having the titles, the press and the campaign chairman, da da da. But I did the legwork and Phil was always extremely commending and introducing me and saying that, if it weren't for my early work and the extent of my work, he never would have been Congressman.

There was one key thing that makes a difference. Realizing his extraordinary ability as a communicator and how people listened to him, we set up coffees—three to four a day. I would get one or two people in every precinct to say: I'll open my house, I'll have a coffee, I'll have a tea, I'll have a reception in the evening. We, the campaign staff, would send the invitations to every registered Republican in the whole precinct. We did not tell the host or hostess that invitations were going to every registered Republican, because that would have scared them to death. I can't sit two hundred people in my house. But we knew that if we got thirty, forty people, that would be fabulous; we knew statistically, from campaigning, well if you invite hundreds, you'll end up with thirty or forty. So we had these continually for three months. That's really what paid off, because people would come who had never heard of him, but here he was in their neighborhood, and everybody left supporting Phil Crane. That was the core of his campaign. He was a very persuasive, very attractive candidate who people trusted.

DePue: I wanted to take you back to the late '50s, early '60s again, and some of the other activities that you were involved in. Now I'm assuming you were involved with your local parish or your church.

Sullivan: Yes, always was. That would have been in Mount Prospect, Saint Raymond's. Our kids started school there and we ran a lot of things there, from the musical to the schools particularly and so on. I don't remember anything unusual particularly, other than they took Kevin in early, which was unusual in those days. They didn't skip kids a grade at that point very much.

DePue: What was the name of the school again?

Sullivan: Saint Raymond's.

DePue: Okay.

Sullivan: And when I went over there in fact, to talk to them, the principal said well you know, our regulations have just been changed and we are permitted to test a

kid and see if truly they are up to taking a higher grade. And he did; he was very equipped because he had done a whole lot at home. So he went into first grade at five years old instead of kindergarten.

Mount Prospect, there wasn't too much church activity particularly. Our boys started at Loyola Academy in'68, our eldest one, and then we moved to Glenview, purposely really, to get into the parish there: Our Lady of Perpetual Help, because the pastor there was an extraordinary man who, you would probably find quite a bit in the records about him, Father Dussman. He was very creative, not only in the church but in community work. He started a routine of having the parish build a home and raffle it, every year. That was a big community support thing and they were raising funds for the parish. He became quite famous in the Chicago area. He also built what's still referred to as the Palladium, which was a huge community swimming pool, and this was back in the '50s. So he developed that parish very much for the betterment of the community in Glenview. He was extremely respected. He also had a large school—first grade through eight—and we wanted to get our kids in there. He was also very politically active.

One of the things he did for instance, which was unique then, but I don't know that is ever done now. He told the community authorities, It's unconstitutional that you do not provide transportation for the kids coming to the Catholic school the way you provide transportation for the public schools. They have a right to have that transportation, and the parent taxes are paying for it, and this is limited to transportation. And he negotiated that for—I don't know exactly how long—but probably a year or so. Then he just made an announcement that come such and such a date, all the children would be enrolling in the public schools, unless they provided the transportation for them to come to his Catholic school. This meant putting a thousand kids onto the public school enrollment, which in those days they were so crowded, they couldn't even think of.

So after that, the school district somehow found a way to provide the buses to bring the kids to the Catholic school, which, when you think of justice, it's perfectly justified. So he was a marvelous leader and did a lot of things that we admired tremendously. Ironically however, the year after we moved there he by then was sixty-nine. He was quite elderly and he was retired within a year after that. But many of us who admired him and so on, you might say, kept going.

DePue: Continued his policies, continued his traditions.

Sullivan: Yes. And that was our introduction to a series of lectures that were being held at the Glenview Naval Air Station in those years. Father Dussman was one of the originators of it and a big promoter of what was called the Cardinal Mindszenty organization, and that was created and is still being run by Eleanor Schlafly, Phyllis' sister in-law, so she's alive. I think she's in her

nineties. And they put on every year the three month session on anticommunism. It was based on Cardinal Mindszenty, who was in prison in Hungary for years, on his books and his life and his teachings. That's when we learned a heck of a lot about foreign policy, and that was back in the '60s and '70s. Jerry and I were very involved there.

There was a lot of cooperation between the church groups and the community. I mean this is Glenview Naval Air Station that we rented space. We were active with the public school system. There was a lot more cooperation. Today,—and this is one of the unfortunate things now—they scream and yell if you have anything faith-based near a public school, which is ridiculous. We all pay taxes and we should have a right to use those facilities after school, weekends, whatever, and yet we run into a lot of roadblocks.

DePue: Were you also involved in the DAR [Daughters of the American Revolution] at any time?

Sullivan: No, because I didn't qualify.

DePue: I don't know why I was thinking that you were. I was curious about that.

Sullivan: Phyllis was, but the basic requirements are quite different and unique. I was not a descendent of any people that came directly here.

DePue: Okay. I wanted to get—and this is from the perspective of the late '50s, early '60s timeframe, when you're growing the family and getting involved in these things early on—what your political views were at that time and how you came to develop those.

Sullivan: They were emerged naturally and as you can see from that picture of me with the children—that was '63—it was basic conservatism, the core, and the family, the role of women. The family and women particularly, and children, had a very special role, and they were respected and held up. It took a lot of time and effort to defend that and account for it. We didn't want the government coming in and saying you have to teach so and so in school, and we're going to teach your kids; you are not capable of it any more. That was like a match to gasoline, because we, the home, knew how to do it best and we certainly knew our children best. So the idea of liberal thought where we the teachers and we the community, could do a better job than you, the parents and the family, was absolutely not acceptable.

Also, this then transferred to the attitude toward charity. You, the individuals and the churches, are not capable of taking care of the communities that had lesser resources, but we the government are going to do it better. In fact, I'll give you an example that really illustrates it.

I went to a meeting at Our Lady of Perpetual Help church one time, and it was just becoming popular to have sex education in the schools. There was one program, "Becoming a Person." Becoming a Person. Interesting name, thinking about it in hindsight, but this was written by, at the time, a Catholic priest, with two of his assistants, and it was supposed to be put into the Catholic schools. In those days, which was in the '60s, it was really not acceptable to outrageous. By today's standards it's mild, looking back on it, but the concept of the school taking over to the degree that this was advocating was very upsetting to us parents. Our kids were quite little then and in fact the oldest was—I guess he was a freshman in high school, but this affected the twins and Andy, in fifth grade and first grade.

So I was at this meeting and the author of the book came and he's giving the talk. Now he's not dressed as a priest. This was the start of the liberalization of the church and he is giving a talk justifying why he wrote this book. He said, "Now what we have found…" He was very derogatory about a particular Catholic hospital in Chicago, Our Lady of Nazareth Hospital. He said, Now that we have found out the government can run healthcare better than the church, we've got to recognize that. And boy that made me sit up straight, because we were very friendly with many doctors and we were quite familiar with the medical situation politically. Then he said, In fact, if you ever find me on the street, don't take me to Our Lady of Nazareth Hospital; take me to Ravenswood.

It's really almost eerie, but a year later he left the priesthood, married one of these assistants that helped him write the book, and about five years later he did have a heart attack out someplace. I don't know if it was on the sidewalk or what. It was a strange situation, but because of his, let's say, very unorthodox standing in the church, the authorities at that time—this is back in '69—they refused to bury him from the Catholic church, which caused a big stir. Oh, that was just outrageous, how insensitive, da da da.

So I wrote the Cardinal at the time—it was [John] Cody I think—but it was a monsignor who made the decision that he is not qualified for a Catholic burial. I told him of this personal situation I had. Unfortunately, at the time it occurred, I wrote a letter to the administrator of the hospital, so I had a written record of when he said what he said. I said he really excommunicated himself. He publicly stated on that date, that he did not want to be buried or having anything to do with a Catholic hospital. I didn't say buried, but a Catholic hospital.

It was a strange episode that I found myself in, believe me. I'm relating that to you just to illustrate actual things that were going on back then, that some of us were part of. We witnessed the organized effort to change what basic values we knew were the most beneficial, and in a nutshell it's conservative values. Today we don't have any values. You do your thing, I'll do my thing and you know, your values can be right or wrong and mine are

always right. That's just not natural. There are certain things that nature's law—by the way, faith law is based on nature's law and visa versa—that many of us believe, and basically that's the conservative core values. I had them growing up in Trinidad, where I think I described to you the churches have a very great role in the value system in even a little island like Trinidad.

DePue: You mentioned the Cardinal Mindszenty organization. Is that pronounced right?

Sullivan: Yes. It's an unusual spelling. It's M-i-n… See if I can find one of the newsletters here. Jerry, how do you spell Mindszenty?

DePue: We can look that up, because I know that Mrs. Schlafly wrote about that quite a bit. Were you also then concerned in the late '50s and '60s about the communist threat? Was that one of the things that animated your politics?

Sullivan: Absolutely, absolutely. We were very, very well informed and were fortunate enough, because of Phyllis and Fred [Schlafly], her husband, and her sister in-law Eleanor, we met and knew a lot. Phyllis wrote a lot on foreign affairs back then, before the ERA. She has really been one of the most extraordinary general interest type of leaders that I've ever met.

Yeah, Mindszenty is spelled M-i-n-d-s-z-e-n-t-y.

DePue: Okay. Well this is probably a good opportunity to tell us when you first encountered Mrs. Schlafly.

Sullivan: It was in '62. She was giving a talk in the northern suburbs of Chicago. We went to the talk. It was at a little motel on the north side and it was on defense. My neighbor in Glenview—she was staying there, right Jerry? No. It turned out that when she heard where we lived, a mutual friend, my neighbor was a good friend of hers. This was right before the Goldwater organization was developing and I'll never forget, she was pregnant with her last daughter, Anne, and just an amazing person, in knowledge, plus.

I don't recall just how we made the next move or what, but it wasn't long before I was part of her organization. After that the women's movement really got going. We were also working on church things and it got where she would leave the contacts and so on, among church people, to me, for Illinois. But I also started going to the bishops, meeting, watching their activity in foreign affairs. The U.S. Catholic Bishops wrote a pastoral on U. S. Defense. There was quite a liberal antiwar movement among the Catholic Bishops, and anti-military. Phyllis and about eight or nine of us talked with many of the bishops—Cardinal O'Connor being one of them and Cardinal O'Brien, who then became head of the military—to plead the cause of American military being the hope of the future and so on. I think we had quite an impact at the time, but not sufficient.

Cardinal Bernardin—I mean this is all history and I'll be real frank with you—[Joseph] Bernardin was the leader of the anti-American liberal wing of the bishops, and he was the Cardinal of Chicago then. No, excuse me, he was in Cincinnati then, in the '60S. He then ended up in Chicago and he never did like me at all.

Phyllis and I were really on the same wavelength. She was very good at motivating individuals like myself to do more than we ever dreamed we could do. She would say, Okay Kathleen, here's my next project, and lay it out. And I thought huh? Wait a minute, wait a minute, what are you suggesting and so on, and yeah, you can do it, you can do it, and we did. Just very, very astute at seeing the capability of people, and she was able to infuse that into many of her followers. And remember, we're all doing it on a volunteer basis.

DePue: What was the organization? Was there an official organization that she wanted you to join, that you did join?

Sullivan: No, all different things along the way. We created different organizations as things were needed, like the Career Homemakers I got going in Illinois; we did quite a few things under that. Church-wise, one of the very, I think effective things, we created the National Catholic Coalition and put on four conferences, which included prominent Catholic women; it was to counter the feminist influence in the Church mainly, and in the culture. We had two in Chicago, one in Milwaukee and one in New York; the one in New York was at the high school of Cardinal O'Connor's Diocese, and Mother Teresa was there. In New York, I think we had fourteen speakers, an all-day conference, including Nellie Gray, Father John Hardon, prominent Catholic thinkers and leaders, to show that the value oriented teachings of the Catholic Church were what was really working, not these radicals who wanted to come in and change the teaching on abortion, on contraception, on homosexuality. And this again—stop and think—this was back in the '80s, that we put on those conferences.

DePue: Okay, so that's jumping a little bit ahead of our timeline here.

Sullivan: Yes.

DePue: Back in the early '60s, what was it about communism that most concerned you and others you were working with?

Sullivan: Oh, the government takeover of your life. I mean let's face it, everybody in communist countries did what the government wanted, period. The government owned and ruled and did everything, and that's not America, that's not freedom. I think history has shown that it didn't last.

DePue: Was there also a fear of the relationship the communists had with religion and with the Church especially?

Sullivan: Oh, well absolutely, but it's not because they didn't like the Church, it was the values that the Church represented that they had to get rid of. They couldn't stand anything that the government didn't run, and changing Church authority to government authority was repulsive. I mean we're not saying Church authorities are perfect, but the values, the core of the faith and religion are good. The values of government changes by who's running the government, like abortion. I mean did you ever think, ever, ever dream, back in the '60s or even the '70s, that we would have dismembered fifty-four million babies by the year 2012?

We talk about the horrors of the Aztec human sacrifice. What have we done in this country? We've committed human sacrifice on fifty-four million. I think I've mentioned this to you before, one of the incredibly difficult things for us to even imagine is there are seventy to eighty million mothers and fathers directly connected to those abortions that are living and citizens of our country today. They are a voting block and why? This is my theory. The reason they cannot debate or talk about abortion in the media and public sphere, they can't deal with it because of their own personal situation. Some of them have overcome it and come out of it. Some of them, very few today, proclaim it.

Twenty year ago, they would come out and say I'm for choice, I'm for choice, and they'd be advertising and promoting it. You don't hear anybody today say, I'm for choice. They just don't talk about it. That to me is one of the most frightening things, when I think of that, eighty to a hundred million mothers and fathers and direct relatives. That's a third of the country directly connected with having made the decision to eliminate one of their children.

DePue: Even when we're talking about communism, at that time and today, we always go back to social issues for you, the core of the family with you.

Sullivan: Well, the core of the whole fight. Communism promoted abortion with state control. Look at China. China's socialist communist government openly proclaims and demands and enforces, you can only have one child. I mean that is appalling, yet just recently there was something I came across that somebody in this country, in America, is proposing we look into the one child policy, because children are too expensive. Back to economics. Children are really the greatest investment we could ever imagine.

DePue: When you first encountered Mrs. Schlafly then, I know at that point in her career, much of what she was talking about was kind of the more esoteric side of the communist threat, dealing with nuclear defense strategy, missile, those kinds of issues. What most impressed you initially, when you first encountered her?

Sullivan: Her general knowledge and her ability to convey leadership and enthusiasm. There's just no question about it. And she did it, which to me was maybe

particularly attractive; she did it in conjunction with an amazingly wonderful husband and five kids, she was having her sixth. She was multitasking all her life. All her life, she was just an outstanding person, and for good values, as compared to Betty Friedan… Oh, who are some of those other feminists that I've run into? Who are more like a vendetta against men that have hurt them, which is so unfortunate and I feel very—I don't know that sorry is the right thing. It's so unfortunate that they never experienced the marvelous satisfaction that Phyllis and I have had, by doing the good value things, not fighting the good values.

How could you live with yourself when you realize that you have promoted the elimination of babies? That's anti-mother. It just doesn't sit right, and I think that's what's starting to emerge. When they get to be fifty and sixty and there's no grandchildren. I mean talk to the Amy Johnsons, who have turned around. I happened to have the privilege of meeting and getting to know the doctor who helped to form NARAL.[2] He's now passed away. [Bernard] Nathanson. That poor man had such a burden to live with in his life the last few years. He even aborted his own son. He had to live with that. It takes a super human, a great person, to be able to live with that and overcome it, and he was driven to inform the rest of us: "Don't listen to people like me and what I was telling you, don't fall for it. A pregnancy is never as bad as it seems at the time, and there's always help." But we don't hear that.

The sitcoms—they trivialized, it's been turned upside down. But the real younger people, the teens and the twenty year-olds, I do see a new interest there. And do you know why? Because technology is showing them: ultrasound. There's no longer a question. These kids in school, why don't we just show them in science class, from grades seven and eight, every year, what that developing baby looks like. Just show them an ultrasound picture. I doubt we would have very many of our teenagers going to the clinic for an abortion if they had that visual image of being pregnant, that's a live baby I'm seeing. Why don't they show it to them? Oh, it's too controversial. No it isn't. They show them what horrible black lungs look like when they smoke. Why can't we show them the truth of procreation, and I'm using the word deliberately.

Procreation. We don't do it all by ourselves. A man or a woman, it is together. Something is provided in nature that makes that next generation. We don't have the right to just say, I'm not going to stand for it, I'm too selfish, I want to do my own thing my way. That's not life, that's not a good value. The basic difference is there are positive values and negative values. With negative values, it's a contradiction, it's not a value. We shouldn't be valuing something that's negative, wrong, bad, whatever, but today, they try to present it as such and that's a lie.

[2] NARAL: National Abortion Rights Action League

DePue: You've been talking very eloquently here, obviously extremely passionate about it. Was that a theme that you heard from Mrs. Schlafly, even when she was talking about communism?

Sullivan: Oh yes.

DePue: When you first encountered her?

Sullivan: Oh yes, on every issue. You hear her talk about the economics of social security; it's fascinating, how many rights women lost. If ERA went through, we would have lost even more on the economics of social security. She knew it all inside out. Communism, say global type things. For instance, one of her very current issues is the patent laws, American patents, the rights for copyright and patent, and how it's affecting the economic situation right now with China stealing everything and so on. America should be able to hold on to their own patents, where the global interest. No, that's selfish. They want to take that away and make it an international right, which they did to a degree just this last year. She is knowledgeable and eloquent on just about any issue.

DePue: Well here was an issue from the early 1960s, and I know you were very involved with it as well. Let's talk about the 1964 election campaign, and Barry Goldwater.

Sullivan: Yes.

DePue: Were you already a supporter of Barry Goldwater before you knew Mrs. Schlafly and knew her views on the subject?

Sullivan: I don't remember exactly, it was probably simultaneously, because I did become very… Well I think her speech when I met her had to do with the campaign developing then. The speech was in '62 I believe and it was pretty soon after that, and because of the foreign affairs. The main issue of the Goldwater campaign was foreign affairs. Having a foreign affairs plan, what about American foreign policy, was paramount in those years. It was before the *Roe v. Wade* abortion decision; it was before all the government interference in family and education and so on. Foreign affairs, foreign policy it was referred to, American foreign policy, and what was going to be covered or not covered was the key interest. She was extremely important in that debate. That was something we shared and I learned a lot from her.

Her book early on, *A Choice, Not an Echo*, and, I'm trying to think of the one she wrote right after that. But the Bilderberg, let's say international group, which she would record and report on every year which was influencing American foreign policy, and the Goldwater conservative movement, emerged out of our concern for those foreign policy items as they came forward. Because there were many people then, who by the way still have influence now, like Bill Ayers in Chicago, in making America similar to communism in Russia.

I ran into Bill Ayers back in the Students for a Democratic Society days back in Chicago. I mean I didn't personally run into him but I knew of him from way back then. So it's been interesting, following them along the way. There are unquestionably people who have held on to that, and we are concerned that there's still people trying to make America into a—they call it liberal state—but it's really a socialist pattern; the government runs things, period.

DePue: The '64 campaign: maybe the most known thing about it today is that ad that came out suggesting Goldwater's position about how to execute the Vietnam War and the possibility even, of using nuclear weapons. Was that something that concerned you?

Sullivan: I don't remember that item particularly, individually. It was more that we were concerned about a defense. I'm trying to think of the term for our national defense against nuclear weapons coming into this country. The culture referred to it as Star Wars, but there was another term.

DePue: Are you talking about MAD, Mutually Assured Destruction?

Sullivan: Yes. Mutually Assured Destruction was definitely discussed, so that it would be so terrible for them, they wouldn't even attempt it. Actually, this particular program or policy that I'm thinking of—SDI, Strategic Defense Initiative—I think maybe really emerged more in the Reagan days. I was very instrumental in promoting Reagan's defense and speech on Goldwater, back in '63, '64, and that was when I did a lot of work with Phyllis.

DePue: Okay. I know Mrs. Schlafly's view on the whole issue of Republican presidential candidates; that's all laid out in, *A Choice, Not an Echo.* You can correct me if I get this wrong—her complaint always was that it was the eastern elite, more liberal, wing of the Republican Party that was picking the candidates, and not picking conservatives.

Sullivan: Yes.

DePue: They also were picking candidates who were inevitably going to be defeated by the Democrats.

Sullivan: True. And I think that is maybe history repeating itself in our current day. I think [Barack] Obama is the result of that and the, let's say, emergence and all-out push of the media for Mitt Romney is the eastern liberal—they don't refer to it as much as eastern establishment any more I don't think—the liberal establishment behind him, under the guise that well, he's the only one that can get the Independents.

The theory that real conservative values person should be the nominee holds more than ever today, because it's the best contrast we have to what's happening. But you have to remember too, Goldwater was way ahead until the

assassination of Kennedy. Then things flipped over and there was a sympathy vote for the Democrats.

Today, Obama has done more to internationalize us into a world situation than we ever wanted, and he's been sort of just so bold with it. He just throws aside the legalities, which he's done very recently. He wants to appoint when he wants to appoint him and to heck with the rest of you, I don't care whether you like it or not. And then he turns around and blames it all of course, on those horrible Republicans who won't do what he wants them to do. He is a dictator and we'll see whether the people are going to continue with him.

We'll survive it. I certainly have enough faith that this country is strong enough. We'll survive it, but we've lost an awful lot in these past three years and we certainly don't want to have this go on, and to what degree we'll be damaged. He cannot keep up this downturn in population much longer. That is going to have a very, very detrimental effect on our country, out of sheer replacement population needs. It could cause all kinds of problems by attracting for instance, an enormous number of illegal aliens. All of a sudden we'll need a lot of people to do what needs to be done, so open up the borders, and here come a lot of people who do not have the United States' interests at heart. We're already seeing that to a much greater degree than people would like to admit, and morally it is terribly, terribly detrimental. We cannot teach people to be economically wise and just when they don't understand natural law or respect for law. If you can't respect babies, you can't respect anything else.

DePue: Let's go back to the election itself and the resounding defeat of Goldwater. What was your reaction to that?

Sullivan: Well, we saw it coming right after the death of [President] Kennedy. It was predictable. [Lee Harvey] Oswald[3] was… yeah, it was all a sympathy vote and it never was clearly explained who this guy was that got away with it, and what really were his connections and motivation and so on. It's just, No, he's just a loner, because it's convenient to just say that. I'm not indicating he was—I don't know anything about his background, but it's strange to me that nobody really went back and traced who influenced him. Why did he want to do that.

DePue: I'm not sure who you're talking about now.

Sullivan: Oswald. The guy who killed Kennedy, right at a very, very pertinent point in our election process.

[3] Lee Harvey Oswald was accused of being the sniper who killed President John F. Kennedy, but he was assassinated by a man named Jack Ruby before being brought to trial.

DePue: Do you think the Republican Party drew the wrong conclusions from that election? That see, we can't have a true conservative that can win the election; we've got to go with somebody more moderate?

Sullivan: I think the party officials of that day were very mad at those of us who got Goldwater in, and that convention was, let's say, not completely controlled by the eastern establishment. The delegates were there. We worked hard ahead of time and we had the delegates to put him in. They do a lot more work ahead of time now, such as watching the Mitt Romney situation. For instance, they hardly ever talk about the delegate process in these states. We just talk about the beauty contest and very few of our citizens have any idea: A delegate, what's a delegate? What are you talking about? This convention is like a coronation for the beauty vote. They don't know, much less understand, what the delegate process is all about. I'm talking about the rank and file. The party officials do know, and they want it kept quiet, because that's how they control things.

DePue: Well going back to the mid-'60s now and the post-Goldwater defeat, I know that certainly thereafter, the National Federation of Republican Women—maybe the struggle between the conservative and the moderate or liberal wing of the Republican Party—was fought out even in that form. Were you involved with that fight? I think it was New York City or someplace, where there was a convention where Mrs. Schlafly was running to be the president I believe, of the National Federation of Republican Women.

Sullivan: Right. And I was not at that convention because I believe I had one of the babies at that time, but I certainly was active in the state level. That was getting back at the conservatives and Phyllis specifically. The Rockefeller organizations were out to get her and they did; they controlled enough and denied her getting the presidency. There was two definite philosophical differences of opinion on policy—a lot of the domestic policy things were beginning to emerge at that point—and they did not want her and her thinking getting more support. She and the conservatives knew growing influence was becoming too difficult to deal with, and they decided they would show their objection by denying Schlafly the leadership of the women's group. So the battle has been going a long time and it will continue.

I just realized the time. I've got to go someplace in about five minutes.

DePue: Okay. Well this is probably a good place to wrap things up. Let me just ask you this question as we conclude for today. Then next time definitely, we'll get into the ERA fight.

By this time were you thinking, after you see Mrs. Schlafly having the door slammed in her face, it might be that the Republican Party is the wrong place for me?

Sullivan: No. Quite the opposite, quite the opposite, because at the same time we were observing that the things we did not approve of, those people had taken over the Democratic Party completely. The ERA battle had started in Illinois and the Democrats—at least that we had then in the ‘60s and ‘70s—were becoming under pressure and were starting to peel off. So by no means any of us considered going to the Democratic Party; in fact it made us more determined than ever to fight to have the Republican Party as the main influence. That grew into—I think it was 1980—that we got the strong pro-life plank in the Republican platform, and it has remained there ever since. The Democrats never have put in a pro-life plank, even though back in the ‘60s and ‘70s they were pro-life Democrats, but they lost control pretty fast.

DePue: Okay. This has been a very interesting discussion today. It will be even more interesting perhaps, once we get into the main ERA fight. It’s very interesting to hear your views, your passion about the subject that we’ve been talking about, and I look forward to the next time we do get a chance to talk.

Sullivan: Okay, thanks Mark.

(end of interview #2 #3 continues)

Interview with Kathleen Sullivan

ISE-A-L-2011-059.03

Interview # 3: January 26, 2012

Interviewer: Mark DePue

DePue: Today is Thursday, January 26, 2012. My name is Mark DePue, the Director of Oral History with the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. Today I'm sitting in my office doing an interview, because I'm talking to Kathleen Sullivan who is in Florida. Good morning Kathleen.

Sullivan: Good morning. It's a pleasure to be with you.

DePue: This is our third session, and I think we get to the real meat of the issue. The reason I wanted to talk to you at first was your involvement with the long ERA fight that occurred in the state of Illinois. Last time, we talked about late '60s politics and some things like that. I am not quite ready to finish off with that yet and I know the quality of your memory is that you've got some stories here specific to the late 1960s as well.

I wanted to start with your personal views about the direction that you saw the United States going in the late '60s, with all of the different protest movements, with the antiwar protests, with the civil rights movement, with the students rights movement, and the early women's liberation movement. If you can talk just a couple minutes in a general sense on that.

Sullivan: I think what was most concerning and almost frightening to many of us—our children, the Sullivan family, six children and they were really going into the teenage years, going through high school—and it was frightening to think of them going off to college campuses which were in such turmoil in the late '60s. We parents really questioned: Do we want our kids to go off, because the tumultuous situation on the campuses was even more frightening than that radicalism of today, which is more out in the cities and the communities, but back then it was centered among the younger people and among the schools, even in the high schools. So that was very different and in many ways even more frightening than it is now.

Also, we saw the discontent and the changing in the wrong direction that many of us felt was in education and among the school administrators and teachers. That was very difficult and very challenging to deal with, because we really put a lot of time and effort studying where did we want our children to go. That's different today.

In many ways today, the schools are very definitely more generally in the liberal, do-what-you-want-to-do type of sphere. Back then there was more, I'd say, discipline and self-discipline among the communities and the families. The change was going on then in the '60s and the rise of the feminist movement, where moms ought to get out of the home. A terribly disparaging attitude toward those of us who were career homemakers was building, and very disturbing to me and a lot of us. Our role as being the nurturers and the key foundation of the family unit—which you stop to think of it—the family unit is the main and premiere rock of government. That's where young people from birth and toddlers and elementary and high school learn what structure is, what rules mean, right and wrong. That has changed dramatically. To a great degree it pulled mom out of that very important role and said, You need something different and out here it's better. And looking back on fifty years, it really isn't.

DePue: I wanted to ask you about the Vietnam War in particular, especially since you're the mother of four children, but also in a very conservative household and had definite views about the war against communism.

Sullivan: Well, actually we had four sons. We have two daughters also.

DePue: Yeah, that's what I meant to say.

Sullivan: Our eldest son from about seventh grade had aimed to go to the Air Force Academy for several reasons, finances not being a minor one, believe me. As he aimed toward there, we took him out to Colorado Springs and visited when he was in eighth grade. So his goal was get there, and boy, did he take a lot of flak for being someone who was aimed at going into the military, among his peers in high school but also to a great degree, among the culture. The lists of where you could go to avoid the draft, in Canada for instance, were circulating all over the place, even in the private school that he attended. Looking back, it probably was a good lesson for him—to know how to defend what he felt was the right thing to do—at a very early age.

DePue: You're a mother though, and having four boys who were coming of military age during a war, that's got to be a concern for you.

Sullivan: Oh, very much so. On the other hand, I had grown up during World War II, in another country mainly, but also after the war I was living here as a newly married young bride, and so we were familiar with the whole concept of defense. We also were very conscious of the changing government, the

communist influence and what was happening in many countries. As communications got better, we knew a lot more, had a lot more information. When I think of the incredible advances of fast information now compared to then, it's really very amazing, but we were very involved.

Our kids were raised to recognize that they had responsibilities to God, family and country. A lot of us faith-based people, we live day-to-day that we want to be prepared that something might happen any day. So the fear of death or the fear of being hurt takes second place to doing what you really need to do. Self-defense, the defense of the family and the defense of country—it still is applicable today. We were fortunate; all four of our boys did go into the military service. Actually, they went through ROTC[4] and went through college in military programs, and then served their time. Each one of them said they wouldn't have done it differently. They appreciate having done it. They met wonderful people, fellow students which they still keep in touch with today.

DePue: I want to spend some time then, talking about 1968. It's kind of an atypical year. It is a very important year in American history, and you're obviously at that time very politically informed and involved as well. So we'll start off—nothing particular in the first couple instances—but the Tet Offensive[5] started the year, as you will recall, and that causes quite a furor because suddenly it looked like the United States wasn't winning that war.

By late March, LBJ, [President] Lyndon Johnson, announces that he will not run [again] for president, which opens the field wide up. April fourth, Martin Luther King is assassinated and then there is this explosion of riots across the country. So I think I'll ask specifically: Your reaction when you heard about Martin Luther King's being assassinated.

Sullivan: Well you know, as I mentioned before, the uprisings were becoming so prevalent prior to that, that when it happened we thought, Oh my goodness. Of course we were living in Chicago. Chicago was very, very affected by it; I mean the city was in turmoil. We could see it wasn't just the campuses at that point, it was into the cities. You could see the whole attitude was building to where they wanted chaos, they wanted confusion.

DePue: They being?

Sullivan: The people who wanted—and I'll use the term, because it's a title now—change". The change was what they were going after. They didn't stop to think of what change might end up being. It was more of a chaotic thing and

[4] ROTC: Reserve Officer Training Corps. The Navy version is NROTC.
[5] The Tet Offensive occurred in late January through February, 1968, and was a massive offensive by the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army, with the objective to take over the entire country and drive out the American military. The offensive failed in a strictly military sense, but undermined the American public's resolve to continue waging war in Vietnam.

in fact, the people—the ones who assassinated Kennedy, who assassinated Martin Luther King—people were ignited to do these bad things. And right about that time, it became… Well there was bad and good really, with your interpretation of it, and that's not right. Those of us again, who believe that there are certain basic morals: you do not have the right to go out and murder somebody because you disagree with their views. Self-defense is a different thing altogether, and the young people have to learn to distinguish that difference.

You don't have the right to just go out and kill somebody because you disagree with them. I won't jump into the really long explanation, but that has grown into the attitude toward the killing of the unborn baby, which became "legal" in '72, not too long after that, because the attitude toward getting rid of something you disagreed or disliked, became prevalent. It wasn't a question of what you could do as self-defense, but rather you do it out of aggression.

DePue: Later that year—you already mentioned Bobby Kennedy's assassination, that was June fourth—well, in August, "The whole world is watching." That was the phrase that was stated by the protestors at the Democratic Convention in your hometown of Chicago, Illinois. How much do you remember about that event?

Sullivan: You know, the thing I remember most about that was we made a trip to New York for a family visit. I think it was during the convention actually, and so I was hearing the reports as we were out of state. I ended up defending then-Mayor Daley, because he was trying to keep order. I remember thinking, This is strange, I'm defending the Democrat there. But the reasons were that he was trying to do the right thing that needed to be done, rather than giving up. I cringe today when I hear, "I've never seen a crisis I couldn't take advantage of." Mayor Daley didn't take advantage of that crisis; he tried to stop it.

So it was in a way again, something that we saw coming. About that time was when I really got to know many of the democratic legislators, who were still very value oriented and yet they were being pushed aside, and that's when the feminist element really came to the front. The number of them at that time was probably, percentage wise, much greater than we have today.

DePue: "Them" being values-oriented Democrats?

Sullivan: No, no, no, the feminists.

DePue: Okay.

Sullivan: The feminists coming on the scene. They really attacked the value-oriented Democrats; they wanted to get rid of those values. Being a homemaker—they thought that was just the pits. We were lazy. We didn't want to share the workforce, and the men who let us do that were terrible. They had the whole thing upside down, which really developed the difference between the pro-

ERA people and the Stop ERA people. We realized how much we were going to lose. We would lose the home unit, the partnership of running the home on one income, rather than those who felt everybody should be in the workforce and get mom out of the home.

DePue: Since you brought this up—I was going to mention this a little bit later—but I think this is appropriate. I believe that the National Organization for Women, NOW, was organized formerly, in 1967. So that would have been a year before, very much an expression of the women's liberation movement. Here was one of their founding statements of purpose:

"We believe that a true partnership between the sexes demands a different concept of marriage. An equitable sharing of the responsibilities of home and family, and of the economic burdens of their support."

Sullivan: And that introduced no-fault divorce and did away with the responsibility of the husband to support the family and his wife. Women lost a tremendous amount of not just financial, an enormous amount of financial, let's say entitlement, but they lost a lot of respect by that being promoted, because when you have a statement like that, complete equality, it gets down to where you're arguing over. "I did the dishes last night. You can do them tonight."

A simple item to think about is in raising kids. If you have a boy and a girl or two boys and three girls or whatever, how do you teach these kids to be generous, thoughtful, helpful, just simultaneously? Just do it. Things need to be done just do it. It comes down to no, the boys will do this and the girls will do that. It was chaos. And so from early years, they got this very unfortunate attitude in the young minds of the males, that they should be doing the laundry and doing this and doing that, on a shared basis. Everything had to be equal, we're all the same. Well the bottom line is, we're not.

I'll argue the case that we women are just a heck of a lot better at rearing kids than males are. Excuse me being so blunt, but that's an observation of seventy-eight years. Maternal attention is just far, far more compatible with dealing with the next generation than the father's role. Yet the father's role, when it comes to responsibility and respectfulness for women, that's a great thing that we lost with that. In this business of equal everything, men lost respect for the feminine virtues. And I don't mean just opening doors and so on, but being considerate, thoughtful, really caring, which is what marriage and love is all about. Here in our late years, my husband does all the grocery shopping. He enjoys it and he's retired, and it's wonderful. Which leaves me a lot more time to still be involved in civic activity.

DePue: I think we talked about this very briefly: you also became aware, somewhere in this timeframe, about what the Students for a Democratic Society were all about.

Sullivan: Oh yes, yes. They were very prominent in Chicago and I had a very personal situation where a very close family friend who lived a couple blocks from us. Her children were a little bit older than mine and her eldest son was a senior in high school. She was a single mom. Her husband had a very bad accident when this boy was about seventh or eighth grade; he drowned on a summer vacation up in Lake Michigan. So she raised these kids and we helped her. Her children were like part of our family. Her son came home from high school and said, Mom, I've been given the opportunity to go to San Francisco for a training for three weeks for only fifteen dollars. Oh, she says, what's this training all about? He said well, it's a group called Students for a Democratic Society. Because she was involved with us and the anticommunist seminars and so on, she said, Wait a minute, wait a minute, you've been invited by who? Students for a Democratic Society and a bunch of us can go. And when is this trip? It was over Christmas, which didn't sit well at all and she said wait a minute, I'm going to look into this.

She called me up and she said, Kathleen what do I do? I said well, I'll tell you what, I've got quite a bit of literature on them; I know the background. Stokely Carmichael, who also came from Trinidad, was part of it at the time, and that leads into the story because I was pregnant with, I think my fifth baby at that time. And I went over to his school and asked to see the appropriate teacher whose class this was being promoted in, and I ended up meeting with four teachers. Three were laymen and one was a priest—this was a Catholic high school. And as I spoke, I told them and showed them the literature I had and so on, and I said there's several aspects here. Number one, this organization is very pro-communist; they are very radical. That word was really becoming very much used at that time, but as a title it wasn't necessarily that common yet. They sort of looked at me. Then, as I continued to plead the case, I said, Taking this youngster out of his home at Christmastime, to go for this training, and you're paying his way? I said, do you realize the enticement you're doing here and the confusion you're going to cause. One of these four looked at me, and I don't remember exactly which one; it was not the priest however. He said, "I bet you grew up in an all white neighborhood."

With that, I jumped out of my chair, I pounded the table and I said, You are just the epitome of this liberal line that we're getting today. I grew up in a country with more Negroes than you will ever meet in your whole life. I grew up in the same place as Stokely Carmichael. Another one in the group said, "Who's Stokely Carmichael?" I said, That just shows how little you know about what's going on in the country, and I stormed out, left the meeting.

The priest did follow me out and tried to apologize I guess, and I just said, I'm too upset to even talk any more. What you're doing is bad, it's wrong. And I left and went home. The senior—his name was Ralph—came into my house a few hours later, storming, "Mrs. Sullivan, how dare you do

this?" I grabbed his shoulders and sat him down in my kitchen chair, next to—I was feeding one of the kids. I said, Ralph, you listen to me. I then proceeded to tell him what I knew about the SDS and so on. He calmed right down and went back home.

That night his mother called and she said okay, he's not going. I said, Oh, thank goodness we got through to him.

But the funny thing was, when he came home from school, he told his mother, Do you know what that Mrs. Sullivan did? She went over to my school and my teacher bawled me out in front of the class for having somebody interfering in my life. Now, you can visualize that scene. If anybody did that today, I probably couldn't even have got into the school to begin with, because procedures are different, but he was embarrassed in front of the school because a neighbor took an interest in what they were doing with him. He was so mad, he came home and he told his mother, "I'm going to go over and tell her off." She says he walked back very quiet after an hour and she said, Well? He said, "Well I didn't tell her; off she told me off." And by then he had the handful of literature.

But we did know what we were talking about. We had the references and the research from both sides. I had the SDS literature also—like the statement you read there—we knew that's what they intended.

I'll tell you the truth, I want to thank you, because you have got me thinking back on a lot of these things. Like I told my grandkids, I said, You know, Papa has always wanted to write a book about our life experiences and so on. He hasn't quite got around to it, but there's something going to be in the Illinois Library[6] that you can all go and listen to.

DePue: Well, did you know about the name you hear about now—in terms of radicals from that era—Michael Ayers? Was that a person that you were aware of at that time?

Sullivan: It's not Michael.

DePue: Oh, I'm sorry.

Sullivan: You've got me in my senior moment now. Oh yes, very knowledgeable, and Bernardine Dohrn, his wife. Ayers and Saul Alinsky. I knew people who were trained by Saul Alinsky in Chicago, and we just followed Alinsky's operation in Illinois and nationwide really. He had a network out early, in Texas, California, and that was really building. SDS came out of that and the [Black] Panthers, and a lot of different groups.

[6] This will actually be found in the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library collection which is part of the State of Illinois Library.

I remember when they stormed into Carson Pirie Scott in downtown Chicago, which was written up in *Rules for Radicals* I believe, or it might have been a later one. They organized these busloads of people, went into Carsons on a busy day, and bought things and had them sent COD. Stores did COD deliveries much more commonly then. I mean tons. I forget the number of transactions. When they were delivered at their house, they refused to accept them and sent them all back. The purpose was to create chaos. It's all written there; they were very proud of it. Now that may be civil disobedience, but it really is not the right way to go.

DePue: It's William Ayers, my mistake.

Sullivan: That's right, Bill Ayers. And I believe it's Bill Ayers' father that actually arranged to get Obama into Harvard. At the time, Bill Ayers' father, I believe, was chairman of the major utility company; Commonwealth Edison Company, which was big in Illinois, but I think they operate in other states too and so on. So I am very familiar with that whole organization over the years.

DePue: And so much of it was happening right in your neighborhood of Chicago.

Sullivan: It sure was.

DePue: I wanted to finish off with the year of 1968 and get your impressions of Richard Nixon, the Republican that emerged.

Sullivan: Well that was interesting. At the time, as he was emerging he was mainly known for his work fighting communism; the committee he was on investigated influence in our country and our government and so on. I was very involved in the Goldwater campaign, as I told you, and as an outgrowth of that, I got to know someone who was one of the Watergate people. I'll think of his name in a minute. I actually became his co-chairman for the congressional district at that time, and he was brought to Washington by Nixon, became part of his administration. Jeb Magruder was his name. A very nice young man and I worked very hard as his co-chairman and so on, but he got caught up in the Washington crowd and unfortunately, they got swept into doing things that were improper also.

The Watergate apparatus was not appropriate, it was wrong. But when the whole thing collapsed, having known Jeb Magruder, my husband and I felt that once he got on the stand, he would tell the truth, which he did. The poor guy went to jail, spent time in jail. On the lighter side, I thought, Well, I stayed home and raised our six kids and tried to keep things back in the right track.

DePue: Did you find that Nixon was the right kind of Republican to represent your views?

Sullivan: Well at the time I thought so, but looking back in history, there certainly were others that would have been better. But there again, let's say the administrative command of the party would be doing one thing quite different to those of us at the grassroots, who had way more values. That's when I learned a lot about the command structure and how, if they have the power they'll use it.

DePue: They being the people in the party elites?

Sullivan: Right, on both sides. As the years went on, the Democrat hierarchy became more and more influenced by the feminists and by the pro-choice movement. That was their main goal and I think still is, where the Republican Party became more pro-life and more conservative, and that's what the fight is today among the party rank and file. You notice today—we were talking about it yesterday—the activity going on here, there aren't any candidates really, that run on a pro-choice issue any more. It just doesn't even come up at all. They never try to defend it, justify it. Once in a while they'll say, Oh well, you know a woman's right to choose. To choose what? They don't want to talk beyond that point.

DePue: We probably ought to put a marker in here; I'll just mention very briefly, you're in Florida. This is January 26, 2012. You are just a few days away from the primary election in that state, and of course 2012, that means you've got a very spirited Republican race that's going on in Florida right now, so that was what you were referring to earlier. I know that later on you're going to have to cut us short a little bit today, because you've got things to do with reference to the primary later today.

Sullivan: That's right. It's very, very much in the final stretch and lots going on.

DePue: Okay. This is the point in time I'd like to turn to the issue of equal rights and the Equal Rights Amendment, but let's first get your family moved to Glenview. I know that's not a big move, but can you talk to us very briefly about why you made that move in 1969.

Sullivan: Mainly we wanted to get closer to the high school that we wanted to send our sons to, and that was in 1969. Our eldest had started as a freshman there and it was quite a drive from Mount Prospect to Glenview, so we decided to look around in Glenview for a different home, which we did move to in June of '69 and lived there for thirty-four years. The interesting thing is that soon after we moved there, we realized how the liberal education policies were in fact creeping into the private school that we had deliberately moved to, thinking that would be the best school for our kids. Three of our boys went there but when it came time to send our fourth boy to high school, we switched. He got a scholarship to a different school and he went there instead, that was not as openly liberal at that time, which was the late '70s. Also, he was very well versed and grounded in more conservative principles, because he's the fifth in

line of our kids. His views were really respected very highly at this other school. He ended up being quite a leader there and it was interesting to see that the leadership qualities of substance, back to values, are recognized if the youngsters are well informed and can articulate the points. And that's what's happening today.

Here we are in 2012 and that "March for Life" that occurred this past weekend in D.C.; there were—depending on who you talk to—three hundred to four hundred thousand people there. I looked at about two hours of the marches going by on EWTN Television and everybody seemed to be under thirty or forty. The young people, the teenagers even, were overwhelming, and that's really the hope of the future. Those young people are value oriented. They understand the individual's worth and independence. All they need is to get the experience, get the knowledge, and they will in fact start taking over governments at different levels and hopefully do a much better job than we're in today. Because they're going to be paying for what we have at the moment, which is an enormous debt, and I feel very sorry for them.

DePue: Well, to a certain extent, I think you could make a good case that the people who are leading the country today are the sons and daughters of this time period that we're talking about, the late '60s and early '70s.

Sullivan: No question, no question at all.

DePue: So let's get to the ERA and I'll kind of set it up very briefly. The Equal Rights Amendment issue had been kicking around in the United States Congress all the way back into the early 1920s, shortly after the passage of women's vote. But it didn't really pick up steam until the late '60s. I won't go into too much detail there, but it was March 22, 1972 that Congress passed the Equal Rights Amendment. It passed in the House, 354-23, so an overwhelming victory in the House. In the Senate the vote was 84-8, so again, 90 percent of the Senate voted for it. Sam Ervin was the only really vocal voice against it in either House, as I understand—Sam Ervin, the Senator from North Carolina.

Sullivan: That's right.

DePue: Let me just read the language here, because I think it's important to start with the specific language of ERA, and then we can get into much more detail.

The First Article: "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States, or by any state, on account of sex." Second: "The Congress shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article." Third: "This amendment shall take effect two years after the date of ratification."

The way the ratification process worked at that time was that as of the date that it passed Congress—that was again, March 22, 1972—the clock

started ticking and there was seven years then, for three fourths of the states to ratify that amendment.

Sullivan: Right.

DePue: So one other item to throw in here about the same timeframe. June 23, 1972 there was Title IX of the Education Amendments for a statute that had been passed a few years before—Title IX is very well-known today—that reads: "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, being denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."

Primarily, we know that today because of its impact on women's involvement in sports in the country.

Sullivan: Right.

DePue: So here's the way I guess we start all this. How did you first hear about the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment?

Sullivan: The day it passed, we in Illinois heard about it because a congressional representative that I knew personally and worked very hard for—I think there are very few people that are aware of this today—he unfortunately did not realize it was coming up. He had just won a special election to fill a vacant seat.

DePue: Who was this again?

Sullivan: Philip Crane. He had gone in, in December, and I worked very hard to put him in. But at that point, I was not aware of the ERA moving to the degree that it was. Phil, unfortunately, not being briefed and up to speed on that particular item, he voted for it. When that became known to us back in Illinois, we exploded; we realized how important it was to communicate with our representatives. We had all worked so hard to put him in office, and that issue was not an issue in the campaign.

DePue: When you say "we", was this a formal group or just people of like political mind with you at the time?

Sullivan: People of like political mind. As I say, he won a special election that opened up when Donald Rumsfeld moved to be head of the new department called the Office of Economic Opportunity. They had opened up that congressional seat, and there were many issues, mainly foreign policy, military, that were premiere in those days—in '69. So here comes the ERA for a vote and Phil did not realize what the arguments were against it, and we were not really organized at that point, to stop it. And as you have the figures, I'm sure it

moved across the country—the ratifications from many, many states happened in a matter of six months or a year—right after it passed.

DePue: I'll go through that very quickly and then turn it back over to you. March, '72, of course it passes Congress. Hawaii was waiting for the opportunity to pass, and within hours the next day Hawaii became the first to ratify. Nebraska was the second and within a year, there were thirty other states.

Sullivan: Right. I don't recall exactly at what point during that year as to the importance of that; it was the second part of that first section. Congress…would you read that main first sentence again, because the first few words get at the problem.

DePue: And I think I know what you're going to get at. "Equality of rights under the law, shall not be denied or abridged by the United States, or by any state, on account of sex."

Sullivan: Yes okay, hold it there. See, under the law. Well, laws in general, equality under the law. But that's when we started to realize the law gave women the right to special rates in social security. The law gave women the rights to alimony. There were a lot of things that women benefited from laws that were different, and when we started to really look into what that "under the law," under what law? And then the second part says Congress has the right to write laws in this regard. We could start seeing what would be put in there by the feminists; equality of everything. It was like a bomb exploding, because it could turn all law upside down, and the meaning of those things. Women benefited by having recognition in law because of our being female. Did we want to give up all that? No.

So the vocabulary of the whole thing was so open ended that it was a shock to a great number of women across the country. As we started we didn't have the internet, the communications then; it took more time and effort to really get the word out. A group of us in Glenview at the time got together and came up with the recommended name of "Stop ERA," and the stop sign. And actually, a call was made from my home, by a group of us of about ten or twelve, to Phyllis, saying, Okay, here's what we've discussed, we've got a name, and we think you ought to really lead this group and start organizing. Eagle Forum was in operation at that time, but we then shifted specifically to the issue and formed the Stop ERA movement.

DePue: My conversations with Mrs. Schlafly about this, she was a little bit late in getting into the issue because her focus was elsewhere. I can't recall the specifics;, you certainly can check out that interview where she talks about it in some detail. But others were making her aware of the issue. She says, Well, I don't know what my views are, and they said, Well, if you check it out Mrs. Schlafly, we know what your views will end up being.

Sullivan: Yes.

DePue: And certainly by late ’72, early ’73, she was ready to take on the issue and take on the role of leadership. Is that how you remember it?

Sullivan: Absolutely. I do remember that at that point she was very involved with foreign policy. That has always been one of her main interests—the foreign policy and overall governmental operations in many issues. She was always multi-issue, but the urgency to put the brakes on that particular one really got her attention. She’s always been brilliant in researching things. When she started looking into what laws would be affected and how it would change the whole cultural relationship for women, boy. she could see through it so clearly. Stop ERA then became her main focus.

DePue: I wanted to just go through some of the issues before we get into any details, and just get your personal views on some of these things and the evolving role of women in American society. So at that time—and again, I’m talking about what your views would have been at that time—did you have objections to women pursuing careers outside of the home?

Sullivan: No, not really, but I always had a premiere interest and avocation and admiration for family life, for having children. I thought the greatest role we had was to bear and raise the next generation. So if you could do both or if you could fit it in your time schedule—which, if you had one or two children, could be done easier than if you had six or eight—it would depend on what type of career. But a blanket thing, to say women absolutely should not have—and I never thought of it as a career because a homemaker was a career—an outside career or do a career is really what it amounted to.

Back then I was very, very strong on the premiere role of women was to take care and raise the children, but also be very, very effective behind the scenes with the men. That’s the beauty frankly, I’ve lived to realize, that affects marriage, affects your relationship with elected officials, with businesses. Women can go in and talk—the customer—and have a great impact. So there’s so many roles that we did do and could do. I never felt shut out. In fact, the only people that really tried to shut me up over the years were the feminists.

DePue: How about the whole issue of, if a woman did want to pursue a career in business or industry or medicine or education, that there was this glass ceiling, that there would be limits to how far she would be able to advance, that the more senior positions would always be given to the men?

Sullivan: That’s probably debatable and frankly, I think as time goes on, it plays out as to the women that do succeed in becoming, let’s say top management and so on, are not usually the feminists, because they’re very difficult to work with. Their goal and their methods are different to most women. Women can be very effective being charming and being feminine, as well as talented and degreed and all that, but the attitude makes a difference.

Now, the women who wanted to get in there and say, Move aside, I want to take over, their attitudes were not really accepted in business and with men. But they didn't want to admit that, so they found all this business of women are paid less and da da da. Of course women were paid less. There were many less of us in the workforce, period. It was a propaganda war and it really had a lot to do with, Get women out of the home and then there would be less children. The population control aspect of it cannot be ignored or downplayed.

DePue: You didn't buy in on the arguments about equal pay for equal work then?

Sullivan: No. In fact in many cases, I think they got priority, because it became the in thing to have a certain number of women in our company, or have women there. So the ones who were able to get along with the company in general, with men, were in many cases given extra bonuses and things, because they were an asset in the whole situation.

I think the percentage of feminists today in private business and so on, is probably not that great at all, because they predominate in legislatures. Actually, they don't even predominate there—the leadership, yes. But they're not compatible and happy. They want to rule things and you do it my way. I was a victim of those feminists in Illinois Legislature, who wiped out the funding for a very successful program I was running. And the ones that did it overruled. The men wanted to keep funding Project Reality; the Project Reality was in the budget up to '07, when the feminists took it out.

DePue: What was Project Reality? Can you flesh out that story for us?

Sullivan: Oh, that's quite a story. I formed Project Reality as a result of an obvious need, and that was to teach in education the healthy concept of sexual abstinence. I developed that in the '80s. In '86 we really got going, through the '90s. From '87 for twenty-one years, we were funded by the state of Illinois to teach kids how to be healthy. If you don't get involved in sex, drugs and alcohol, you'll be healthy and your life's goals are going to be much more attainable; everything in your life will be better. It was so successful Mark, that our cost… The reason I went to the government to get funded is I wanted to get in the playing field of where our tax money was going in the wrong direction.

Up to two years ago there were fourteen programs run by the Illinois Health Department. Fourteen programs to pick up the pieces **after** kids get into problems. Parents too soon, male responsibility, da da da—fourteen—to take care of problem kids, either from drugs, alcohol and sex. Most of that had to do with sex. Here we come along and for twenty-one years were funded by the Illinois Legislature, and all of a sudden the feminists won out. Why? Because our program really was so popular that we were cutting into the clientele of those fourteen others. They were having a hard time pleading the

case that they needed more money because they had less clients, and the really less clients in the six hundred schools that were teaching abstinence education, including the city of Chicago, believe me. Very interesting, true-to-life things. In '08, we suddenly were de-funded, just cut out.

The heads of both legislative bodies in Illinois said, You're in there, it's chapter so and so, line so and so. This aide to the governor—who is no longer the governor—tells me, "Mrs. Sullivan, I have no money to give you." I said, I'm not asking you for your money. This is a grant my company has had from the state of Illinois for twenty-one years. "I have no money to give you." That was the end of Project Reality funding. We had got $1.2 million for the last five years in a row. At ten dollars a student, we served a hundred and twenty thousand students in Illinois.

DePue: That would have happened during the Blagojevich Administration then?

Sullivan: Sure did. His sister in-law was one of the main ones, [Sara] Feigenholtz. There are a bunch of them that are still there.

DePue: Okay, let's go back to the early 1970s though. I want to get your opinion about one other thing—women in the military—your views on that subject, because this is going to be one of the main arguments that's going on for the next ten years or so.

Sullivan: Has had a terrible affect on our military preparedness and our military operations.

DePue: But your views in 1972 on that issue.

Sullivan: Vehemently against it. I think it's a sad, sad indictment of American culture, that we have to have women in practically every category of the military the way we do today. Now big differences. Under ERA, they could not be denied being in every category of the military. That was a big point in saying you can't discriminate. They would have been put on the frontlines to a much greater degree than they are now. This was before the volunteer military by the way. This ERA debate started when we still had a draft. Under the draft, women would have no separate discussion or opportunities at all. It would have to be across the board, applicable to everybody: submarine service, everywhere.

There's research now to show the effects on unborn babies by women being in the submarines. I just heard a talk by Elaine Donnelly a week ago talking about the effects. Let's face it, you have men and women in close quarters like that, there's going to be intimacy and pregnancies result. Some of those babies, because of certain things in the re-circulated air situation of a submarine unit, affects the unborn babies, they have found out. Now, that may seem minor, because women are not in all submarine units, but under ERA, you could not segregate them. They wouldn't allow the opportunity. Today,

because it's volunteer there's still a minor amount of women and not that many of them choose to go into submarines. But there's combat units, there's all other things.

Unfortunately, what's happening today, because a volunteer military demands very generous economic compensation, many single moms are going into the military for economic reasons—the benefits and the financial compensation. Because that is happening, it's causing chaos with the children of those single moms being left at home. It's not a good setup and overall, when I hear it discussed, I think, Isn't it sad that in this highly sophisticated country of ours, we have to have women out defending the country.

Now, certain women have always been there, but they ought to be very, very limited roles. They ought to be stateside. We should not be putting our women, particularly single moms, over in combat areas.

DePue: That goes back to this whole issue of the glass ceiling, or certain things that women are prohibited from doing and therefore, the resentment that some women who have those aspirations have. I wanted to get to a quote. I'm going to read from, *Why We Lost the ERA*, by Jane Mansbridge. It's a scholarly effort, but she also is pretty clear where her leanings are on the whole issue, since the title again is, *Why We Lost the ERA*. I wanted to get your reaction to this quote; this goes to the issue of what would have happened when the ERA, if it had passed, then women would have had to serve in the military.

She says that, "If ERA had been ratified, the Supreme Court would have been unlikely to use it to bring about major changes in the relations between American men and women, at least in the foreseeable future. Nor do the American public want any significant changes in gender roles, whether at work, at home or in society at large. The groups that fought for the ERA and the groups that fought against it however, had a stake in believing that the ERA would produce these changes. With both the proponents and the opponents exaggerating the likely effects of the ERA, legislators in wavering states became convinced that ERA might in fact produce important substantive changes and the necessary votes were lost."

Later she goes on to argue about this whole issue about women in combat units. She's making the case that, even if the ERA amendment had passed, the Supreme Court would have been reluctant to force those changes.

Sullivan: When was that book written?

DePue: This is fairly recent, 1986.

Sullivan: Well that's twenty-five years ago.

DePue: So it's not fairly recent, no.

Sullivan: No. The atmosphere then was quite different than it is now. I would say that the way things have played out in those twenty-five years proves that our fears were legitimate, because just look at how it's operating. Bear in mind that we still are under a voluntary military, and it would be way different if we had—or have to bring back—a draft situation. And her jump to the Supreme Court not permitting it—the Supreme Court will permit anything that the makeup of the court philosophically believes in.

DePue: I think that was the issue that I wanted to hear you address.

Sullivan: Yes. And the way things moved after that book was written showed that the Supreme Court got very liberal for a while. Now it's, let's say, more balanced. On the other hand, unfortunately they sometimes they make laws, but I would read her quote there as she's saying they would not make that law. But what if the draft were in there and it was quite clear the draft meant everybody belongs, any and everywhere. The makeup of the court could, if they philosophically agreed with absolute equality, they would interpret it the way the law was written. If they didn't, it would go the other way. So her relying on the Supreme Court to do the right thing, I think that's her opinion. The way it's played out isn't necessarily that way.

DePue: I don't like to do this too often, but I read this as to suggest that she saw the Supreme Court—to use the terminology we would use today—that the Supreme Court Justices would interpret the Constitution as a living document, that it adapts to the times, rather than as a strict interpretation of what the Constitution says.

Sullivan: But see, that's a big problem: the ones that interpret it as living, which means changing. It grows up, they'll use the term. The court sees it as growing up. Things have changed, cultures changed, and that doesn't necessarily mean it's changing for better position. In many cases it changes for a very wrong direction, as with *Roe v. Wade* and others, but *Roe v. Wade* is a premiere example.

Let me mention something that happened over this weekend. I think I told you my theory of fifty-four million abortions having happened. There's this block of a hundred million voters in this country directly associated with the abortion issues; mothers who have had it, fathers, grandparents, at least a hundred million. I had occasion this weekend to mention this theory to a prospective candidate—not the presidential level at all—it's someone running for a local office. It sort of startled him, and I went on and said, you know that block really concerns me, because they are suffering the consequences to a greater degree than I think people realize; the only way they can deal with it is, we don't talk about it. He looked at me and hesitated—there was two or three other people standing there—and he said, "I have to tell you something, I aborted three of my children." I just looked at him and he said, "Yes, I can't help but think of what would those three children be like today." He now has

four. "What would they be like? They'd be older than the ones. Yes, I do think about it and I don't really want to talk about it." But yet he felt compelled to tell us perfect strangers in an answer to my just bringing up this observation. To tell you the truth Mark, that's frightening to me. It's at least a hundred million people in that category.

DePue: I want to address one more issue that Mrs. Schlafly was very concerned about in the specific language of the ERA Amendment in the first place. So let me read that first article again. "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state, on account of sex." She found it very curious that it said sex, instead of between men and women.

Sullivan: Or gender, yeah.

DePue: Or gender. So the last question I want to ask you about in terms of your views on this whole subject at that time, is what the impact would be in reference to homosexuality.

Sullivan: Oh, it's playing out as to what they intended, and not just lesbian, gay, transgender, but now we have "Q." I was at a public health meeting and I said, "What's this Q?" Oh, well that's questioning. This was a State of Florida public health meeting about two years ago. I said, Well, where does it fit here; we're talking about education? Well see kids, they don't really know what gender they are, so they're questioning it. This is in education health programs. Now I haven't found any curricula that say this in Florida, and I'm not aware of it in any other state, but they're talking about it. I said, What do you mean? Well, see gender really is not your sex gender, your physical gender, it's in your heart, it's how you feel about yourself. So kids should be encouraged to look into both ways: homosexuality or heterosexuality, and explain to them. And I said, Equally acceptable—you are advocating for educational purposes? Well, you know, yes, but they fumbled around it and so on.

Talk about causing chaos? I mean that's going against nature. Now let's really tell the truth about it. Sex and gender is there for a purpose, to keep things going, not just for pleasure. Now, if they really were teaching the complete open facts, that would be one thing, and it would depend on the grade and so on, but they're talking about elementary school. That's emotional confusion to young children and it causes—and I feel very strongly on this—it is the basic cause today in most bullying cases and situations. It causes chaos and bullying in those young minds, and here that's becoming part of what our health department wants taught. So, under ERA, that would be encoded in the Constitution. But they're doing it anyway, without the ERA Amendment.

But the next most important thing—or parallel most important thing—is the abortion question. We could not have a law that would outlaw abortion,

because it would only apply to one gender or one sex, and that would be discriminatory.

DePue: Well, you've talked a lot and passionately about the abortion issue. We should mention here, *Roe v. Wade* is the landmark Supreme Court decision, and that was in 1973. So again, a lot of these things are happening about the same time.

Sullivan: That's right.

DePue: Nineteen seventy-two is the passage of ERA—the debate starts about that time. About a year later they abolished the draft and went with an all-volunteer army. You get *Roe v. Wade* and to a certain extent, there are some in the feminist movement that would blame *Roe v. Wade* as kind of conflating those two issues, and that they are really separate and not the same issues.

Sullivan: No, very few would take it that way. Most pro-ERA people want abortion legalized. They believe in abortion. In fact, very, very few pro-ERA people that I've run into are pro-life.

DePue: Okay. How much more time do we have today here Mrs. Sullivan?

Sullivan: About five minutes.

DePue: That's what I feared. Let's just finish off with this then. Nineteen seventy-two, you acted pretty vigorously again when you found out the news that the Congress had passed ERA, and you could watch it flying through the states.

Sullivan: Right.

DePue: It seemed like Republican or Democrat, most people in power positions were lining up for it. I mean you had an array of both Republican and Democrat president's wives who were strongly in favor of it. Would you say it would be fair to say that the news media strongly favored it?

Sullivan: Yes. In fact, I personally did a survey—counted the minutes of coverage out of Chicago—but I think it was later than that. It might have been more around '80. Oh, it was really overwhelmingly pro-ERA. We'd get about 15 percent of coverage, 20 percent at most, but by then, a lot of us were learning how to be spokesmen on it. Phyllis did a beautiful job of encouraging and providing media training and speaker training for a lot of her followers, which made it possible to really bring the debate out.

DePue: Well that will be the subject of our next discussion, so my closing question for today then is, in 1972 and 1973, how did you ever think you would be able to stop this juggernaut?

Sullivan: That is a good question. The main thing I did not realize—and it was a good thing I didn't—the power of people at the administrative level of different organizations and government. So we the people at the grassroots, if we had the correct arguments that made sense and were reasonable, we could get out there and really affect the outcome, and we believed that. Phyllis was a marvelous leader and she inspired confidence in the rank and file that you could do it, and we did it.

DePue: Were you surprised then, in 1972, that Illinois—which was generally a liberal, progressive state—that Illinois of all places voted against ERA?

Sullivan: I don't remember the very first floor votes, but it wasn't long before we had made enough contacts with both sides of the aisle that we knew we had the support, and that was very encouraging. And some of the Democrat legislators, like Tommy Hanahan, was just—he was just fabulous. He was from Lake County.

Now one person I've been—have you ever heard of Penny Pullen?

DePue: Yes.

Sullivan: She might be somebody… If you have time or want to go further, she was a legislator at the time—the youngest legislator elected actually—back in the early '80s I think, late '70s or '80. She was one of our leaders, with Tommy Hanahan and McNamara, who were both Democrats.

DePue: McNamara, is that Mack, is that his first name?

Sullivan: McNamara is his last name, and I'm trying to think of his first name. I have it someplace, but Penny is still in touch with him. John, I think it is, John McNamara. He was a state representative.

DePue: Penny is on our list of people we want to interview.

Sullivan: Yes. She knows a lot of the actual legislative maneuvering.

DePue: Okay. I think what we want to start with: I can give some background on what happened in that first year in the Illinois State Legislature, and why it didn't pass that first year. Then I'll let you pick it up from there, because I don't know that Mrs. Schlafly or your movement had much impact that first year, but it certainly picked up steam very quickly after that.

Sullivan: Yes. And Penny would probably know just who did it at that point.

DePue: I've heard that story from a couple of different perspectives, so I'll toss it out at the beginning of the next session and let you see if that sounds right from your perspective.

Sullivan: Okay. Would you like to set another date?

DePue: Yeah, let's go ahead and stop the interview, the formal interview. Thank you very much; it's been a wonderful conversation again today.

Sullivan: Thank you very much. It's really intriguing to relive some of this.

DePue: Okay.

(end of interview #3 #4 continues)

Interview with Kathleen Sullivan

ISE-A-L-2011-059.04

Interview # 4: February 14, 2012

Interviewer: Mark DePue

DePue: Today is Tuesday, February 14, 2012. My name is Mark DePue, Director of Oral History at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. Today I'm in my office doing a telephonic interview with Mrs. Kathleen Sullivan. Good morning.

Sullivan: Good morning Mark, it's a pleasure to be with you.

DePue: Happy Valentines Day.

Sullivan: Well thank you, thank you.

DePue: This is an interesting subject to be talking about on Valentines Day isn't it?

Sullivan: Yes. Our youngest daughter's birthday was yesterday so she is quite a valentine, and it's a very, very important day for us in our family.

DePue: Well, we've had several discussions before. I think this is our fourth session. This is a fascinating series of interviews and an important series, since it deals with one of the most explosive issues of the 1970s and '80s which still has major implications for how we sort through political and social and cultural issues today. Obviously, we're talking about the Equal Rights Amendment fight. We finished off with just the beginning of that fight in 1972. I wanted to know in your case, why Illinois became such an important battleground state for the amendment.

Sullivan: I do think it was to a great degree because there was bipartisan concern on the fallout, the consequences of the so-called Equal Rights Amendment. It was quite amazing how much support the Stop ERA movement had from the democratic side of the aisle—leadership in the Chicago area as well as downstate. Downstate was very concerned about the ramifications of ERA and even the Chicago democratic organization then, realized that these were serious things.

Back in the '70s and '80s we had three representatives from each state district, and that made it a very unusual challenge you might say, for dealing with legislators. So we had a very long battle, because number one, the state required a three-fifths majority to pass a constitutional amendment, Ironically that was put in by the feminists for other reasons, that they wanted to have a supermajority like that—the three-fifths—but when it came to the ERA they wanted to get rid of it. But the supporters, the ones who were opposed to the ERA, felt that the consequences were so serious that we really needed to hold onto that three-fifths. And if I remember correctly, most of the votes in Illinois centered around that three-fifths requirement. Toward the end of the voting, we really only voted on the three-fifths requirement. I do not recall actually voting on the amendment itself.

DePue: And for many years, especially in the early years, I know that the sequence was that both the House and the Senate would vote on the three-fifths measure, and then after that had gone down, then they turned around and they voted on ERA itself to see if they could get to the simple majority.

I want to read something to you that came up in an interview I had with Governor Jim Edgar. It deals with this first year and it took me by surprise when I first heard it. I'm going to read it to you and see what your reaction is and if that sounds familiar to you. And this was again, dealing with that first year. Quoting him:

> *ERA was up in the House. Maybe it passed the Senate, because there's no question about the Senate. It had not become the big divisive issue it had in later years, and Republicans were as supportive as Democrats at that point. The lead in the house was a woman from the suburbs, Genie Chapman, and the Republican counterpart was*

> *Giddy Dyer. They are cosponsors of this bill, both from the suburbs, Republican and Democrat, very strong on women's issues, as most of the Republican women legislators at the time were, probably more so than the democratic women. Some of the democratic women were from the city, and they didn't care too much. The suburbs women, who are mainly Republican and some Democrats, this was very important to them. The issue got called; everybody figured it was going to pass. At that point in Illinois politics, Genie Chapman, who was a delegate at the national convention, had joined up with Adlai Stevenson and Jesse Jackson in blocking Daley and some of his people.*

I'm going to take an aside here from what the Governor is talking about and just kind of lay out the groundwork. After the very contentious '68 election, the Democrats changed their party policies for how delegates are selected to the national convention. They put in provisions where you had to have basically a representative mix of men and women, young and old, minorities and the white population. Because of that, when the Daley Administration basically had a lot to say about the city's delegates that were going down to the convention in Florida, for 1972, there was a counter movement that was led by—as he mentioned here—Jesse Jackson and Genie Chapman I believe, and some others, putting up this other slate of delegates. It went all the way to the Supreme Court and the Supreme Court ruled: No, the Democratic Party can make its own rules for how it selects its delegates. The [Richard] Daley folks were basically locked out of the convention. So that's what Edgar is talking about here.

> [Quoting Edgar again.] *They excluded Daley from being chairman of the delegation, and some of his people from even being delegates. Daley was, needless to say, not happy, and Genie Chapman was an ally with Stevenson and Jackson. So the word came out, teach her a lesson on ERA. Nobody thinks it would kill it, just that we're not going to pass it then. Make her think about it. So the debate came on, a little bit of a heated debate, but we were pretty convinced the votes were there. There wasn't a lot going on that day, just the ERA; the vote came up and it didn't pass, and everybody was kind of surprised. But that was the reason given: Daley had sent the word down, We're going to teach Chapman a lesson. But nobody thought it would kill the ERA, it just wasn't going to pass this session.* Does that sound familiar at all?

Sullivan: Yes it sure does. (chuckles) That was about the time I was really getting involved. That fits with my former statement there, that we did have very, very strong support from the democratic powers that be, in Chicago even, but we certainly had very strong support in the downstate districts. And what

emerged out of that, I think—looking at it in hindsight—was that the democratic power structure at that time realized the real agenda of the feminists. The feminist philosophy was just emerging then. It was emerging in the Republican as well as Democratic Parties. It's interesting to have Governor Edgar note that there were more Republican legislators at that point; I think several of them were elected right around those years, mainly because of their campaigning on the ERA, where the Democrats were much more apprehensive.

We had Republican male support, I think about even throughout the state. Though I remember a couple Republican legislators in the House who had very vocal and strong wives who were of the feminist movement and philosophy; their wives were pushing them to vote for it, and the rank and file in their districts were saying no, we don't want it, here are all the problems it's going to cause.

I'd like to mention, you might say, a historic playing out of that debate from way back then. Right now, here we are in 2012, and there's the big debate going on between government interference in religion, and government wanting to tell religious groups, particularly the Catholic church, how they should run their Catholic healthcare and insurance companies and so on. Stop and think: if ERA were in effect, wouldn't the government be dictating to the Church that they would have to ordain women? The Church would have a very difficult time saying that no, our practice, our teaching as established by Christ, was a male clergy. If Christ wanted to have women in the level of clergy and so on, he certainly would have appointed his own mother, but he didn't. And in fact, our church teaches that the clergy are supposed to be in persona Christi, in the person of Christ.

But now, enter in the government. If the government can tell the church how they can rule on moral issues such as abortion, contraceptives, sterilization and so on, the government would be trying to tell the church who they can or can't ordain, according to nondiscrimination, because of the Equal Rights Amendment, so-called. So it was very, very wise that we were able to bring it out and debate it; at the time, the ordination of women came up, but it was sort of pushed aside and said oh, that will never happen. Of course when it started back in the '60s, we didn't think we'd ever have abortion either, but we knew that that was a main goal of the feminist movement on both sides of the aisle. And of course it's very definitely a prime goal for them, and they are promoting it with our tax money. A lot of us, whether we're religious, faith-based or not, it's a terrible infringement to demand that tax money go to pay for abortions.

DePue: There's a lot of different ways I want to go from this point in the interview, but let me start with this. Do you think if it would have passed Illinois in 1972, and it probably would have if this incident we just talked about with

Mayor Daley being upset about his delegation in Florida hadn't happened. If it had passed in 1972 in Illinois, would it have become law in the United States?

Sullivan: Very possibly, because that real opening up of the whole debate, and the movement in the late '60s and '70s, was when Phyllis Schlafly became interested. Many, many of us really encouraged her to start a movement to Stop ERA, and came up with the name and the whole movement. As soon as Illinois got going on that, because of our very heated debate and votes and so on, other states picked up on it and it put the brakes on it going through. I think at that point it needed only three or four more to reach the amount required, but then certain states started repealing it—the ones that had passed early on without opening up the debate—and that became very controversial. Were they permitted to repeal? Of course the feminists and the more liberal judicial people were really caught and argued—and they're still arguing over—can a state repeal a stand? Should it be counted as legitimate or not? After the extension was added on and they still never reached the required amount, it became a moot point. So yes, if Illinois had passed it, it probably would have gone through. But as time went on, I think it would be very strong arguments for repealing it. But that's a whole other thing.

DePue: The actual votes in the Illinois House that year—and I don't have this for every year—but since '72 was a crucial year in the Illinois House, there were eighty-two votes cast for the amendment, seventy-six against. So 53 percent, but as you mentioned earlier, they needed that three-fifths [60%]. That was part of the Illinois Constitution in 1970 for making amendments, either to the national or to the state Constitution.

Sullivan: That's right.

DePue: In the Senate it was thirty votes for and twenty-one against. So I think in the Senate that year it passed, but not a vote to spare was the comment that was made. Not a vote to spare.

Sullivan: Yes. And I think that happened more than once, that it was a matter of one vote in either the House or the Senate. We voted, I think a total of sixteen times, and I would say half of those were extremely close.

DePue: Oftentimes, as I understand, it might pass one House and not the other, and it wasn't necessarily the same chamber each year it came up.

Sullivan: That's correct. And also, different ones would switch their votes in different years, depending on, let's say, how tough a challenge they might have in the election coming up. In fact, the one case I mentioned of a House member who was genuinely very much against this, he saw the problems but he was pressured very definitely by his wife. Now unfortunately, his marriage fell apart and a year or two after that, he was perfectly free to vote against it, and

was very strong. So in a way, I felt that was an example of the tension it caused between spouses, between males and females.

They were trying to ask people to do things that really were unnatural. Putting women in equal combat service and in the military, equal with men, that concept was simply not what America wanted or should have. To me it's barbaric that we consider putting… If we had the draft and we had to draft our daughters and girls equal with the men, that's barbaric. We would have hoped we had left that behind centuries ago, and today, lo and behold, they're again discussing it as if we're denying women a job advancement and opportunities in the military by not letting them serve on the upfront combat lines. We shouldn't, absolutely not. So this matter of economic equality is turning natural law upside down.

DePue: Okay. We're going to go back to 1972 timeframe. There's a couple of things I think we need to lay out here, but let's start with, as you understood it at that time, where was the support, who were the supporters of this? And let's look at the political arena.

Sullivan: Well, one of the main supporters I remember was Mrs. Ford. Betty Ford was a big promoter of it on the national level. It's true, there were several Republicans unfortunately, but there were also several Democrats. One I remember distinctly was Senator Jeremiah Joyce, who was a very close friend and ally, worked with the younger Mayor Daley, who just retired. The two of them were technically—if I remember correctly—they were listed as for ERA, yet they voted to support the three-fifths majority.

DePue: Was this along party lines? As you've explained so far and as we read from Edgar, it did not follow party lines closely.

Sullivan: I think it's correct it did not follow party lines completely. There would be variations at different years and different votes. However, there were some very prominent Republican women that were for it, and unfortunately, there are a couple still there. But there was one from Hyde Park—oh my, I think she's still in the legislature. At one time, I think she might have been like the token Republican down in that district. Then, when you got rid of the three member districts, she ran as a Democrat, which most of them at the time, the so-called Republican, was basically a Democrat too.

DePue: Do you mind if I take an aside here and talk about those three-members districts and cumulative voting?

Sullivan: Mm-hmm.

DePue: Just so that the readers know what we're talking about here. This was almost unique to Illinois politics at the time, that each Senate district could have three representatives in the Illinois House from that particular Senate district. But the way it worked out was that the Democrats would hold up two people to

run for those three seats, the Republicans would put up two people to run for those three seats, so you typically would have four names on the ballot. Each voter would then walk into the voting booth, look at those four names and have three votes. They could put all three votes on the same candidate or three votes on three different candidates, or have two votes, so it would split—one and a half and one and a half. But the system basically guaranteed that even in the most staunchly democratic district, you would have one Republican; vice versa in the most staunchly Republican district, you'd have a Democrat.

Sullivan: Yeah, that was the theory and I think it was spelled out legally that they had to have that minority representation.

DePue: How did that affect the dynamics of the House membership and these votes year in and year out then?

Sullivan: Well, it affected it greatly, because it was common practice for whichever party had the majority in that district, would run one of their own on the opposition party ticket. This was particularly true in Cook County. The City of Chicago, as I say, would basically—their Republican representative usually came out of the democratic machine, and in the suburban areas it was vice versa. Though there were some very definite democratic minority ones in the suburban townships and in the northern counties that I knew of, who were, let's say, very family-oriented Democrats and were strong Democrats, and they would get elected, because the suburban voters knew and had tracked down their background. Tommy Hanahan was one of those. He was very popular. He was a third vote in Lake County, I think one of the areas, and then he went on to carry the district on his own when the three member district was abolished.

So it was, I think, unique to Illinois. It was very confusing, made for let's say a bigger operation of party politics. Not being a historian, I don't know that I could say whether it was better or less than it is now.

DePue: I've talked to a lot of people and most of the politicians that I talked to have strong feelings about having abolished that with the cutback amendment, but that's a different story.

I want to ask you, was there a group of blacks from Chicago who would vote against this? Now normally that's a reliable base for the liberal side of the Democratic Party.

Sullivan: You know, I don't recall there being a particular, like a block of them. Again, they were more ones that would move in and out of support at one point and nonsupport at others. As far as I was concerned, from the networking and campaigning point of view, it was just important to know the feeling of the individual legislators, whether they were from the black community or not. I would say I thought of it more in terms of, were they part of the Democratic

base or Republican base. There weren't too many Republicans who were black at that point, I don't think. And remember, from my original background, I didn't tend to think of the racial element quite as much as some others might. It was more getting to know the individual. Kind of my specialty in the Stop ERA movement was really working with the individuals during their campaigns, because I saw the value of them then being very responsive to the people who would help elect them.

DePue: I wanted to spend a little bit of time then, having you tell us about the formation of the Stop ERA movement and then the strategy of the movement.

Sullivan: Okay. It really was let's say it came out of the woodwork, came out of the wings. It was early signs, I guess you'd call it, of what we think of today as community organizing. It was not difficult at all. It was amazing, come to think of it. We didn't have computers, we didn't have the communications network that we have now, but boy, did word of mouth get around. One of the phrases we used was we had two rapid fire angles. We had the telephone and tele-woman, and that got around very fast. So just telling friends to go visit their local offices would get others to respond. We concentrated on that to a great degree, as I've mentioned—getting to know the assistants in the local office even. Stop ERA, Phyllis encouraged our…We'd take big query things to Springfield, but we also took them to the local offices.

DePue: The Stop ERA movement, according to my timeline, was October, 1972 roughly?

Sullivan: Well that's sort of when we officially got started, but we had been networking and working with Eagle Forum and Phyllis through the '60s; probably the main issue then was the foreign affairs defense issue. So we had a real core of homemakers—as I think I mentioned—Career Homemakers; the Cardinal Mindszenty organization was very, very popular, and we would meet as sort of a study group, following communism and foreign affairs. So it was easy to just corral that for what became the main domestic issue. But the interest in civic action was evident in Illinois from the time we moved there, which was in '54, and through the '60s it was very strong. So it wasn't hard at all. It wasn't like we were starting from scratch in '72. The basic networks were there. It was simply getting them organized for this new issue.

DePue: So the actual formal establishment of Stop ERA, if I'm correct here, is October, 1972, after the first series of battles in the Illinois House and Senate.

Sullivan: Yes.

DePue: Did you or any others try to appeal to the House and Senate, your representatives, to vote in a particular way in '72?

Sullivan: Oh yes, we did. I don't remember the exact dates of any of those votes, but when we actually organized under the banner of Stop ERA, it was, as you

mentioned, the end of October, ’72, and then things really geared up for the next session. But I’m not real clear on exactly what votes took place. Maybe you have them?

DePue: Well the Senate vote, as I understand, was May twenty-fourth of ’72. The Illinois House was June fifteenth of ’72, and then several months later, apparently Mrs. Schlafly and you and many others got organized in a very serious way. So that was the reason for the question.

Sullivan: Okay, yes. So I’m sure we were aware of it and saw the need to really attack it. You’re jogging my memory now. I think Phyllis then, seeing the national scene and the national action, started speaking very strongly that this wasn’t going to go away. We had to be more formally organized and connected, and then each of us sort of recruited people from the different districts, took a headcount. But early on, either that fall or the spring of ’73, we literally got chairmen in all the different districts under the banner of Stop ERA. We got a headcount of just where the votes were. In fact, one of our very, very wonderful leaders—I got word three or four days ago—Senator Ray Hudson passed away. He was quite a champion, from the Downers Grove area. I’m trying to think of the Senator from Barrington—Jack Graham—was another one that was one of our Stop ERA leaders in the Illinois Senate at the time. He’s been gone I think, about twenty-five years, but we used to work very closely with those two. Jeremiah Joyce also, on the democratic side.

You haven’t got in touch with Penny Pullen yet by any chance?

DePue: No, I have not.

Sullivan: She went into the House right about that time I think, in the later ’70s. She was from Park Ridge and there was another gentleman there at the time that she worked very closely with. He was one of the leaders for Stop ERA also.

DePue: How important was Mrs. Schlafly’s role in creating this formal organization and really getting the support for it?

Sullivan: Oh, crucial, because Phyllis is a marvelous tactician. She really understands the routine that should be followed and so on. What I and others would do was the fieldwork of getting to know the legislators, getting to talk to the different church groups and so on. Then we would report it back to her and we would go down literally the headcount of who was very strong, who needed work, who was impossible, and she would make the decisions as to, let’s say the time schedule. She did a lot of speaking before different groups, pointing out the problem. Back then we had the draft, so that was a major item of not wanting our daughters to be drafted equal with the boys. Also, the whole abortion debate was just starting up.

Stop me if I’ve mentioned this before, but I attended a lot of the Catholic women’s organization meetings and would plead the cause to Stop

ERA. There was some movement within the Catholic Church in Illinois—particularly in Chicago Council of Catholic Women—sympathetic to ERA. I had one particularly interesting session; it was their annual meeting in Chicago. The body of the meeting, I knew was against ERA, but some of the board members were for it and it was moving in the direction of where they would try and convince the group to come out with a support motion.

Here's an example of Phyllis' ability to motivate others. She had suggested to me that I take a parliamentary course; actually there were three or four different sessions. And I did go and take this class. A very wonderful lady who specialized in it was a parliamentarian in Evanston. I found it to be fascinating and very useful when you're an activist. So at this Catholic convention—I forget just what year it was, probably in the late '70s—I made a motion to adjourn. I took a good look around. There were about two or three hundred people in attendance. I had spoken, and could sense that the membership, the attendees, were on my side. So I made a motion to adjourn, knowing that that takes precedent over everything else. Well, the board members sitting at the head table could just have, you know, clobbered me, but they checked it out with their parliamentarian, and I adjourned the entire convention. (chuckles)

They had to reschedule it two months later, and then I went back in and as they were getting started, I asked that the minutes and the tapes of the previous meeting be produced and read before they picked up on the second part of the convention. They weren't expecting that and they didn't have them, so that threw it up for grabs again. By this time the rank and file membership, who were really not for ERA, were really enjoying it. They were having a good time. Now, I'm sure the minutes of the record show otherwise, but that was one of the more, you might say fun historic episodes.

I didn't make any friends among the powers that be, but eventually we got to sort of respect each other. The national Catholic women's organization, I might add, had officially passed a resolution against the Equal Rights Amendment, so I was really pleading for the local group to do the same thing.

DePue: When first getting organized in '72—and Mrs. Schlafly has already been out there networking and developing her core of supporters and her base long before that—but as you mentioned, it was primarily about national defense issues. So I'm assuming that the group quickly grew in membership, with people who had never been interested in the national defense side of the discussions.

Sullivan: Yes, I would say that. Particularly the church groups; they really came onboard. The Evangelicals, the Mormons, and even the Catholic women's clubs and so on. By the '80s they really were very, very strong. When we went to Springfield there would be all different groups identified, who—you're right—were not necessarily multi-issue. Let's say the leaders of the

group in Illinois, and I think nationally too, to a great extent, were multi-issue and had been active with Phyllis over the years.

DePue: Okay, so that was the launching pad. Was there a particular focus or strategy, in those early couple of years, to really building the base of support?

Sullivan: Oh yes, very much so. We had many training sessions. When I say training: of how to approach the news networks, both TV and radio, to get our points out, to be spokesmen. I know we actually were monitoring the news reports, and recorded how much time did they give to the pro-ERA versus the Stop ERA.I It was all quite lopsided, so we developed more spokesmen. A lot of effort was put into developing leadership and people who could represent the bigger groups and the reasons why.

Phyllis did an amazing job. Through her newsletter she would give the concise and boiled-down reasons as they came up, as it emerged, so it was very easy for a newcomer, or someone not particularly involved before, to become involved. Also, at that time there were many, many more women at home that had flexible schedules, that could do some of these extra things, but also could do a lot from home. I know Eugenia Chapman was one of them. This other gal I can't remember from the south side mentioned to me at one of the rallies or something where we were testifying, Oh yes, Mrs. Sullivan, I know what can be done from the kitchen with two telephones. So we had home offices long ago.

DePue: You mentioned a couple things here; I want to just get a chronological marker down. December of 1972 was the end of the draft era. That's obviously towards the tail end of the Vietnam War as well; that was all part of the whole contentious debate about it. So it was December of 1972 that part of the discussion would be watered down to a certain extent. But January 22, 1973, the Supreme Court issues its landmark *Roe v. Wade*[7] decision.

Sullivan: Right.

DePue: You and I have talked about that extensively, but I wonder if you can tell me, when you first heard it what your reaction and what the reactions of your church affiliates were.

Sullivan: Oh, it was outrage. I personally heard about it as I was home that day, but my second son was driving to an interview for medical school. He heard it on the radio at 1:00; his interview was at 1:30. When he came home later that afternoon, he said they asked him point blank. It was an interview for Northwestern Medical School's six-year program, and they asked him point blank what his views were on abortion. It was a very hot item and he was

[7] Roe v. Wade was the 1973 Supreme Court decision that ruled that the right to privacy under the due process clause of the 14th Amendment extended to a woman's decision to have an abortion, effectively legalizing abortion.

prepared for it, fortunately, and spoke up. He did not get accepted into that program. As it turned out, he went to Northwestern and graduated in three years, and then did Loyola Medical School in three years. So for him individually, it didn't affect him, but the discrimination started right away against anyone who was not pro-choice. That title, that word, was infuriating. In fact we had—I would say—a much stronger force against abortion developed within five years there than happened say ten years ago.

Now it's coming back. It's growing tremendously—the interest in the unborn—among younger people. But the leadership back then knew that the pro-ERA people really wanted ERA to enshrine their right to abortion. They could not have any laws that would apply to one gender and not the other, and they openly said that and they needed it for that reason, which is part of our big tug-of-war right now with the administration's health program. So it's something we've been fighting and many of us were aware of it prior to '73—the whole movement for abortion. It's something that's been around, been fighting sixty, seventy years probably.

DePue: As you recall, were there some people in the pro-ERA movement that wanted to separate this issue of abortion out of the ERA debate?

Sullivan: I don't think so. I think it was their premiere cornerstone. I can't remember any of them that would say, I'm for equal rights but I'm pro-life. In more recent years there's a group called Feminists for Life, but to my knowledge that was never particularly tied to equal rights for women, to the ERA Amendment. I think it's ones that grew up with a more feminist atmosphere, but they do recognize the rights of the unborn.

Today, an incredibly new item is the technology of ultrasound; that is not only making it very real, that that is a human being, a baby, it's only the size that's different, and location you might say. But also, that reality really goes back to *Roe v. Wade*, which said that if technology ever proved that the fetus was a person, then everything should be redone. I think we're getting to that point and states are passing laws. We just passed a law in Florida last year, that all clinics provide ultrasound of the baby before they do an abortion. The implementation of that is very challenging right now, because the Planned Parenthood clinics for instance, don't like to have to do that. How can they do that and show a moving baby, and then say it's just a blob of tissue. So the defense of it, the discussion of it is changing. The attitudes of the younger people hopefully will be more serious about whether or not they are sexually involved and intimate, without realizing that it involves another person possibly and they had better think of that.

DePue: Let's go back again to the early part of the Stop ERA movement. You mentioned that there would be training—and I have heard otherwise—that there were annual workshops that Mrs. Schlafly and the Stop ERA program would put on. Are you aware of those? Were you involved with any of those?

Sullivan: Oh yes, yes.

DePue: Tell me as much detail as you can about what went on in those workshops.

Sullivan: Well, I think they were even more than annually; we put them on more often when it was needed. Mainly they were informational—sharing information of how to talk and discuss the issue. There were workshops on campaigning, workshops on getting to know your legislators. I took part in those very often. Also, on the media. The media was a very important thing, because we saw there was a need for spokesmen and representatives who were comfortable and confident to be able to go and talk on the issue.

Someone popped up on TV the other day that I debated several times, Debra Haffner. She is now a minister at a church up near Yale University, I believe, in Connecticut. I was on John Sununu's program with her about fifteen years ago. She was a great ERA proponent and very much for comprehensive sex ed and all that. Today she's a minister but she wasn't then. She was, I think, CEO of SIECUS. [Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States.]

DePue: Do you know what denomination she's a minister for?

Sullivan: No, I don't. She went to the Yale Divinity School I know, but I don't know what denomination she belongs to now. You could probably Google her. But back on that program, we were debating abstinence. I was on there about my abstinence program in the ,90ss—I'm pretty sure it was early ,90s. I'm advocating teaching of abstinence as a more healthy route for youngsters; she had the attitude, they're going to do it anyway. But she used the phrase, "Well they're not getting married until twenty-five or twenty-six. Are you advocating that they be sexually unemployed until then?" That was her phrase, sexually unemployed. Now, I really jumped on that, as you can imagine. I said, "Wait a minute—unemployed? What are you advocating?"

In today's situation I would have gone further and said, Are you promoting trafficking for our young women? Trafficking was not thought of back in the '90s, but it did tell their thinking. They thought that physical intimacy was to be encouraged, not discouraged, and certainly not thought out. They did not have any respect or thought of this being part of carrying on future human beings. It was strictly recreational sex, and the worst thing you could do is produce a baby. That was the only thing wrong with it.

DePue: Which gets you back to the other issue that we've talked about extensively. Let's go back to these workshops. Were you one of the instructors? Was Mrs. Schlafly the—

Sullivan: After I went through many of them, I would help in some parts of them—I'd say mainly in the campaigning angle, the dealing with the legislators and so on.

DePue: Was this strictly, something that was going on in Illinois?

Sullivan: Oh no, nationally also. Phyllis put on several workshops and training sessions in D.C. and St. Louis. We have an Eagle Forum Conference every year; they alternate between St. Louis and Washington. Then she would do it in other states also. So she trained a lot of people.

DePue: The groups, the workshops that you went to, was it exclusively Illinois people?

Sullivan: No. I was at both. I took part in many of both of them.

DePue: I understand that things that occasionally occurred at these workshops were actually mock debates and mock speeches.

Sullivan: Yes. Well, she would encourage the, say chairmen of districts or the chairmen of the state, to give three to five minute reports of what they had accomplished back in their home districts or in their states. She would have people critique. Sometimes it was done specifically for someone, a professional to critique where they could improve and so on, but other parts of the conferences would be simply giving reports that would, in reality, share ideas and procedures. Lots of us picked up things that were being done in other states that we saw could be added and developed where we were working.

DePue: You mentioned you had had debates, and I assume you had lots of interviews on television and radio and other sources. Was there training involved with how to do those kinds of things as well?

Sullivan: Oh yes, a lot to do with media, which were very helpful.

DePue: Remember any of the pointers in particular?

Sullivan: To learn from the experiences. A funny one: I did the *Today Show* in New York—they flew me in for it—and my opponent on the show was Faye Wattleton, the head of Planned Parenthood at the time. She is very tall, over six-foot, and a lot younger than I was then. They put the two of us to sit on a couch near to each other, and I learned, don't ever let them do that again, because I looked so short and so different, and just the visual was overpowering. And also, I learned a very good lesson from that episode.

She was, I think, picked to be head of Planned Parenthood at that particular time because she was an excellent spokeswoman for it. After I got back to Chicago, one of my children said, Mom, I've got a quick answer that I think you can use in the future; when they ask, well, why am I for teaching abstinence and not sex ed and so on"—I forget exactly what I said, but the advice from my son was—"say 'look, we're teaching good health. Just because good health happens to coincide with a religious tenet is no reason not to teach good health. After all, we teach all our kids not to steal, that

corresponds with a religious tenet, not to lie, not to bear false witness.'" When you stop to think of it, it's true. We just want to teach them what's good health, and their being sexually involved is not good health for teenagers. In the same way we teach them they shouldn't drink, they shouldn't take drugs, they shouldn't drive before they have a license—it's back to natural law.

After I got through with that program I used that constantly in interviews after that. Do you know, it would end the discussion right away, because how could they come back and say we don't care if the teenagers are unhealthy? So aiming it at a health issue, rather than discuss it as a moral issue or religious issue, was very, very important, because really that's what it was. They didn't want us to think of it that way; they didn't want the general public to think of it that way. Oh, you don't want to force your religious views on somebody else, and I was charged with that quite a bit.

After I learned that lesson, which didn't come from one of the conferences but it came as a result of a TV interview, it worked beautifully. Literally, just being able to crunch down the message and how to approach radio interviews, rather than TV interviews, they're very different. I don't have to tell you that. I'm getting a little rusty now, but I did learn an awful lot.

DePue: Well I'm curious. What do you think were the differences, as you understood them, between radio and TV?

Sullivan: Well TV, you have to think in terms of how do you look to the people out there. So you know, be sure and smile, don't ever frown, don't have a negative look on your face. You have to look friendly and nice, somebody the viewers would like to be with. When you're doing radio you don't have to worry about how you look.

DePue: One of the things that Mrs. Schlafly has always been known for is her impeccable posture and her impeccable appearance.

Sullivan: Yes, which is very hard for most of us to follow. But you're right, and that I think was a great reason that people admired her. They felt she was very professional and very poised. Really she's a wonderful example of a wonderful feminine person, but not just feminine; she's an extraordinarily talented person in many, many fields.

DePue: When you went to these workshops, what were you told in terms of what to wear, how to approach the legislator, how to appear on television—if you had to do something like that?

Sullivan: Yes, yes, exactly, all those steps.

DePue: Strictly dresses?

Sullivan: Remember, we're all volunteers. We were not paid staff being trained, we were all volunteers.

DePue: What were the instructions as far as what you would wear and what kind of makeup you would wear, things like that?

Sullivan: Oh, it was… it's a little hard to explain to you in a capsule, because it covers many different things. Phyllis always encouraged us to lose some weight, because on TV you look ten to twenty pounds heavier than you are. That is a very interesting point to note. I remember Ted Koppel got on the *Nightline* show back then in those years, night after night after night. He looked very handsome and I don't remember thinking particularly, well how tall is he or anything, until I met him in person at a conference and he was a little, bitty, bitty guy. And I thought wow, that is really different. By putting a chair in front of the camera, he looked much more prominent and professional, where you would walk by him and wouldn't have noticed him if you hadn't seen him a thousand times on TV.

DePue: Were you told that you needed to wear dresses and not pantsuits?

Sullivan: Not particularly, because I think pantsuits were very popular then. I mean that might have come up and certainly, don't look casual like you're—you know, don't go to a meeting or lobbying in Springfield in what you would wear to a picnic or the beach. So I'm sure that might have been covered, but I don't remember it being emphasized. Maybe I wasn't particularly paying attention.

DePue: How about the media events or approaching the legislature? Here's another tactic if you will, that got a lot of publicity: things like bringing pies and bread and jam, and those kind of activities, with the legislature.

Sullivan: Very, very good, it was very good. Number one, it emphasized our career, homemaking. It emphasized that it's a social custom to share food, just the everyday occurrences; let's have a cup of coffee, let's go out to lunch, let's have dinner. So, somebody brings you in, especially homemade things, to your office, you appreciate it. So it was a good icebreaker and it was pleasant. And for many of them, we learned who liked what, you're happy. See, it was building a friendship. Today, I guess maybe they write big checks instead, but back then we used the friendly home-baked stuff and it was very genuine.

DePue: I think your opponents though, took a different approach. They said well, this is just an example these women can't be taken seriously.

Sullivan: Well that was very sad, because things like that didn't sit very well with the male members of the legislature.

DePue: You mean their criticisms of you?

Sullivan: Right. And you know, we'd get feedback and so on. I mean that was just showing their agenda, let's say.

DePue: Okay. Can you talk a little bit about how the movement was funded, where you were getting your money.

Sullivan: Out of our own pockets—that was it. As the years went on and I got busier and busier and busier, Eagle Forum offered to pay some expenses for me, or as years went on, Phyllis would ask me. Well, I was chairman for the state of Illinois for, I forget how long, but also, I would attend different meetings on her behalf and so on. So I worked with her in developing the political action committees. We had a state of Illinois PAC, we had a federal PAC, and I would help her. She did the mailings, the requests for funds, but I would help her decide what candidates we would support and endorse and contribute to. So the fundraising—she did most of it. I may, at certain times—well, I don't even remember doing much of it at all. But there would be local meetings, like down here in Florida we have a luncheon for her every year. She'll be coming down next month to help run Eagle Forum's office and for the PAC and education committee. So it is a real grassroots volunteer organization. She probably predated a lot of the conservative groups, which are numerous today.

DePue: Did she have any big donors, some deep pockets?

Sullivan: Not particularly. Nothing compared to today. I mean one of them that I remember that was very helpful to her was Milliken Fabric and Manufacturing in North Carolina. That was one that I remember. What was considered big then? A $10,000 donation was really great. Most of the donations she got, I would say were spread out. I am not familiar with the details in recent years and so on. I am on Eagle Forum's board, but I have not been to the last because I don't like to travel any more. I haven't been to probably the last five or six meetings.

DePue: There were some pretty loud voices on the opposing side, making claims that you were getting money. I'll kind of go through these one at a time. Organized labor.

Sullivan: Organized labor?

DePue: Yeah, that money was coming from organized labor.

Sullivan: Well, the only person I ever knew that was connected with organized labor was Tommy Hanahan in Illinois. I have no idea at that point whether Tommy got any contributions, but I certainly was not aware of any organized labor. He was the only union person that I remember working very much with, but it was not for fundraising.

DePue: Okay, well the next one on the list is the John Birch Society. For a couple decades, people had been trying to connect Mrs. Schlafly with the John Birch Society.

Sullivan: Well, if you remember back then, the John Birch Society was very popular, and I'm sure lots of their members were also members of Eagle Forum. But I don't think they ever had tons of money the way it's flung around today. I knew of them, I never belonged to them, but I knew several of their members and so on. But they were more rank and file.

DePue: Okay. Roman Catholic Church. Was that a source of funds?

Sullivan: I wish. (laughs) That's laughable.

DePue: I knew you would have a closer connection with this one: Ku Klux Klan.

Sullivan: Oh, come on. I never knew anybody. That was before our time. I have no idea what might have happened in the southern states that might have had a remnant of them, but I was never aware of any members or any of those organizations. You could probably look it up.

DePue: In terms of where the money was coming from?

Sullivan: Yeah. I don't think that was an item. On the other hand, some of the feminist contributions from the ACLU [American Civil Liberties Union], et cetera. In fact, the unions really supported the feminists way more. They were quite openly supportive of the feminists. I didn't really look at those comparisons. I just knew they had tons of money and we were volunteers.

DePue: Were some of these allegations that were made about funding sources just part of the NOW [National Organization for Women] and pro-ERA movements to discredit the overall Stop ERA movement, and to diminish you?

Sullivan: Yes, yeah. It was one of their main things, because they really didn't want to debate on the items and consequences. They didn't want to come out and say we want to protect killing a million babies every year. It's just not a very popular thing to do, so hence, they hid behind, We want to protect a woman's right to choose. And we'd say, Okay, choose what and let's talk about what is being chosen. That would end it. As I say, in my angle of the education, we're teaching kids how to be healthy. They didn't want to defend that they didn't care if kids were healthy. The combat was the same thing. Even the same-sex marriage. If we brought up gay rights in those years it was a very unpopular item, and they didn't want to really argue for it; we'd go back to what nature's laws were all about. And adopting children and so on—today they admit that's what they want, and we're seeing just how it's playing out.

So the discussions on the items were very limited. The main thing they wanted to discuss was the messenger. The irony is that Phyllis was such an

accomplished individual. She really represented what a lot of them said they wanted, but they certainly didn't like her and it was mainly because her philosophical views were so different to what they wanted.

DePue: Well I know that was an issue that came up a lot. You just mentioned they heard Mrs. Schlafly's message and in their minds it was in total conflict. Her career was in total conflict with what her message was. I want to read a quote here, what one woman—I don't know who this was—but here's a quote and this would be about Mrs. Schlafly. "She married a rich man, had half a dozen children at last count, knows nothing about job discrimination or laws which result in unequal learning opportunities between equally qualified men and women. All Schlafly and her ilk want to do is to fleece as many as they can trap for all they can take him for, and they admit it."

Sullivan: Wait a minute, that we admitted—that's what they said about her?

DePue: Well, I'll read the last couple sentences here. "All Schlafly and her ilk want to do is fleece as many as they can, trap for all they can take him for, and they admit it."

Sullivan: Oh, that's pathetic. You see, their attitude is so anti-men, and they try and impose that somehow, on anybody who gets along with men. I mean that's just pathetic, is the best word for it. They're so unhappy, that they couldn't stand to have any of us be content with a happy marriage and home, or just happy people. Not all the women in Stop ERA were married even, but we certainly all agreed that we wanted homes and happy homes and happy children, and to see the country and the world go on.

That attitude was pathetic. Phyllis' husband was one of the kindest, nicest guys you could ever wish to meet, and he was wonderfully supportive of all her efforts and her work, as I might say is my husband. It's daily, every day for the last few months, we have had something, civic action of some kind to do, and even at our age, we are still grateful we're able to do it. We live in a very modest condo and we're happy to be able to share our experience and help with others. That's really sad.

DePue: I'm going to read another quote. This one appeared in the *Chicago Tribune* in May of 1973, so again early in this whole debate, and this time they're quoting Mrs. Schlafly. I think it probably occurred in the *Chicago Tribune*, in part to reflect her own views, but also perhaps inflammatory comments that might get others charged up. Here's the quote. "All women's liberationists hate men and children. The real division between women doesn't have anything to do with whether they are educated or uneducated, or black or white, or rich or poor, or old or young, or married or single. The only thing it has to do with is whether they are happy or bitter. The liberationists are a bunch of bitter women seeking a constitutional cure for their personal

problems. To them, children are a terrible nuisance. They are not planning on having any themselves, and if by accident, well, they favor an abortion."

Sullivan: Oh I think she's right on there. I concur in that completely; that's been my experience. They almost resent those of us who try to make a plea for, Let's be generous and considerate and kind to kids. Kids are a bother and by the way, we'll take them from you. At pre-preschool, the government can do a better job with them at three years old, so now they want to tax us and put them in school at three.

DePue: But can you see how this kind of language would be inflammatory to those who are more moderate, who aren't necessarily members of the National Organization for Women, but who otherwise would support ERA?

Sullivan: But you know there's another side to that. Those people—we, Phyllis, myself—could never get through to, would never win over. But that realistic talk reverberates very, very well with men, and we specialized in getting along with men, and not just to take their money. It's quite different and broader and all inclusive than money. It's a partnership. It's parenting with them, it's being married for fifty-eight years and getting to the point where we're happy to be a caregiver to a husband that's ninety. And a wonderful opportunity, when he gets better from that care, that I don't have to go and ask the government or somebody to put him in a nursing home to take care of him.

DePue: At the heart of the pro-ERA forces, their argument dealt with equality of pay, equality of opportunity, equality of education. What would you say in response to that when that would be the emphasis and the focus of the argument?

Sullivan: Yeah, we only made fifty nine cents compared to a man. Look, it's apples and oranges. Any similar job in a company does not discriminate on pay, so where were they comparing them? They chose their own positions to compare. But the main item is, most women would work at different periods in their life; before they got married, when their kids were little they would take off, they may go back later. They had different jobs. Most women have part-time jobs, or did back then. Today I'm not sure of exactly what the numbers are. But unfortunately, so many of them got trapped into the idea that they had to have a business career as well as home. As time went on and they're getting older, so many are regretting it, really regretting it, because they don't have the interest, much less the attention and affection, that those of us have who have wonderful, large families.

DePue: How about a couple of the professions where women have always predominated, and yet the pay scale is pretty low in a couple of cases here: childcare or healthcare industry or in nursing homes. A lot of these places, that's incredibly hard and challenging work, and yet the pay scale isn't commensurate with that.

Sullivan: I would challenge the childcare situation. If they are so underpaid in childcare run by government or other entities, then I think the full-time homemaker ought to get an enormous tax rebate for taking care of their own children at home. So let's compare that for instance. Then, nursing care facilities: the same thing; if we encouraged couples or family members to take care of their ill or elderly at home it would be a lot cheaper, a heck of a lot cheaper. What was the other one you mentioned? And by the way, in education, women predominate as teachers and they are very well paid.

DePue: Okay, and healthcare.

Sullivan: They're not doing a very good job, by the way. There are all degrees of healthcare. Are we talking about anything, from a doctor, through nursing, and specialties and janitors? Where in healthcare? Again, the whole healthcare thing is, let's say, a challenge.

DePue: So much of what your response to these kinds of questions is, deals directly with how the nature of the family structure in the United States has evolved over the last two or three generations.

Sullivan: Right. It sure does. What I'm pleading for is let the younger people rethink and analyze and critique, is it even to the point Mark, of, is it worth the investment in college, because it costs $100,000 probably, to go to four years of college. You come out with a degree and they feel compelled and pushed into going and getting that paycheck, not considering getting married and two people living cheaper than one, and dependent. No. I want my own independence and my own paycheck, and it creates conflict in many, many cases.

I love to suggest to people that they reconsider: Are they really making it worthwhile by going out to a job every day, 9:00 to 5:00, and paying daycare and all these other things? You know, it's really fun to be able to set your own daily schedule. Talk about expenses for eating? I could serve meals for a week, as to what it would cost to go out two nights a week. Many things like that.

DePue: Okay. We're getting close to the time that we determined that we had to finish off here. Just quick comments then, about one more argument in favor of passage of the ERA, and that's that we need to have something in place that protects and allows women to have the same opportunities to move up through organizations, be promoted to achieve these top positions, that otherwise the glass ceiling has prevented them to have before.

Sullivan: Absolutely unnecessary. They move up on their own talents and competence. We don't need the government to say when we have an opportunity, and we don't need an expansion of government jobs in order to do that. Right now 47 percent of the population, I understand, works for the government. That

doesn't leave many of us on the outside to pay those salaries, and that's what the population is really facing today. There's going to be a revolt of the taxpayer, or there is.

DePue: Are you arguing that there weren't lots of men and male dominated businesses and institutions that in their own mind say, There's no way I'm going to let that woman move up?

Sullivan: I am thrilled to have a predominance of men working in both jobs, because I'm happy to keep them happy at home if they're making that effort to be the source of funding in order to have a happy home. I don't want the competition of that job, no way. It's not a happy, pleasant thing at all. Now, if women really want that and want to do that, sure, and they can get it. I mean businesses are looking for competent, professional, good officers and leaders for their companies, and the reality is, they can't find them. They're not happy, pleasant, professional women. They gripe and they are very difficult to work with. Again, we're back to nature.

So I'm for recommending that women rediscover the wonders of a partnership based at home. Let the men be the breadwinners, the providers, and we provide the happy home for the partner, for the husband and for the children.

DePue: That's probably a good way for us to finish off today.

Sullivan: Okay.

DePue: Thank you very much.

(end of interview #4 #5 continues)

Interview with Kathleen Sullivan

ISE-A-L-2011-059.05

Interview # 5: March 2, 2012

Interviewer: Mark DePue

DePue: Today is Friday, March 2, 2012. My name is Mark DePue, the Director of Oral History with the Abraham Lincoln President Library. This morning I have my fifth session with Kathleen Sullivan. Good morning Mrs. Sullivan.

Sullivan: Good morning Mark, it's a pleasure to be talking with you.

DePue: I'm excited about this session. The last time we got into the major issue that we wanted to—the main focus of this interview series in the first place—and that was the extended battle about the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, which of course you, as a chief lieutenant of Mrs. Phyllis Schlafly, were strongly opposed to. I'm going to take a little bit different approach, since we've talked quite a bit about the philosophical issues involved and the political issues. What I want to do today is walk through that ten-year battle and hit the highlights of that, and hopefully in the process, prod your memory a little bit. I'm sure you'll have some stories and anecdotes to tell as we go through there. If that works for you.

Sullivan: Yes, that sounds very interesting and I hope I can do a good job in remembering some of the details from back then.

DePue: Well hopefully, I'm going to help you with that and provide at least a timeline structure to the whole process. Because I know each and every year the battle was waged in Illinois, as it was in many other states across the country. I'm sure that over time, those years kind of blurred together.

Sullivan: Very much so. However, it was a fascinating opportunity to follow the political and the civic process over a period of time. One of the things I would like to mention here is that for those of us who were in it over a long period of time, we really did appreciate how important it was to be able to be persistent and to last in the civic action. Because we saw many people would come in

for one campaign or one year or two years, and it is very challenging. It was very demanding on your time and patience and so on. But somehow you lose the efficacy if you don't have a certain number of people that are there over the long haul, because the legislators and the people that make government work get to know you if you are a civic activist over a period of time. In most cases they think oh, you'll be here today and you're bothering me, but you'll be gone in a year or two. So it really was quite an experience in that it taught me the importance of really following over, year after year, because you could get so much more done.

DePue: Okay. Well, last time we talked quite a bit about the battle in 1972. I think you would agree that was really before the Stop ERA movement geared up in a major way. That was the first battle and we talked about some of the peculiar things that happened that year. So I'll start with May of 1973, and just see if you remember this quote.

I believe it was an event in Bloomington, at Illinois State University. Mrs. Schlafly holds a public debate with feminist icon Betty Friedan about ERA. This is the place where Friedan famously says, "I'd like to burn you at the stake."

Sullivan: Yes, she was very flamboyant and unhesitatingly vocal on just how deep her opposition and resentment of Phyllis was, and it was very personal. We've often thought over the years that there was a certain amount of, let's say, reverse admiration there, because the words Betty would say of what she and her movement wanted, were really what Phyllis had been able to accomplish, and yet she resented Phyllis to such a tremendous degree. We all realized that. Back in those days, in the seventies, language like that was not really very appealing to the majority in the grassroots. If anything, that helped us, and it certainly was not that appealing to legislators. They were not used to women talking like that and it didn't really impress them. So in a strange way, she helped us to really motivate people to get organized.

DePue: She would definitely be a national leader in the National Organization for Women, NOW?

Sullivan: Betty Friedan at the time was, yes.

DePue: We're in the twenty-four news cycle now and the political discourse—I mean everybody wrings their hands and say it's become so divisive. Was it less divisive at that time, less coarse in terms of the nature of political discourse?

Sullivan: On the large scale yes, it was very, very much more diplomatic. There was fewer people who really spoke out in those terms. NOW, the National Organization of Women, was really just getting going and what they developed early was an intimidating process; that's what we recognized as being really a negative for the culture at large. They didn't really want to get

along with men. They wanted to overpower them and push them aside and make room for more women here, there and everywhere. We were much more interested in the home front literally. We were quite happy to let the men do the incredibly tough job of campaigning and running for office, and we would support or not support them. Women were more content, literally, to be on the partner and on the sidelines, and the men at the time overwhelmingly, and I'm talking of both parties appreciated that. They really would rather deal with the homemakers and the Stop ERA people than the Betty Friedans.

DePue: Okay. Here's a quote just a couple of months later that I think I found in the newspaper. One woman writes, reflecting on Mrs. Schlafly. She says, "Her logic, that to love a man properly is to stay home while he works himself to death, somehow escapes me. It is as twisted as her misrepresentation of what the proposed Equal Rights Amendment would do to women. Please do not let go unchallenged her statement that she speaks for most American women."

Sullivan: Well, the actual facts are, that back then there were far less problem homes. The number of divorces were way lower. The partnership appreciation of marriage and family and home was recognized to a much greater degree, and that's what made a lot of these feminist women very mad and very uncomfortable. It was sad to watch, and we observed that a lot of them didn't have the satisfaction of that home front and the partnership and it made them bitter, very bitter, to where they forced themselves into the media and to the microphone and the speaking out, because they wanted to be heard. It was unusual for the career homemaker to be the upfront spokesman. We had to spend time learning how to do that, how to be able to debate and speak in the positive defense of the value of the marriage partnership and one income earner. It seemed really not attractive at all, to have to go out and get that second job and put your kids in daycare then preschool and[turn them] over to somebody else, and really, the tension of running many different jobs, because you didn't eliminate the full responsibility. Over the years, I think it's proved that we were right in that cultural observation, and that's what we really were fighting for.

DePue: Did you believe at the time—let's take the first few years of the ERA battle—that Mrs. Schlafly and you did speak for most American women?

Sullivan: Oh, absolutely, absolutely we did, and had the country become aware of what that ERA really meant. It never would have raced through in that first year the way it did. It just sounded so simple; who would be against equal rights for women? Well, women knew they not only had equal, they had actually preferential rights. I don't mean superior rights, preferential, such as the right to be supported by a husband, childcare, social security. That was an amazing plus for women, that we women could draw social security on the record of their husband having worked. It's no advantage at all to have women have social security in their own right if they're working. That forced them into the

workforce and just gave the government more tax money. It certainly wasn't a help for women, or to be drafted, combat, I could go on and on.

To bring it up-to-date, today, in 2012, the biggest item right now is religious liberty, and how this new healthcare law is going to affect religious institutions. The main point that I think is being aimed at by those who want the government to run everything, is to be able to tell religious groups how to run their organization, even to the point they will say that, for instance, the Catholic Church would not have a right to ordain only men. If ERA were in effect, they would demand that the Catholic Church ordain women. Under the anti-discrimination laws currently, it could be argued that women should be ordained in the Catholic Church. The bottom natural law is they cannot be, because the very basis and founder of the religion, Jesus Christ himself, set the foundation by only ordaining twelve males. If he had intended women to be ordained, he would have ordained his mother. She certainly was well qualified. But he didn't. So it comes to the heart of religious foundations and that's what we're facing today here, forty years later.

DePue: Well, we got a little bit off topic. I want to take you back to this closing statement this woman had made, that she was upset that Mrs. Schlafly was saying that she was representing the views of most American women. I mention that because I've got a market opinion research survey that was conducted in 1976, and the question was, "Do you think the Illinois Legislature should or should not pass Equal Rights Amendment." And 58 percent of Illinois women at the time, in this survey at least, said that they favored passage, and only 27 percent opposed passage.

Sullivan: That was only four years after it went through Congress, and if I remember correctly, we were just getting going in analyzing what those so-called simple statements really meant. At that time, we hadn't really debated the social security situation, the draft situation and so on. So, is it 54 percent or 58 percent?

DePue: Fifty-eight percent.

Sullivan: Fifty-eight percent. I would say, number one: We don't know exactly where the sample was taken. Certain parts of the state were different and may have been more supportive than others. So I'm not particularly surprised that that is a poll taken at that time. But the fact is, when we really got going—which was more in the late '70s and so on—and more people were informed, we went back and forth and had the opportunity to keep it from being passed.

DePue: Okay. So in other words, you're saying that your position, Mrs. Schlafly's position would have been, Well, if we have a chance to educate them on what the true impact and meaning would be, the numbers would be quite different?

Sullivan: Yes, yes.

DePue: Well, let me finish with this earlier 1973 quote. Here's another name you'll certainly recognize, Gloria Steinem.

Sullivan: Oh yes.

DePue: Here's what Gloria Steinem said on Schlafly. "The only nice thing about Schlafly is that there is only one of her."

Sullivan: (chuckles) Well, I would not take that as being accurate at all. There were thousands a great deal like her—none probably as extraordinary as Phyllis was—but there were thousands. That was demonstrated by the thousands that would turn out when we had rallies, not only in Springfield but in other states as well, and they kept growing. Today, I think there's a resurgence among young people particularly.

DePue: Would you say that's almost a backhanded compliment in terms of the crucial role that Mrs. Schlafly's leadership provided for the Stop ERA movement?

Sullivan: Well it certainly turned out that way. Whether her intent was to make it a backhanded compliment, again, you don't know if she at times really admired Phyllis, which she probably did. I mean Gloria Steinem should have known better herself. She had many opportunities and could have done many positive things if she hadn't got as wrapped up. I don't think she was as bitter as Betty Friedan in general, but she got caught up in that movement and went along with it. So I would not really want to judge her real motive or her thinking at the time, but it certainly could be taken as a reverse compliment.

DePue: I'll put you on the spot here. What happens if you take Mrs. Schlafly out of this equation, that she's not there?

Sullivan: Oh, undoubtedly it would have been very different, even to the point of probably having passed. It takes a leader like her—and we've had many in our country—and we all recognize the value of leadership, because somebody like Phyllis, who frankly I believe is probably the most extraordinary person that I have ever been privileged to meet or work with or see, to be able to inspire others to go way beyond what they might have thought. Phyllis' talent in that area was very, very extraordinary in the forty-five years I've known her, even up to today, where I still keep in touch with her. She's the sort of person that she won't let me retire. (laughter)

DePue: Okay.

Sullivan: And there aren't too many people that we would keep going with, but she is really unique in that way.

DePue: Well I think she's eighty-six or eighty-seven years old herself, and she seems like a long way away from retiring to me.

Sullivan: Eighty-seven. Yes, she's scheduled to come down here to Florida in ten days and give three talks. It's just amazing.

DePue: Well let's get back to the politics of the thing once it gets to the legislature. '73. Like so many years after that, the debate centered on phase one; let's talk about the three-fifths rule. Do we really need to have three-fifths or 60 percent of the vote in each House to be able to pass this thing? Each and every year, the decision was made: yes, that's what the Illinois Constitution says, we do have to honor that. And then phase two of the debate always ended up being about the amendment itself.

I don't know if you have any comments on the three-fifths rule. We talked about it a little bit before.

Sullivan: The three-fifths rule was literally the key to Illinois not passing it. I'll be very frank, and I think people in future years need to know some of this behind the scenes manner of operating, because it will always be there. They are always looking for ways of making things work with a slightly different fact of how it operated than what the perception is. In politics, perception is reality, but there's often difference behind the scenes. The three-fifths rule in Illinois at that point in time was essential. It was put in by the feminists, because they thought they needed that in the new Illinois Constitution in order to get what they wanted taken care of at the time.

So here ERA comes along and they suddenly want to get rid of it, because enough of the legislators who could say upfront in public, Well I'm for ERA, but I'm going to uphold the three-fifths requirement. Over a period of probably six to eight years or more, they literally held on to that three-fifths requirement, so they did not have to admit they really were against ERA. I'm talking about Republicans and Democrats, key people.

DePue: Okay, well here's a philosophical question for you. For an issue like ERA, why is it better that it be settled by a supermajority, rather than a simple majority? We are, at essence, a democracy in the United States.

Sullivan: Well, the debate wasn't a philosophical one. At that point in time in Illinois—I don't think I can remember exactly what other states had unusual things—but in Illinois it was a means, a vehicle of stopping a much greater detrimental thing. We didn't have to argue it on: Do you or do you not support what the ERA would do? The debate and the pressure was on just uphold the three-fifths. So it gave many legislators a cover, gave them an excuse to be able to say I'm for this supermajority because that's what our constitution says. They didn't want to go back and change the constitution;, only the feminists wanted to change it there. The reason they didn't go back and change it is because they really didn't want the ERA.

DePue: Okay, so the issue of the three-fifths was never discussed at a philosophical level.

Sullivan: No, no. It was a procedural requirement or acceptable procedural thing in order to give a good cover for legislators who did not like the amendment itself but didn't want to go through the wrath of the feminists, so they were very happy to have that barrier to protect them.

DePue: I just want to mention here, to kind of put some context to this—at least according to Jane Mansbridge, who wrote, *Why We Lost the ERA.* She says that Illinois was the only state where this rule was in effect, at least where the battle was being fought.

Sullivan: That's probably true. I don't remember otherwise.

DePue: Well let's jump ahead a couple years, to 1975. I'll start with this comment, and then we'll get into another significant constitutional issue. This is a comment made by Senator Dawn Clark Netsch, who was probably as prominent a voice for passage of ERA in the Illinois Senate as you had at that time.

Sullivan: Yes.

DePue: Not necessarily the sponsor of the bills, but she was the voice of the movement once it got to the Senate. Here's her quote. "There is an hysterical campaign against it. The opposition is organized and they have planted all these fears. There is a kind of McCarthyism about it."

Sullivan: And what's that supposed to mean?

DePue: Well, you tell me.

Sullivan: At the time, that's what we said; Explain what's so negative or horrific in your term McCarthyism. They just threw that around, because they knew that certain people supposedly hated [Joseph] McCarthy; therefore anybody that they called McCarthyism, they were supposed to hate also, but they never really explained what McCarthyism was doing or shouldn't do. And frankly, I just laughed at it literally back then, as I do now. What's so hysterical about that?

DePue: About the position that Stop ERA was making?

Sullivan: Yeah. They didn't want to debate it on the facts. They didn't want to talk about alimony, about child support, about the draft. None of the real key results would they really debate. To my knowledge, Dawn Clark Netsch never said, I think it's fair to have women drafted. I think it's perfectly right to have ERA, because we want women to be able to have abortions, and you can't outlaw abortion because men don't have abortions, and that would be sex

discrimination. She never, to my recollection, talked about the specifics. She didn't say that no-fault divorce was going to be okay and that if the woman was working, the woman could pay alimony to men. She just sidestepped it and talked about women only made fifty-nine cents, the more trivial things.

I don't know if you have found any wording in the debates to contradict what I'm saying, but to my recollection, when we brought up the points they just threw them aside and talked in these hysterical references, you know Schlafly was da da da. We were all McCarthyists, we were John Birchs. Oh, I was thrown that—and by the way, I had never been to a Birch meeting. It was all "blame the messenger" and not ever describing…

My husband happened to be an actuary, working in pension plans, so the whole social security thing was very, very prominent for me. They would never pick up and talk about was it going to affect the homemaker would be getting social security based on her husband's working. They didn't want to discuss those things.

DePue: Well I'm going to be just a little bit shameless here and suggest that listeners or readers of the transcript somewhere in the future should be aware that I had an extensive conversation with Senator Netsch about ERA, at least a couple hours, and so we talked about a lot of these things. I won't try to characterize what her positions were; that's up for the scholars and the readers to decide.

Sullivan: Well, I'd be very interested in seeing it, so I will look forward to seeing it.

DePue: Very good. The constitutional issue that emerged—I think '75 or '76 timeframe—was the issue of rescission. In other words, there were states, that early in the excitement of passing ERA, specifically Kentucky, Tennessee, Nebraska and South Dakota, passed ERA, and then later on the legislatures rescinded it.

Sullivan: Right.

DePue: So, the constitutional question here was, did these states have the right to rescind? Did these four states then count towards the total or not count towards the total of thirty-eight states.

Sullivan: That's right.

DePue: Your position.

Sullivan: Go ahead.

DePue: What was your position on that issue?

Sullivan: Of course we fought for and debated in favor of them being able to rescind, because what was happening is, it was showing that they were railroaded

through at the beginning before they ever knew what it really would amount to. And as the debate opened up and they saw the detrimental effect it would have, those states started pulling away. They said no, we didn't intend this, we don't want this. To my knowledge, the whole thing died before it was ever resolved whether rescissions were legally acceptable or not.

DePue: In other words, resolved at the Supreme Court level.

Sullivan: Right. And maybe I missed something along the line. Have you found anything in that area?

DePue: No. I guess I don't know the answer to that, but I know that all the language suggests that those states no longer counted towards the total of thirty-eight, that once you got to '82, you were still looking for thirty-eight states that had passed it and still had that legislation in effect.

Sullivan: Yes. That's my recollection, that they were short four or five. So I guess the decision of whether the rescission was legal or not was moot at that point then. Of course a lot of them are still saying it's not dead; they want to bring it back.

DePue: I know that there's usually legislation at the federal level to reintroduce it.

Sullivan: Yes, yes.

DePue: Okay. Let's take a little bit of time. By the time we get to the mid-'70s—'75, '76, et cetera—the two sides had solidified. I want to get your opinion about a couple different national and state organizations who were proponents for ERA, and their different strategies for trying to get it passed. The logical one to start with is the National Organization for Women, and the counter to that or a different group was ERAmerica. As I understand it, obviously there was an Illinois chapter of NOW, but there was also this thing called Illinois ERA, which was quite different in nature. Can you kind of lay out the political landscape for us on those two organizations?

Sullivan: I'm not sure I could distinguish or remember the differences. I think about that time was when they started getting, let's say, a little more crude in their demonstrations, which really helped our side because as I mentioned, the legislature was still made up mainly of men, and they didn't really respond to the more hysterical kind of "beat them over the head" approach. We, in the opposite direction, developed bringing baked goods in our, let's say, partnership, working as, let's say true feminine means and ways of getting along with the men. They didn't see that at all, they resented that, so they resented a lot of us. I think that was the reason that they got more vociferous against Phyllis and ones that were spokesmen for Stop ERA, though Phyllis was the main one.

It was a very interesting time, but the point I would like to stress too: we really went into specializing in the campaign operation of the people, the legislators, who were our friends, who supported the career homemaker and so on. We were there, in many cases year after year, and made sure that the campaign was successful. One in particular I remember is Jack Graham, Senator from Barrington. He actually had had a heart attack and was very incapacitated, and we still worked for Jack. He was one of the really wonderful leaders of the Senate. I don't remember the exact year, but he was there for quite a while. I was very involved in a main role in his reelection campaign, when Jack was recovering from a stroke and couldn't even be part of the campaign, and he won. So we specialized in supporting those who appreciated and knew what we were fighting for, and we became, you might say, a shadow campaign, "we" being the Stop ERA movement, because that was my major role, trying to organize the different campaigns throughout the state and contacting people and linking them. Thinking back, it was a heck of a challenge, because we didn't have computers or iPads or anything like that, at that time. It was strictly telephone, telegraph and 'tell-a-woman.' That's what we used to say.

So it was a real challenge but that's what we did, where the method used by the feminists, even the ones in Illinois where Dawn Clark Netsch was the main one. Then oh, there was another one, Eugenia Chapman. She was not of the hysterical group but Eugenia was very staunch and pro-ERA. Giddy Dyer, from the western suburbs. They were more threatening and just not particularly appealing as people who wanted to work with a friendly legislator. I do think that was our main method and reason they had trust in us and we had trust in them, and there was a partnership ongoing—in between elections and particularly during elections.

DePue: I will say that Senator Netsch portrayed herself as not necessarily a strong proponent of the tactics that NOW would use, but was much more interested in the political process obviously. Let me kind of lay out NOW, National Organization for Women, versus this ERAmerica or Illinois ERA. I'm getting this information primarily from what Donald Critchlow wrote in his biography about Phyllis Schlafly, and also this book that Jane Mansbridge wrote. "The National Organization for Women would support issues like economic boycotts of the states that had failed to ratify the amendment." Does that ring a bell to you?

Sullivan: Oh yes. They told companies not to have their conventions in Illinois. Back in the seventies that didn't sit well with the then-Mayor Daley. That didn't endear them to the democratic machine. They were hurting the city in business, and the Illinois democratic political people were not happy with that at all. So that wasn't a positive for them. It again, was a vindictive, we're going to clobber you routine. I would say that backfired and to what effect it had, I don't know that I would… I don't remember whether it really was a plus or a minus. What I do know is it annoyed the heck out of people that

would normally appear to be with them, but they weren't, like the Daley machine.

DePue: The focus for NOW was… I'm looking for the right comments here. "The strategy for NOW oftentimes was more national than local." Certainly, they rallied their forces in Illinois plenty of times, as you know better than I do, but they would look to have things where they could get national media coverage: mass rallies, demonstrations, TV ads, TV level debates, things like that.

Sullivan: And they had friends in the Chicago media that would pick up on those news stories. That was their main asset. They couldn't necessarily get the physical support in Illinois that easily, but when they did it in other areas, the Chicago media would pick it up.

DePue: Would it be fair to say that their focus and strategy was to sway public opinion, more than it was to effect the election in the debate in the legislature?

Sullivan: Very much so, because that was their manner of trying to effect legislators to go along with them—get the public to call the representatives and so on. But they didn't have the local contacts that we developed. And their methods and their manner of handling it just wasn't appealing.

DePue: I also got this from Mansbridge:

> Many of the NOW members were decidedly liberal, if not radical, in their views.

She's got one quote that says,

> An Illinois NOW leader said, 'Well you know, most of our members would identify themselves as socialists without knowing what it meant.' I would doubt that they would ever identify themselves that way in any kind of a public sense though.

Sullivan: Well, let's stop and think. That was the '70s and '80s. That was the high point of the community organizing and the [Saul] Alinsky operation—that really got going in Illinois, in Chicago particularly—and it was synonymous; the feminist was the upfront issue or movement to the Alinsky operation at that time. The Alinsky operation was socialist and is socialist even today, much more so, but at that time, when they were really getting going, the feminist cause, ERA was their frontal attack, and their philosophical item was, we want equal rights for women. It fits in perfectly with what Alinsky taught them; you find an issue, make a big crisis out of it and divide the people. We didn't have the inequality. We had very positive advantages for women, but they didn't want that; they wanted the chaos, they wanted the crisis. So was it socialistic? Absolutely, except nobody wanted to admit we had socialist-thinking people in Chicago and Illinois at that point in time, so it wasn't called

that. If anybody indicated that at all, they would be branded McCarthyites. That's a good example of what I think they meant by the term, or what I really feel they meant by the term McCarthyites. You were bringing out the fact of where the base motivation was; they didn't want it brought out as socialism, much less communism, so it was feminism.

Today, the feminist movement is not… For instance, nobody runs for office today saying, "I'm pro-choice. I think everybody ought to have the right to choose." And even go further, what are you choosing? I'm choosing to eliminate my own child. Nobody says that today anywhere. Why? Because we now have that hundred million block who are directly connected with abortion. And there was no question that the feminist movement in the '70s were really the vanguard, the upfront for abortion. It was put in, in '73, and they wanted it promoted and accepted, and they were all running around boasting. All candidates at all levels would say, "I'm pro-choice", "I'm pro-choice." But for the last four or six years, they sure have dropped that reference.

DePue: Okay, let's talk about the counter group, and not necessarily counter, but a different group in terms of its approach to passing ERA; that was ERAmerica, which was started in 1976 as I understand. Here's what Don Critchlow said about this group in his biography, *Phyllis Schlafly and Grassroots Conservatism*. He described ERAmerica as,

> …an umbrella organization representing 120 groups, including labor unions, American civil liberties unions, religious and political organizations, based in Washington, D.C. ERAmerica advised state coalitions on techniques of legislative lobbying, presentations of research, testimony at hearings, contacts with constituents and public education campaigns.

I don't know how much you recall about ERA Illinois, and maybe I'm making a poor connection here with ERAmerica and ERA Illinois, but as I understand, their tactics were quite a bit different. Where the NOW faction would focus on swaying public opinion, they would focus on the legislators themselves and perhaps getting the right kind of legislators elected.

Now that sounds very similar to your approach, the Stop ERA movement, where your focus was on the legislators and not necessarily all on public opinion.

Sullivan: Well see, the two go together. I would say we approached it from the two going together. Not involved in campaigns, like legislators, who would in fact reflect public opinion. So it's not separate, but of those organizations, my recollection is ERA Illinois were the more Alinsky community-organizing base. They got out and did the protesting and the rabblerousing and so on, where the NOW organization were more the voice-of-women impression.

They wanted it to be the voice-of-women impression. The ERA Illinois yes, was unions and all those groups, which today operate under other names, but it's the same basic community organizing that we see today in the ACORN [Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now] organizations and so on.

DePue: You've mentioned Saul Alinsky several times here; obviously you're referring to his book, *Rules for Radicals.* Do you think that the NOW leadership were students of Alinsky, that they were reading and embracing *Rules for Radicals*?

Sullivan: Oh yes, I am quite sure that Dawn Clark Netsch and Chapman and all of them were very familiar. He was very, very prominent in Chicago and in fact, had great influence in the churches, and I mean even the Catholic Church, of which I'm a member. But to the degree that his people got a collection in the Catholic Church nationally, it was originated in Chicago, called Campaign for Human Development. It's still a collection that is done across the United States in all Catholic churches, every November, the week before Thanksgiving. That originated from the Alinsky operation in Chicago, with cooperation with certain parishes.

It's fascinating to look into and read the connections of people. President Obama, for instance, from '85 to '89 was paid by Campaign for Human Development to learn how to organize on the south side of Chicago. I think I've gone through this with you before.

DePue: Well, remind us again, what was the goal of the Campaign for Human Development?

Sullivan: To filter money into the Alinsky operation.

DePue: And the goal of the Alinsky operation was…?

Sullivan: Socialism as it is today. And now they have their guy in the White House. They want government to run everything. This Campaign for Human Development, by their own bylaws, were not permitted to give any grants, any of the money they collected in the churches, could not go to Catholic organizations. It went to groups who they wanted to be self-help for the poor. It's the master plan of ACORN, and until about four years ago, Campaign for Human Development, which collected $8 to $12 million a year nationwide, gave grants all over the country to ACORN. When ACORN was shown to be the big fraud that it is, bishops finally cut it out, but now they've already formed under a different name. So that's a big, big problem, but we were facing it back in ERA days, in the '70s. The Campaign for Human Development was instituted in '78.

Now as contrast, let me point out that *Roe v. Wade* occurred in '73, and the National Catholic Bishops Conference has never had a pro-life collection. No, there are only five small dioceses in the whole country, out of

192—this has been one of my key points by the way, and I'm pretty well versed in it—had been begging and pleading that there should be a pro-life collection to handle and stop the abortion problem. And of course it has not been stopped; it's been expanded. Why? Because the effort and the money, particularly in Illinois and Chicago, has gone to groups that are pro-abortion, like Campaign for Human Development. It is a scandal in the Church, not the only one unfortunately, but it is the political. That's why we had elements within the Catholic Church that were for ERA.

In Illinois—I'm pretty sure I covered this with you—I adjourned the Catholic Conference of the Chicago Diocese one year because I saw it going in the direction of endorsing ERA. I called for adjournment and got it through. The attendees did not want to endorse, and the powers that be were not happy with me at all.

DePue: Yeah, we did talk about that, I think the last session. I want to go back though, to Saul Alinsky and *Rules for Radicals* and these kinds of organizations. Now maybe this is my own political ignorance involved here, but I don't recall hearing much of anything about the role that Alinsky had in these kinds of organizations until the emergence of Barack Obama as a strong political candidate for the presidency.

Sullivan: It's not surprising to me that you would not have heard of him. He was a master of behind the scenes. He put it all down in writing. He had key people as the lieutenants, to learn how to organize. Many of us did read about him and did know of him. One of the main places that I learned a lot about him was the Cardinal Mindszenty conferences, because they would have speakers saying how these socialist views and operatives were getting established in America. We knew back in the '60s that the core one was the Alinsky operation in Chicago. It started in Back of the Yards [district], southwest side of Chicago; Bill Ayers and Bernardine Dohrn were two of their prime youngsters that were trained there. And of course, they're very involved with Barack Obama. We're watching that whole thing play out, and unfortunately it's really happening. Back then most people thought… Well, they probably thought we were all McCarthyites, because we knew about the thing—just put a label on you and make nobody want to talk to you. But there were many people who did read and follow him, and unfortunately they're still going. But you know they're not going to last forever.

DePue: Well, I know this is a subject that you're going to have strong views on, but this whole battle that we've been having here, and perhaps the general ignorance of most Americans at the time, what does it say about the nature of press coverage of the whole debate about Equal Rights Amendment, about who the members of National Organization for Women, et cetera, about who you were as well.

Sullivan: The media coverage was extremely one-sided. As far as my observation, it has always been dominated—whether it was television, radio, which were the two main outlets—and then it got into the schools themselves, always more governed and influenced by the liberal thinking, and even to the point of the socialistic thought. Today the appalling things in middle and high school are just beginning to surface to show the public how far it's gone, and it's the reason that the country voted for who they did. But I think it's beginning to turn around.

A lot of the young people are much more analyzing today. The march in Washington that occurred for "Right to Life" this year was overwhelmingly people under thirty. That's a perfect example of how the media is one-sided. Hardly any outlet even covered that march. Four hundred thousand mainly under-thirty young people, and nobody writes about it or shows it on TV or does a special on it? No. They just ignore it like it didn't happen. But those kids knew they were there; they saw it.

You know, the interesting thing is, what we did for Stop ERA was community organizing. The methods, the manner of organizing is okay. It's just that today it has a bad name because people think of it as producing figures today that they don't admire. But the method of organizing communities has been there prior to Alinsky, let's say; he just saw and put it into a very precise form of how to go about it. But as far as Stop ERA and my early involvement, it was a natural. If you want to influence public policy, make sure you get the right people elected and keep in touch with them.

Then, if you have equal sides, I think that the emergence of the Tea Party is the current community organizing on the conservative side. As the two sides become quite influential on both ways, then you get a much better debate situation and maybe the media will start to listen. In radio today we do have very prominent talk show people that attract millions. So it's an interesting time to watch, and then we can get back to debating ideas, rather than covering up the meat of it and being superficial.

DePue: Well you touched on what I would think is a revolution in the nature of the news media in the United States—that there is an alternative conservative media—but was there anything like that in the 1970s and early '80s when this was being fought?

Sullivan: No way, no way. The only way we got any coverage was to literally sit with a stopwatch and count the so-called news items, and go down there in person—and I did this a lot—go to the station and say, "On your newscast last night you had seven and a half minutes given to so and so and two minutes given to the opposing side. Oh, oh. And we had what we call the fairness doctrine—which we took advantage of to a great degree—saying, on public issues, da da da, you should be giving both, otherwise we're going to… It was very tedious follow through. And eventually, they might listen.

Let me give you one instance where it was an interview I did for TV with Debra Haffner, who is now a Unitarian minister. We might have talked of this earlier. In all this hysteria currently, in the last week or two, over government supplying birth control and the percentage of who uses or doesn't use—which is ridiculous—Debra Haffner, on that program said, "Well Kathleen, people are not getting married until twenty-six or twenty-seven. Do you really expect that they will go until that age sexually unemployed?" She used that term, sexually unemployed.

Yesterday, somebody, I understand—I didn't see it myself—appears before Congress talking about needing the government to pay her birth control pills because the costs are so much. I thought, Wow! We've come a long way. And I did that interview with Haffner probably around 1990, '92. Here we are, eighteen, twenty years later, and now we the taxpayer, government, is supposed to pay year-round costs for people to really be sexually employed? We used to have another word for that and it wasn't acceptable.

DePue: Well, you've gotten us up through the 1990s into very contemporary discussions, which is to illustrate that even though the Equal Rights Amendment finally died as an amendment in 1982, these issues have very much not gone away, have they?

Sullivan: Absolutely right, and they won't go away, because the more people realize how serious they are and what major consequences the fallout from that ERA would have, they don't like it.

DePue: Okay. I'm going to get you back to the late '70s, and these two opposing pro-ERA groups: one being NOW and the other one ERA Illinois. As I understand, NOW, in terms of the people they would be courting, in terms of its membership, was almost exclusively democratic. And that ERA Illinois though, would be much more moderate in their approach and include many members who were Republicans. In fact, as I understand, the leader of ERA Illinois for most of those years was a Republican herself.

Sullivan: Giddy Dyer, was that?

DePue: I don't know; it wasn't mentioned in the book. It very well could be.

Sullivan: Yeah, I think she might have been. But her philosophy and her thinking was much more in line with the Democrats. She was not a conservative Republican at all.

DePue: But during that period it illustrates that there were plenty of Republicans who were moderate or even liberal on their stance, and that perhaps is a reflection of this peculiar thing in Illinois called the cumulative voting process.

Sullivan: Yes. Well, I don't know that it was a result of cumulative voting. The Republicans, at that time, thought it was the "in thing", to showcase women,

but they weren't ready to accept the conservative women. So they picked some of what would be called "RINOs" today, Republican in Name Only. Those women were basically very much liberal and really were more in line with the democratic interests than Republican. However, they merged in Republican geographic areas such as DuPage County and outlying southwest suburban areas. I think four or five of them got elected in one year and they were the forefront of the pro-ERA people. But little by little we had to work on them too, but their emergence in a way gave us a more solid rapport with some Democrats, particularly from downstate. So yes, there were Republicans in Illinois who were for ERA, but they really were more Republican in name only.

DePue: But there is another prominent Republican in Illinois by the time you get to '76, and especially beyond that time, and that's Governor Jim Thompson, who is a pro-ERA person.

Sullivan: But he would not abolish the three-fifths majority. He supported retaining the three-fifths.

DePue: Are you suggesting that he was pro-ERA, because he thought that was to his political advantage?

Sullivan: Yes.

DePue: No qualifier on that at all? Yes, absolutely, he was strictly an ERA supporter because of politics then?

Sullivan: That was my impression.

DePue: Did you ever have any dialogue with him? Was the Stop ERA movement reaching out to him?

Sullivan: Oh, I talked with him many times and he thought it was very important that Illinois keep the three-fifths majority.

DePue: That was the nature of the discussion?

Sullivan: Yes.

DePue: Did you ever try to convince him that Governor, you need to be against ERA?

Sullivan: No.

DePue: Why not?

Sullivan: No. At that point, it would not have been to his advantage to do that. It would simply have… Well, the feminists would have just lowered the boom on him.

My goal was not to cause him to be the focal point of their wrath. As long as he supported the three-fifths, it would do the job.

DePue: Wouldn't it be better for the feminists to focus their wrath on Governor Thompson, than for the feminists to focus their wrath on selected legislators?

Sullivan: Not necessarily. Each one was a slightly different case. As I mentioned, at one point, the second Mayor Daley was on vacation in Florida, I believe, when the vote came up. He just wasn't there and it lost by one vote.

DePue: Yeah, that was the first Mayor Daley I think.

Sullivan: No, the son, who was a Senator at the time…is the one that was not in town.

DePue: Okay. Well, let's get into the politics of it as well, and we've kind of suggested this. As the legislative year came to a close, oftentimes you would have NOW and other organizations making as big an impression as they could in the city of Springfield, where the legislature obviously meets—we're talking about the May and June timeframe—and they're trying to get the attention of the legislators at that time. But anybody who follows Illinois politics knows it's May and June and maybe sometimes into July, when other issues like oh, the budget and whether or not to raise taxes and how to do that.

Sullivan: Right.

DePue: And overall, the big pieces of legislation are also moving through the legislature. Can you talk about that dynamic at all?

Sullivan: Well see, that's where the feminists did not really care for those other obligations or activities of government. They had their agenda and that's all they really were concerned about. What I think they didn't realize is that a lot of their shenanigans caused more problems for them, because the legislators were annoyed that they were disrupting and causing them to have to work overtime and go into all different things.

Of course, the most famous action was when a dozen or so of them chained themselves to the Governor's door and threw blood from the slaughter house all over the Springfield Capitol. That really backfired and showed them up. Those tactics during that time—in the '70s, '80s—was really outrageous and it was amazing. They didn't see how it backfired continually. The people didn't like that, and I think that helped in causing these other states to rescind and say, We don't want these type of people running things. That gave a lot of support to our side and to the legislators that represented us. So it played out quite differently than what they thought. I guess it never occurred to them that it was their tactics that in many ways caused our success.

DePue: Well I know again, from what I read—I wasn't involved in the personal fights—but what I read was that the ERA Illinois forces, who had a more traditional approach, trying to work with the legislature whose ranks oftentimes included many Republicans, and the NOW forces were oftentimes at odds with each other in terms of whether or not their tactics were effective.

Sullivan: Yes, there definitely was tension between them, and that probably was caused by some of the Republicans in the ERA Illinois being embarrassed and not wanting to be considered in those extreme activities. They had a little more decorum in them and wanted a more civil debate. But the other side saw that they were losing ground; if they kept debating they were losing ground.

DePue: I will say at this time, that in talking with Senator Netsch and a couple other proponents of ERA, they did say that these tactics that you've been talking about—that NOW used—were counterproductive.

Sullivan: That's interesting that they are seeing that, and they definitely were. There's one person, I think she's still in the legislature, from Hyde Park. At one time, I think she might have been the Republican third legislator when we had the three people representing a district. Oh, what was her name? She's lasted a long time. I think she's one who, let's say, modified over the years. But forgive me my senior moment; I can't remember her name but it was common then. See, Democrats would file as the single Republican in the three member district routinely, so you had to get to know which ones really were… There were some that were true Republicans, but many of them were token Republicans and mainly Democrats. It was fascinating. I have never heard of any other state that had that procedure. Illinois was quite unique.

DePue: The cumulative voting?

Sullivan: Yes.

DePue: Yeah. Again, Illinois is kind of this unique political environment in many respects.

Sullivan: That's right. And I'm hoping that they will come up with something really creative and new and get the state straightened out. (laughter)

DePue: Okay, let's get back to our timeline here. We're in 1976, and as I understand, thirty-three states by that time had passed, and we're excluding the states that had rescinded it by that time.

Sullivan: Right.

DePue: Bella Abzug, there's another famous NOW leader, comes to town. She leads a march in Springfield and Mrs. Schlafly leads her group in a chorus of, "Bella's Bunch is Coming to Town," obviously singing to the tune, "Santa Clause is Coming to Town." Do you remember that?

Sullivan: Yeah. I don't think I was down there that day. I'm not sure why, but I do remember the specifics. At that time I had six kids, some were pretty little, and so I didn't always make the general things, but I do recall that happening. See, it was interesting really, how both sides could turn things into a humorous incident and dialogue or debate, or it could be really raunchy. I remember thinking and hoping that we could keep it on a more humorous vein. We tried to do that particularly in dealing directly with legislators and candidates.

DePue: I want to read you an example of a sign that I think was being carried by a Stop ERA supporter at that time, and get your reaction to this. The sign said that ERA would, "Raise taxes, destroy marriages, abort babies, pamper homos, attack churches, and crucify America."

Sullivan: I don't recall seeing that specifically. It doesn't surprise me. We felt it would affect all those things and as time has gone on—the individual items—it's happening.

DePue: I know that it appeared in the newspaper, in part because this is strident, strong language.

Sullivan: Mm-hmm.

DePue: And you know, it's kind of the counter to some of the things that NOW was doing at the time.

Sullivan: Right. And as I mentioned, it would be strident, strong, humorous back and forth.

DePue: Could some of that sometimes be counterproductive to the Stop ERA side?

Sullivan: Well, from our point of view, no, because it got attention at the time. I don't know where that sign might have been particularly used, but as things have played out now, all those things have happened. I mean look at Maryland. The Governor just signed a gay rights marriage, gay marriage thing, the eighth state to do it. I mean that would have been unheard of back in the '70s. The senior Mayor Daley wouldn't even go to the gay rights parade. He was appalled at any… For years there, the gay rights bill in Springfield would get ten or twelve votes, period.

DePue: But as I understand now, the right thing politically for a Mayor of Chicago to do is to make sure they are at that parade.

Sullivan: Exactly. And I don't think it's helped the culture of Illinois particularly.

DePue: I think it's also 1976—and this would have been in the May, June timeframe—that six thousand women come to Springfield to demonstrate, to

push and pressure the Illinois Senate to pass ERA. And in this group, it's not just women from Illinois, it's women from across the country.

Sullivan: That's what I was thinking as you brought it up. That was the famous item, that they bused them in from all across the country, which we felt, and the legislators knew at the time, was a sign of weakness in Illinois. They could not find six thousand people to bus in from districts in Illinois. They had to bring them from outside the state.

DePue: So is this something you resented or this was something you said, Oh, they're playing right into our hands?

Sullivan: Exactly, and they were, and the legislators knew it. All they had to do was ask a few of them marching, Where are you from? Where did you come from? And they would tell them. They came from Missouri, Indiana, Ohio, and that showed there wasn't the Illinois local support. Now, did the media bring that out really truthfully and openly at the time? I don't believe so. I think it took a long time of checking before it was established that the bulk of those people were from outside the state.

DePue: Well, let's get beyond what's going on specifically in Illinois and get to the national level debate. Gerald Ford is President at the time. There's obviously going to be a very lively, contentious presidential campaign, where you have Jimmy Carter emerging as the democratic candidate, and Ford is seriously challenged by Ronald Reagan. I want you to talk a little bit about that leading up to the Republican Convention.

Sullivan: Which we were not enthused about, because Gerald Ford was, let's say, weak on many things and definitely against us on the ERA question. Synonymous at that time—remember, it was two, three years after *Roe v. Wade*—the pro-life issue was becoming more and more prominent. Gerald Ford, and Betty Ford particularly, were not helpful at all in the pro-life issue. So that was a very discouraging situation to have them emerge, and we could see where the Democrats were getting stronger.

DePue: Does that mean that you were a strong supporter of Reagan's candidacy?

Sullivan: Oh yes. '76 is when I ran as a delegate in our congressional district. I didn't make it at the time. I wasn't elected as a Reagan delegate, to go to the convention. I don't remember the overall figures, but Reagan was just getting going.

DePue: Does that mean that they sent a Ford delegate from your district?

Sullivan: Yes, yes. And then of course he got it in '80 and by then, I don't remember who—I didn't run as a delegate then. Again, Illinois' selection of delegates is very interesting and somewhat complicated. We'd have ten and twelve people on the ballot pledged to different candidates for president. It was the most

complicated campaign challenge, because you'd have friends running as a delegate for one candidate and other good friends and people you worked with pledged to different people. I mean one year I remember there were seven different sets of delegates in our district running for delegate, at the north, across from the lake, out to Elgin.

DePue: Okay, that particular year, 1976 Republican Convention, what was the party platform position on ERA, do you recall?

Sullivan: I don't think we had one in the platform. That's when they started trying to get it in.

DePue: To be pro or against ERA?

Sullivan: Well, the movement among the RINO women was developing. I'm trying to think of who the lead one was at the national scene, besides Betty Ford. Phyllis would know better than I would. I think her last name was Christ; I don't remember the first name. And there were others that were starting to try and get the platform committee to put in pro-ERA. Then it wasn't until the '80s that we got in the anti-ERA, the Stop ERA platform.

DePue: Same kind of a dynamic going on with the position of the party on abortion?

Sullivan: Yes. Yes, very much so.

DePue: So did the platform say that they were pro-choice at the time?

Sullivan: No. It just didn't cover it.

DePue: Okay. And you mentioned Betty Ford a couple of times here.

Sullivan: She was the main leader of pro-ERA on the Republican side during those early years, if I remember correctly. I don't know why she got into it to the degree she did. She was not someone that was particularly known as a feminist. They probably got her to think that it would be a nice thing. She didn't belong in that group, I didn't feel, but she got talked into it early, as many of them did.

DePue: Did you resent her role in that?

Sullivan: I don't know that I particularly paid too much attention to her. We were too busy working for Reagan, the more conservatives. Reagan was really becoming quite the leader of the conservative movement nationwide. After his famous speech in '64, on behalf of [Barry] Goldwater—which I was instrumental at that point, in getting Reagan's speech put on Chicago television five times the week before the primary in '64—that launched Ronald Reagan and is now known and referred to as "The speech." Through the early '70s, he became even more known nationally as the conservative

leader for the Republicans, and we were busy working in that core group. So that Betty Ford—her husband was considered one of the regular Republican operatives—from the beginning, I felt that she was a token. To my knowledge, I don't think she ever twisted any arms, put it that way.

DePue: Okay. Well she just recently passed away and much of her legacy is about her fight with breast cancer and substance abuse.

Sullivan: Yeah, right.

DePue: And for that, she was always viewed very sympathetically by the American public, I would say.

Sullivan: Yes. I certainly don't think of her in terms of a feminist leader.

DePue: Well let's get to 1977. By that time, thirty-five states had passed ERA, so they're getting pretty close. We're three states away from implementing ERA but the clock is ticking as well.

Sullivan: Right.

DePue: You've got President Jimmy Carter, and Mrs. Carter was a strong proponent as well. Again, in Illinois, the vote goes nowhere. Governor Thompson comes out for it, but most of the press says this is very lukewarm support and some suggest it was lukewarm only because he was toying around with some presidential aspirations.

Sullivan: Yes, that I do remember was the situation. That's accurate.

DePue: The big event that year—I don't think you were involved—was a National Women's Conference in Houston.

Sullivan: Right.

DePue: And that was November eighteenth to twenty-first. This is a big thing. Why weren't you going to that conference?

Sullivan: Because of my young family. That was '77 right?

DePue: Correct.

Sullivan: My kids were all… The youngest was eight years old. They were all in middle school, high school. I had six at home and I just could not take off. Actually, I think a great big reason was that our Stop ERA movement needed people back at home to take care of media and things that needed to be done, to try and report it out, and I was always in that role more than at the conferences itself. I did more of the organizing and follow through and keeping track of things and so on.

DePue: Were you disappointed that you couldn't go down to Houston?

Sullivan: Not particularly, because I chose to be the one to stay home and follow things there. You know, we had a lot of very, very talented and wonderful people working with Phyllis. She didn't really need me in that position. I could handle what needed to be handled back at home more effectively. I did that in many cases—moved in and out of whether I was in a main event or back home directing what might be the outcome of the main event.

DePue: Okay. What was your view and the views of Stop ERA movement that this was an event that actually was supported by federal funds?

Sullivan: Oh, we were horrified. They were allotted—what was it, $5 million?—to put on that shenanigan. And there were many people. One very important person, Rosemary Thompson, was a main organizer with Phyllis. She's passed away now. She was from the Peoria area, very knowledgeable. She was one of the main ones down there and she did a lot to bring out the economic fact, and how federal money was paying for that whole thing. It was Eagle Forum people in Texas who hired the hall across town, where Phyllis and Eagle Forum and CWA and all the women's groups—the good women's groups—had a counter conference which was very well attended—I forget the exact figures now—and really showed the contrast between the two. Again, the reporting of it was not, let's say, fair, and that was something we could bring out and did bring out to the legislators afterwards. Here, they're paid with tax dollars on one side; we volunteers went down to really show what our interests were, and were not recognized, but we want you, the legislator, to be aware of this. In most cases they listened very carefully.

DePue: I want to read a list of some of the names of the prominent women who attended the conference itself, not the counter-demonstration but the conference: Bella Abzug, Betty Ford, Rosalynn Carter, Ladybird Johnson. Okay, we've already got three wives of presidents.

Sullivan: Yeah.

DePue: Coretta Scott King, Maya Angelou, Lynda Johnson Robb, Jean Stapleton, and Betty Friedan, and lots more obviously.

Sullivan: You know in hindsight, I have to mention that maybe that's why they were propelled into trying to push for equal rights, because obviously, with all that woman power, they weren't able to accomplish what they set out to get. So maybe that group really was not respected and paid attention to by their husbands or the people. So maybe they felt they had to get out there and do all this demonstrating. When you stop to think of how many of those high profile names were in attendance at that, and they didn't get the job done.

DePue: I'm reading from an article I got off the internet on the National Women's Conference in Houston, 1977. It said:

> The primary job of the national conference was to formulate and pass a national plan of action based on recommendations from the state meetings. The final plan had twenty-six planks, ranging from better enforcement for existing laws, to broaden demand for a national health security system, full employment, peace and disarmament.

I know that on some issues, such as ERA, abortion, sexual preference, the debate was acrimonious, but it generally came down very much on the liberal side of that equation.

Sullivan: Oh sure, it was planned as such. That was a very good demonstration of Alinsky's plan. All the pro-government socialist thinking, it was heavily union power and not necessarily the legitimate unions. For instance, I doubt you'll find much participation among the Teamsters, but the SEIU [Service Employees International Union], the municipal workers, I believe were pretty prominent then there. So it was their coalescing of the Alinsky training, community organizing. It's their early days which has borne out; they're in higher positions today, but hopefully not for long.

DePue: When we started today, you asked that we finish off by about 11:45 your time, and I believe we're right there.

Sullivan: Yes. And I would appreciate if we could. I hope it's been helpful. You're very good at triggering my recall. I haven't thought of a lot of this for years and it is interesting to go back and see how it's developed over the years. I'll tell you Mark, all I have to do in a group down here now is say, "Now remember, I come from Illinois", and everybody says, "Oohhhh."

DePue: They roll their eyes when they hear that?

Sullivan: Yeah. It's really fascinating, because let's say we're unique, but not necessarily in the most helpful way.

DePue: Well, we still have a lot of this battle to talk about. Nineteen seventy-eight, I know was a very active year in terms of what was going on in Illinois, and you've already referred several times to the final battle year in 1982. So we still have a lot more of this timeline to go through and I'm looking forward to it, because it has been a fascinating discussion.

Sullivan: Well, thank you, I agree, I've really enjoyed it.

(end of interview #5 #6 continues)

Interview with Kathleen Sullivan

ISE-A-L-2011-059.06

Interview # 6: March 6, 2012

Interviewer: Mark DePue

DePue: Today is Monday, March 6, 2012. My name is Mark DePue, the Director of Oral History with the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. This morning I have my sixth session with Mrs. Kathleen Sullivan. How are you this morning Mrs. Sullivan?

Sullivan: Just fine. It's a beautiful, wonderful, sunshine day, a little bit cooler here in Southern Florida and I'm very happy to be with you.

DePue: Well, I'm happy to have you with us. A little bit of contrast, it's the sixth of March, but we have snow on the ground, it snowed last night here.

Sullivan: That's the difference between the north and south isn't it?

DePue: And we've had a very dry winter with very little snow and suddenly we get a little bit of March snow.

Sullivan: Yeah, with the incredible stories of the tornados that swept through there in the last couple days. We don't have too much of that down here and the hurricanes fortunately, are far between.

DePue: Okay. Well let's jump right back into the dialogue we've been having. The last time, last week, we spoke about the ERA fight in Illinois; I think we went from 1973 all the way up through 1977, and finished our discussion with the National Women's Conference, which you were not at but certainly were paying close attention to.

So that gets us up to 1978. I'm going to follow along the same pattern and basically, as I understand, follow some of the highlights of the next few years, up through 1982, and let you reflect on things and hopefully stimulate your memory, which has been outstanding up to this point. From what I

understand, especially talking to Mrs. Schlafly and others, 1978 was a particularly important year. That was a year when, apparently after the convention, the pro-ERA forces were rallied and determined to be able to push things through. So I believe the year starts, or at least it involves President Carter discussing things with Florida, saying if the state passes ERA he'll have the Democratic Convention there in Miami. Again, I don't know if any of these things are going to stimulate some memories for you but go ahead and jump in if you do.

Sullivan: Well, I think what really was a key item right then, was that the input of tax money of governmental support for the ERA movement, for the feminist causes, was getting greater and greater. They were providing funds for different committees and organizations that was very difficult to try and keep up with and keep track of. They had the bottomless pocket to the taxpayers to draw on, and unfortunately, the pro-ERA people seemed to have very prominent supporters on both sides of the aisle. So the big difference then, was what grew into a very expensive and heavily financed move on the ERA side, to put pressure on and really get a lot of PR. The Stop ERA movement was the rank and file, really grassroots. I did not have that much to do with the fundraising end of it but I know that what we did in Illinois and what I was involved in, was small contributions but mainly contributions by individuals of time, and I would say very great talent in pleading the cause. So it was a grassroots, low fund, low budget fight of Stop ERA, against very heavy financial support from government sources to a great degree.

DePue: Well you mentioned the financial support but let's take that out of the equation just for a second here. Obviously, President Carter strongly favored passage of this bill, so did you and the Stop ERA forces resent that he was so involved with the fight, even at the Illinois level? Because one of the things he did, I think he came to the Illinois General Assembly and addressed the assembly that year.

Sullivan: That's right, but as we've covered to a degree, the Illinois, both House and Senate, had far more opposition to the basic ERA Amendment than people realized. It was not verbalized openly by a lot of the legislators, but we knew who they were and they really showed their opposition by holding on to that three-fifths requirement for passage. Even when Carter came in, and very prominent people, one after the other, would come to the state, number one they didn't quite understand the three-fifths requirement situation. So they would come in and think the next vote is going to ratify it, where we really had a very, very challenging two-step process that was needed. They had to get rid of the three-fifths requirement, as well as try to pass it.

DePue: Okay. Would it be fair to say that what really bothered the Stop ERA forces was that the Federal Government was using federal tax dollars to support this?

Sullivan: Absolutely.

DePue: That was more troublesome to you than the fact that Carter and Ford and other politicians at the national level were so strongly in support of it?

Sullivan: Well, you might say the real thinking of those people at the time, was for the government to get involved in more of the feminist plans. In fact, I do think it was one of the high points of feminist influence. By that I mean the more radical feminists, not the legitimate women who were really interested in having better chances to get careers and so on, but it was the radical feminists who more had the idea of, get rid of that home front, we want to run the government and the government can run your lives better. That has certainly developed over the years, to where the feminists intimidated the representatives at all levels into putting in things that were detrimental to the home. The preschool, pre-preschool, daycare. Daycare was something that I personally fought vehemently, because I felt it was a very bad practice, to have babies taken away from mom and away from the home for an extended period of time each day. In emergency cases that's different and that should be handled at the local level, but a federal provision of daycare was a very, very negative advance of government power. Today it's so expensive that a lot of people today think the government should run lives from birth to the grave, and that's got us into a lot of trouble.

DePue: Let's go back to 1978, just picking up the timeline here. About the same time Carter is trying to make a big impact with the general assembly, Mrs. Schlafly has a press conference and alleges that Carter is making promises to the Chicago Democrats. It's also about the same time as certainly the 1978 battle, that other outside forces that are strongly supporting ERA are also arriving in Springfield to appeal to the legislature and to the public of Illinois. It includes people like Alan Alda and Marlo Thomas and Jean Stapleton, Carol Burnett and others.

Sullivan: Yes. I started doing media work about that time and appeared on the Phil Donahue Show a couple times, opposing Marlo Thomas, who he was quite enamored with and at some point—I don't remember exactly when—became his wife.

You know, it was sort of interesting, because Phil Donahue almost struck me as being a double-thinking person. I got the feeling—and I wasn't a big supporter of his—but I got the feeling that really, his heart wasn't in pushing for all these feminist plans. It turned out, he was a really good example of how they used him. I think Marlo Thomas used him to really promote what the feminists wanted, and he wasn't completely—it wasn't his creative idea; he was a TV talking head and TV personality. But he had three kids at home and I didn't think his heart was really in it, yet he was able to be manipulated and used and put out front. The feminists did an incredible job with people like him.

Alan Alda was another one, but I think Alan's heart really was in it. But they maneuvered—they being the feminist leadership—maneuvered many of the men who were prominent in the media at the time, and got them out front doing their bidding. I think Carter was one of them, because he sort of wanted to please everybody and wanted to get along; as far as making deals, he was a very good deal maker and Chicago was a good place to make deals. Illinois was a very good place, and I might say that Illinois has suffered greatly since then. They are more known for, let's say, political wheeling and dealing, than anyplace else at this point, twenty-five, thirty years later.

DePue: Yeah, the state has the dubious reputation of having the most convictions for political corruption per capita, more so than any other state in the union.

Sullivan: I think that was part of the orchestrated plan. If any of them tried to deviate and not do what the machine bosses wanted, they really had influence, and control to a great degree, of the judicial system, the whole show, so you weren't going to get away with doing it. I saw members on both sides of the aisle change considerably; several of them ended up in jail. It's like they said, that's what you get if you don't play ball with us.

DePue: I wanted you to reflect on your performance at the Donahue Show. Do you think the Stop ERA forces—when you and Mrs. Schlafly made appearances there—were winning the debate as far as the general public concern, or were you hurting your cause?

Sullivan: In many ways, we did win the debate, because our input was more reasoned and looking out for the long range of positive effects for family and for women and so on, such as social security and things like that. However, the viewing audience as we have today—back then it was probably even more so—they were so in awe of a Phil Donahue type person that they didn't really hear what was being said. It was the visuals.

Now, Phyllis was an extremely good debater on television and I would say she held her own very well with just about anybody there. I don't claim to have that degree of skills, but I learned several things as the years went on, and we were able to open up the debate, and let's say verify or correct some of the misstatements that were often made. It was very incredibly obvious that they were very much on the side of promoting and wanting to pass ERA. Very few of them really knew the details and we looked at our job as trying to educate and get the media officialdom to at least pay attention to what the debate was about, rather than just railroading it through, which is what had happened in most states.

So the tremendous contrast and challenge in Illinois and Chicago media ended up being a positive in the long run, because I think it helped tremendously in getting enough people to respond to the legislators, and that's how we really kept it from going through.

DePue: Let's talk about a couple more specifics in that year, 1978. League of Women Voters Legislative Day: that was the timeframe that Mrs. Schlafly and a crew staged a circus-like event and included Reverend John Peck. I don't know if you remember this; I suspect you will. Reverend John Peck of Rockford dressed up like a gorilla, and some of the other ladies were having rousing renditions of "Here Comes Playboy Cottontail," things like that.

Sullivan: (laughs) I do remember it but again, I was not present there for a variety of reasons. We were trying to, you might say, cover a serious subject with some humor, and it did get attention. It got people laughing and talking about it.

DePue: But was it effective? Did it sway opinions in your direction, or the opposite?

Sullivan: Well, it's hard to say specifically, because there were many things that went on. I don't remember that that particular one turned out a plus or a minus. I just don't recall it as a major item. As I say, it was more of a lighthearted item we did. The more important things were serious. I'd say the individual meetings, the directed confrontations, were really more productive with the legislators. But the most important thing of all was our constant support for the legislators who understood our concerns and voted with us year after year.

DePue: Okay. I'm going to follow this up with just one quote from a Letter to the Editor that appeared in the Springfield *State Journal Register* in June of 1978. Here's the gist of the letter. "I have, over the past five years, seen the anti-ERA folks turn from frightened, cautious but polite persons, working against ERA, to obnoxious, overbearing and definitely impolite persons, much like they try to portray the pro-ERA women."

Sullivan: Well it all depends on who wrote that.

DePue: It's obviously a supporter of ERA.

Sullivan: Sure. And there were many letters like that and many testimonies. I remember testimonies at hearings of subcommittees and so on, and that was their wording constantly, yet I dispute it completely, because I don't ever remember myself or any of those around me being what that says we were. In fact, it was quite the opposite. It's interesting that that writer says we were polite and reasonable at first. To my experience, my knowledge, we continued in that mode year after year, year after year. I don't ever remember getting rude or as horrible as that letter writer indicated, yet we were charged with that, but that isn't necessarily the way it really was.

DePue: Would you agree with her that the anti-ERA forces were portraying pro-ERA women as being obnoxious and overbearing and impolite and other things?

Sullivan: Oh yeah, we did, and they were that. They were obnoxious and they continued to be that even after the ERA itself was dead. I mean I experienced that in my work with Project Reality all through the years. The very people who were

pushing ERA did everything and said things to get rid of Kathleen Sullivan and Phyllis Schlafly. As the years went on, they had certain power in de-funding what was a very, very successful health message in the schools—literally wiped out the funding.

DePue: Do you recall any specific incidences where you could say this is an example of how they were rude and obnoxious, excluding those couple very prominent ones that we'll get to later that happened in 1982.

Sullivan: You're referring to the ones in the Capitol.

DePue: Yeah, we'll get to those later, but do you remember any other examples that you would like to share?

Sullivan: I did a lot of TV interviews on Channel 11—that's the public television in Chicago—and it was quite heated, very heated. One program was the role of women in the church and oh, they jumped on me—they being the husband of a very feminist liberal former nun. He jumped on me and challenged me, "Are you saying that my wife is not a proper matter for becoming a priest?" I looked at him and I said, "I didn't say that. I'm saying our church is very specific on what is needed for the sacraments of our church. In the sacrament of holy orders, the matter has to be a male. Christ was a male and women cannot be priests." He got very strident and the wife was sitting in the studio; she didn't like it either. I turned to him and there was another priest from the diocese there; I turned to the other priest and I said, "Any more than you could use Coca-Cola and chocolate cookies for the sacrament of the Eucharist."

Now, I was being very specific. They were just mad that I could say that, which I thought is ridiculous. Why didn't they just calmly talk about and discuss the actual matter and form. Matter and form are the two key areas required—and this is the same thing, to mention a very current item—in the sacrament of matrimony, it has to be a male and a female. Required matter and form, and that's the basic church teaching. Today we get carried away and vehement on all sorts of other things which have nothing to do with the basic teaching of the natural law and the church teaching that goes with the natural law.

DePue: Okay, let's get back to our timeline here in 1978. June sixth, ERA loses in the House and June sixth, after five black legislators hold off their vote because they're upset about an issue that deals with the Black Caucus leadership more so than ERA vote, but that's their way of protesting. So on that particular date in the House, the measure goes down to defeat. Senator Netsch at that time, and the Senate side, says, Well, I guess we're just going to have to rethink the whole thing, the whole tactic of being able to get this passed.

On June twenty-second, ERA comes up again, but this time it falls short by two votes: 105 for, 71 against. So that illustrates that need to have 60

percent of the vote, or three-fifths. Some members balked, knowing that the issue had not been addressed in the Senate, so they just basically held their vote. This is at a time when Mrs. Ford, Betty Ford, had called several wavering members, attempting to get their support. J. David Jones, a prominent Republican from Springfield who had previously voted thirteen times for ERA, refused to vote this time around. I suspect that he's part of that protest against the Senate's not even taking up the issue.

Sullivan: Right. They wanted the pressure to be put on the Senate as well. The House didn't like the idea that they were always the ones being pressured.

DePue: On June twenty-second again, two Republican legislators switched their vote, voting against the amendment; two weeks before that, three other Republicans had jumped ship. So a lot of the Republicans now are switching their vote after having voted for it many, many, many times.

Sullivan: Which we took as evidence that the longer they were listening to the point and the way it was developing, because by then, the feminists were really showing their strident manner and what they wanted was the enshrining of abortion, control of education through the government, and the gay rights. So those were the three major items and they really wanted to challenge and get rid of the spousal and women's advantages in social security. The workforce was not as heavily filled with women then as it grew to be soon after that; social security was put in, in order to help families and help the stay-at-home moms. That was very, very much a matter of interest. Those legislators—I remember specifically talking to them about that—and they realized, and the feminists admitted, well you can get social security in your own right. I said, I don't want it in my own right. It should stay the way it is. My kids are young and my husband is the one responsible for social security, and I don't want to have to pay into it also and be driven into the workforce to do it.

So things like that were emerging as very reasonable benefits for women, and a lot of the women were reflecting that to their husbands who were legislators. So we won a lot of support of the families of legislators, and I think that began to show up a lot more in both sides of the aisles. But I do remember the antagonism between the Senate and the House, and in a way that may have helped us win over some of the House members who thought okay, let's kill it once and for all and get it over with.

DePue: Well, I'm wondering then, are you saying when the issue first came up in 1972 it didn't seem to follow strict party lines? There were Democrats that voted against ERA, and we talked about the issue with Mayor Daley and being upset about a completely separate issue, telling some of his delegates that he had control to vote against it, and a lot of Republicans that were voting for it. But by this time, 1978, is it becoming increasingly partisan?

Sullivan: You know, in appearance it seemed to be, but again, having worked with them over a long period of time, I always felt that we had the support on both sides of the aisle. In fact I know we did. There were very key Democrat spokesmen, Tommy Hanahan being one of them. There was a very key legislator from Southern Illinois whose name I have been trying to remember this weekend; he was there for years and years. You know what, that was another thing that I remember as an advantage. We did not have term limits and a lot of people really like term limits, but I don't. I think it can cause different problems but very definite problems. If you don't have term limits, you have people there over a period of time you get to know. They get to know the history of how things happened ten, twenty years before, and they really are more reasonable to deal with because they've had the experience. I can see where term limits are a real problem. They are a problem in Florida right now, relative to calling of a constitutional convention issue.

The ones we dealt with in Illinois back in the '70s and '80s, most of them were there for a long period of time. One who was reasonable to deal with was Adeline Geo-Karis, who came from Zion up in Northern Illinois. She was a Republican but of the more liberal overall, but she was reasonable and we could really talk things out. She technically was a yes vote for ERA, but if I remember correctly, she stuck with the three-fifths very definitely. Laura Kent Donahue was one of the Stop ERA leaders. There were some very prominent women.

I finally found an old book here, who I think would have his name in it. It was a southern Democrat who had been there for years and years. He ended up as a very powerful head of the Appropriations Committee I believe, Gary Hannig from Litchfield. Back in 2000 it was District 98.

.DePue: I wanted to turn then, to after it goes down to defeat in Illinois. This was a crucial year for the pro-ERA forces, to really get it passed in Illinois as one of their prime states that they are focusing on. It's about that time, August fifteenth, that the U.S. Congress decides to extend the ERA's deadline another three years. It was going to expire in 1979—that seven year rule that you had to pass it. So now it will expire June 30, 1982. I know you remember this incident. What was your reaction to hearing that?

Sullivan: (laughter) Well, here we go again—typical . If they don't get their way, they do something illegal and make it sound like it was legal. It wasn't supposed to be extended. There was no legal provision for it, but when you've got the votes you do anything you want, and that's exactly what they did. They just rode roughshod and got it through Congress. I'm trying to think who in Washington was really the leader of that operation, though I guess it doesn't matter. They said they wanted to extend it and they thought at the time, they could wear it down and wear down Illinois and one or two others and get it through. But frankly, it was one of those situations that by doing something so

blatantly power-grab, I remember that it turned out to sort of strengthen our forces, and we just kept going.

I don't know if Hannig's still in the legislature or not, but he was a key leading Democrat, very influential. He was, I would say, the leader of the southern democratic caucus or group; he was there a long time and they listened to him. Gary Hannig was a strong supporter of Eagle Forum. We worked with him on several things, again, mainly in education. I remember going through different education bills and so on with his office. He was a big help. He was considered the equivalent of Mayor Daley in the north. He was the southern powerhouse.

DePue: I know you're not a constitutional lawyer. Mrs. Schlafly got her law degree during this time, but was there any thought to challenge this in terms of being unconstitutional?

Sullivan: There was talk about it but it did not seem practical, because the very fact that they could get it through the way they did, we would be spending tons of money, and I think at that point the Supreme Court and the Appellate Court levels were pretty stacked against us. We really didn't think it was practical to expect—I think the extension went for three years, right?

DePue: Correct.

Sullivan: We would spend more time than three years trying to fight it, and a ton of money which we didn't have. So the practical decision was keep fighting it in the states where it was a challenge, and go through the three years that way rather than the courts. I think, if I remember correctly, that was a great reason that Phyllis really got into watching and analyzing the judicial system nationwide. She set up a division for Eagle Forum of court watching, and we were watching the different appellate districts, and who was being appointed to the Appellate Court. She has since written a book about the judicial system. So that came into play then and the feminists were taking a lot of the spots on the judicial bench.

DePue: Yes. The name of her book is *The Supremacists: The Tyranny of Judges and How to Stop It*.

Sullivan: Yes. Because she saw how much they did by controlling the judicial process.

DePue: Was there any thought—this is going back to something we talked about earlier—the use of federal funds to support passage of this. Was there any thought that perhaps this was unconstitutional and should be challenged?

Sullivan: Again, Phyllis particularly, but we all concurred with her. It was a judgment call of where was the time, effort and money best spent. And undoubtedly, that sort of reasoning is why she went to law school. But the specifics of the law are one thing. The practicality—is it prudent to spend the time and money

in the legal process, versus the more practical political process—has to be weighed. In fact I remember her telling me personally and saying it many times, that she hated lawsuits. She felt that that was really a prolonging and extremely expensive route to take for trying to solve problems, and I agree with her. In most cases, it is really prolonging it, and the courts have gotten worse over the years, so that the opportunity to really get it solved is far less. In fact, the courts have caused so many problems that it is almost dangerous to go the legal route.

DePue: We talked about this next issue quite a bit last session, but I wondered if you have any more reflections on the nature of the press coverage for the ERA fight. You very emphatically stated that the press was not objective. Would you say that political commentary was at all objective, or was that slanted against you as well?

Sullivan: Oh, very much slanted, because the ones who were chosen by the outlets to be their editorialists or their commentators or their spokesmen on radio and so on, and TV particularly, had to fit in with the agenda and thinking of the owners of the outlets. Whether it was the *Sun Times*. Now, back in the '60s and '70s the *Chicago Tribune* was considered to be Republican or more conservative, and I think it was to a great degree; they had people like Walter Trohan, a very famous one, that was an exceptionally good writer. He passed away, I think around the '80s.

DePue: What was his last name again?

Sullivan: Trohan. T-r-o-h-a-n, I believe. Walter Trohan. They carried editorials from the conservative people out of Washington and so on, but it was pretty much melded into the mushy middle by the '80s and '90s. I think to a great degree—again, it may sound like I keep going back to the intimidation of the feminists, but in fact that's exactly what their main tool was. They knew how to intimidate companies, individuals, and men were very scared of being confronted and embarrassed by these feminists. We watched them just crumble, because they didn't like being ridiculed, and the feminists were masters.

Unfortunately, that's one of women's very definite weapons that is repugnant frankly. They are tremendous at intimidating an opponent, particularly if it's a male, so that the men give in to them rather than be intimidated, particularly in public or at a legislative meeting. We have several very well-known ones right now, but it's a fascinating weapon and they know how to use it. So when you're talking about legal things, we can cite and refer to legal wording and they take it and put a spin on it or push it aside and it doesn't amount to anything.

DePue: Well it's not just the news media that affects public opinion in the United States then, and certainly now as well. It's how issues are portrayed on late night talk shows, certainly in Hollywood and on television.

Sullivan: Right.

DePue: How was the issue portrayed in those media outlets?

Sullivan: Well, we only had television and radio. We didn't have iPads and cell phones and things like the instantaneous communications of today, so it took longer. Actually, because of the lack of the very fast moving current thing, we had more opportunity to just talk about it and talk about it among women by telephone or getting together. Coffee clatches were a very extensive social networking. A lot of moms were home and would get together and just discuss things. Today that's almost unheard of, because of a variety of reasons; you don't have that same social connection, at least not to a great degree, particularly in the cities and so on. So that they're more dependent on this fast, other people's opinions, and what we're putting up with today, it's overwhelming. So people are picking individuals who they feel a rapport with or respect their views, and tend to listen to certain ones over others, which is very important and I think needs to be discerned at a much earlier age. Who are you going to listen to and go to for advice and follow? I'm not talking just about main speakers in communications or media, but even in family. It's a real challenge.

DePue: Well that gets to another area of influence, and that's in public education, in public schoolrooms, and at higher levels once you go to the colleges and universities. How was the issue being portrayed there? Were you winning or losing the battle on those fronts?

Sullivan: Back in the '70ss and '80s, I would say we were losing the battle at the college level. Today, I think it's opening up incredibly well. The younger people today are asking a lot more questions. They see a void in a lot of areas and they want to know, Wait a minute, what happened?

There was an article in our local Naples, Florida paper, Saturday I think, of graduates from Gulf Coast University down here. I forget the number they referred to who are graduating but say they don't really know what type of job to even look for. They feel ill equipped. They have degrees in this, that and the other—one of them actually was communications—but they don't know where to turn. They were not particularly trained in the technology, so they don't quite fit in the high tech area. What kind of job are they supposed to look for and where? And then, the Florida college and university system is looking over—they need a complete overhaul they said. I thought, you know, this is interesting and it's very good, because frankly, I think colleges have produced a lot of people who don't have the vaguest idea what they're going to do with their life, and they're graduating with enormous debt and are utterly

confused. I think half the colleges—this will shock you—in this country should be closed down.

DePue: But that's getting away from our timeline and certainly the question. Is all of this to say that, in the 1978-1980 timeframe, this was a disadvantage that you had to fight against?

Sullivan: Yes, because we saw the start of the demise of real education. Kids were not being educated and taught how to think, to have a goal, to aim toward a goal. It was just come, and prices went up, up, up, put yourself in debt for $100,000. In the '50s and '60s we never thought of going to college and having a debt of $100,000 before you even got out of college.

DePue: Okay. Let's go back to the timeline, 1979. Another year, so it's another time that it's going to be taken up in the Illinois Legislature. The Senate once again rejects a move to change the three-fifths rule. So it's going down, thanks to some Republicans who otherwise indicated their support for ERA, and you talked about that before. They would support ERA but not for the change of the three-fifths rule.

Senator Netsch that year says well, we will keep bringing it up until it's passed; they had plenty of evidence they had brought it up every year before that. President Carter holds an ERA summit, pledges the full support of the administration to gain passage; this is at a time he's making phone calls to people to sway their vote on ERA, even while Iran is in turmoil at the time, and we know how that issue turned out. Anything about 1979 that sticks out in your mind?

Sullivan: Yes. The movement to put Ronald Reagan in office was growing tremendously, meaning that the conservative moment was growing tremendously. People were not listening to President Carter as far as ERA or many other things. Foreign affairs was a very crucial item, defense was a crucial item, and the feminists again, were not interested in that or were on the wrong side, and that showed the division of the voting population. It was much more conservative and pro-national defense, foreign policy, world affairs, as well as economics. So Dawn Clark Netsch and her group thought they were going to keep going until they passed it, but in fact the country was becoming more conservative and ERA didn't last after what we felt was an illegal extension. They didn't dare bring it up for another extension.

DePue: Let's move on to 1980 then, because the issue of the presidential campaign is very much one settled in that year.

Sullivan: Yes.

DePue: Nineteen-eighty: Mother's Day rally in Chicago that draws 50,000 in support of ERA and again, they are confident that they're going to be victorious that

year. I think it's in 1980 that President Carter invites Illinois legislators to Washington, D.C. to meet with him. Do you recall that?

Sullivan: Oh yeah, and the 50,000 in Chicago were not Illinoisans, they were people from all over the country that they brought in. It was a last gasp I would say, and we knew it, and let's say the campaign for Reagan was really becoming stronger and stronger. We just figured we'd live through it.

By that time, I remember being very confident that it was not going to go through. Now, elements of it were creeping in—things that we had warned would happen—were getting in with individual legislation. We had got rid of the draft I believe, by then, so that issue went on the side, and of course women were encouraged to volunteer to get in the military and things. Abortion was becoming more and more prevalent, so they didn't need ERA for that. The pro-life movement was very strong. It was stronger then than it was five years ago. Now, I'd say the last year or two it's coming back and again, among the young people. So there's going to be a big difference in another two to five years.

DePue: In 1976, you ran as a Reagan delegate for the Republican National Convention and you lost that, so somebody from your district went there in favor of Gerald Ford.

Sullivan: Right.

DePue: Did you run in 1980 as a delegate?

Sullivan: No. I don't know why I didn't; there was probably somebody stronger that was running. I think we did have a Reagan delegate win in '80 in our congressional district, but I don't recall exactly who it was.

DePue: Well, I don't recall specifically, but wouldn't George Bush senior have a strong contingent coming from Illinois for that convention?

Sullivan: You know, I don't remember exactly what the primary election resulted in for Illinois. I just remember being very involved on the national scene basically, in '80. I was working with Phyllis on many things; the military end of it was very prominent then, because of the Iranian situation. That's when Ted Koppel became famous with his *Nightline* program. So I am drawing a blank frankly, on the details of '80 election in Illinois.

DePue: Well let's move to the national level. I suspect you do remember this, because there's a couple of significant things that are now different about the Republican platform—coming out of that 1980 election—where Reagan emerges as the clear winner.

Sullivan: Right, right. Phyllis played a big role in that, and again in '84 and '88. Now I remember being at the convention in '84 and '88, but I don't think I was at the

one in ’80. No, I was not in fact, because I remember being in Chicago the night that they announced that Bush was going to be the vice president, a deal was made then.

DePue: As I understand though, that Republican platform in 1980 came out against ERA, and also came out having a strong anti-abortion plank. These are differences from previous conventions, are they not?

Sullivan: Yeah. That was ’80 rather than ’84, huh?

DePue: Yes.

Sullivan: Because I think in ’84 they were strengthened and went to a wider wording, but I think you’re right, they were put in, in 1980. I was not at the convention that year but I remember following it very closely.

DePue: Okay. I want to read you a quote from Donald Critchlow’s book, his biography on Phyllis Schlafly; this is in reference to the 1980 presidential race: “Phyllis Schlafly prepared to lead a counterattack against the feminist movement. In doing so, she paved the way for the Republican right to triumph in retaking control of the party.”

Sullivan: Yeah, that’s very accurate and that emerged out of her leadership of the Stop ERA movement. By then, Reagan personally had a tremendous admiration for Phyllis and he—and Ed Meese was another one—that worked very closely with her and with us. Oh, I can see three or four others whose names escape me right now, but they were very prominent. The lawyer who was Reagan’s very good friend, William Clark, really was very appreciative of all Phyllis had done. Because she was multi-issue she was respected by them for her knowledge of the military and foreign affairs. She worked with many of the military generals and so on—and put out two or three books at the time on our national defense—and they really respected her knowledge there but also her ability to express those issues for the rank and file, and mainly for women, for the homemaker and for career women.

Phyllis was never against women being in careers. I mean she had a career outside the home, as well as the home. She was portrayed as being anti-career, but that was not really accurate. What she would say—and it was true—women can do different things at different times in their life, and concentrate on different things at different periods in their life. She was obviously a very evident example of that, and there were many of us who, that was sort of the ideal. If you wanted to do something you could do it, because you had a varied schedule. I was an example, you might say, of civic activism and community organizing, as well as being a career homemaker.

So what Reagan’s supporters and the key people around him realized, that Eagle Forum and Phyllis particularly, could be that tremendous link in connecting the conservative principles to just about every phase of the culture,

and that was a big help in getting him elected. She also understood the political details, like the delegate count, and how each state was a little bit different in selecting or electing delegates for the conventions, how to pick the leader and so on.

DePue: At this time, much of the media was portraying Ronald Reagan as far too conservative to ever get elected, and so I think there was some surprise when he emerged as the clear winner at the Republican Convention, although at that time I think he was way down in the polls against President Jimmy Carter as well But would you agree with Critchlow's basic assertion that, without Mrs. Schlafly and the ERA movement he probably would have not been elected as the Republican candidate that year?

Sullivan: Yes, I would tend to agree. I didn't know that's actually how it's portrayed in his book; I'm remiss in saying it.

DePue: Well I don't know that he said it quite that way, but this is what I take it to mean when he says, "…in doing so she"—being Mrs. Schlafly—"paved the way for the Republican right to triumph in retaking control of the party."

Sullivan: Yes, yes, I would certainly concur in that, because I was part of it and very involved with the people who were making things happen, and worked very closely with them, including the ones who were trying to stop Reagan. Senator Jeremiah Denton for instance: he's a prisoner of war in Vietnam that served the longest time as a prisoner, and he was at that time, running for Senator from Alabama. He had come back home in '73, and in '79 they asked him to run as a Republican senatorial candidate, and he went in with Reagan. But he was also a very good friend of George Bush.

This is a very interesting, strictly behind-the-scenes situation. Phyllis, at one point told me, and I conveyed it to Jerry Denton. Jerry Denton played tennis with George Bush a lot, and there were certain specifics to do with the military. There was another point too, which escapes me at the moment, but I went over to Jerry and I said, "Phyllis says these two things are crucial and she's leaving it up to you to get this message across to George Bush on the tennis court, whether or not you're playing tennis, but be sure you cover these with him and make him fully aware of what's involved." Jerry Denton just looked at me, and I said, "And you know what she's talking about, right?" And he said, "Yes I do." At the end of the next day, Jerry Denton came to me and said, "Tell the boss it's taken care of."

So, we had built a rapport of respect you might say, and it just works beautifully when you respect people. George Bush was a tremendous admirer of Jerry Denton. Who wouldn't be? He was four years in solitary confinement in Vietnam. He's an incredible person and you're going to listen to somebody like that. Phyllis knew how to connect people with good, sound reasoning, and

it generally worked. The only people it didn't work with were ones who had a diametrically opposed agenda to the issues we were fighting for.

DePue: Okay. I want to skip '81. I don't know that too much happened in 1981, in terms of the ERA issue in Illinois. Nineteen eighty-two. The clock is winding down. If it's not going to pass in '82, as you mentioned before, there's not going to be another extension. So this is the final battleground year and certainly a memorable one.

Let's start by mentioning this, that in March, the National Organization for Women organized a picket in front of Speaker of the House George Ryan's house in Springfield. George Ryan was the new Speaker. It had been William Redmond, but now the Republicans are in control of the House so their leader, George Ryan, is the leader in the House as the Speaker. Your reflections on George Ryan as the Speaker of the House, and a pretty vocal opponent of ERA.

Sullivan: Yes. I worked very closely with George Ryan. The idea of picketing a person's private home was unheard of back then, but it showed the degree of radicalism that the feminists would go to. They didn't have any qualms about being disrespectful to George's family, and in fact we were concerned about what else they might do. I don't think that episode helped them really. You might cover that with some of the others you're interviewing. If anything, I think that backfired on them and it was not appreciated by the legislators. It's one thing to be an officer out in a public debate, but being obnoxious to family and residents was unheard of, and I don't think that was very effective.

DePue: Of course we're talking about George Ryan here and as we talk, he is sitting in federal prison in Terre Haute for abuses that happened while he was Secretary of State and then Governor. He was eventually convicted. So he's part of that corruption of Illinois story that we're talking about. But tell me about the man that you knew back in the 1980s who you worked with on ERA issues. Did you personally know him?

Sullivan: Very well. George was a wonderful, wonderful individual. He was very conscientious, a wonderful family man. His wife was an outstanding lady and if anything, George is a good example of the, let's say degree of depravity, that the judicial system in Illinois has sunk to. I believe he was not even allowed to go and visit his wife, Lura Lynn, when she was dying. That is inhumane, that is despicable. George never should have been in jail to begin with. He was put there.

Over the years I have served, there was a great difference of people who surrounded George who were working for him in the last few years, than there were back when he became Speaker of the House. Quite a different type of person. It was somewhat heartbreaking to me to see the difference in the attitude of the people around him. I don't know the details, I have not read the

court records of the trial and so on, but having watched a lot of what's going on and been part of some of it—like my organization specifically was de-funded directly on a command from Blagojevich's sister-in-law.

Barbara Flynn Currie is the name of the legislator from Hyde Park who worked very hard to de-fund Project Reality, and Rosemary—she was from Park Ridge, I'll think of her name—she's finally going to be out of office soon. But the personnel that took over in the '90s and into the 2000s, are just a different type of thinking people than we dealt with in the '70s and '80s, and that's really unfortunate, very unfortunate.

But the treatment that George Ryan has received, or not received, is completely unjust, even for whatever they charged him with. He does not deserve to be where he is at all, as far as I'm concerned. The last straw was when I heard they would not even let him go and visit Lura Lynn as she was dying, in the last couple weeks.

DePue: What was your official position in the Stop ERA movement in Illinois at that time?

Sullivan: I was chairman for Illinois.

DePue: And how long did you actually have that position?

Sullivan: It wasn't any formal election or anything. Phyllis just kind of depended on me for a long enough time, probably about twenty years, twenty-five years. Maybe twenty years, because I really took over a 501(c)(3) that Phyllis had created in the '70s, called Committee on the Status of Women; you'll find that in the records, it's listed. It was a 501(c)(3) and I took that over in '85, and developed that into developing abstinence education programs. We got our first federal grant in '86 under Title 20—which was legislation that Senator Denton put in—to teach abstinence until marriage, in schools. It was a small grant and then it was expanded in the '90s, expanded again as part of the welfare reform in '96. Many Democrats voted for that, and again in 2000, but unfortunately it's been wiped out at the national level as well.

DePue: Well I think that's something we want to talk more about here at the next session, but I want to take you back to 1982. We asked about George Ryan. I started with him because we had this protest by NOW in front of his house. But I want to ask you about the other three leaders in the House and the Senate as well. So let's go with the Minority Leader then, who for most of his life had been Majority Leader, and that's Mike Madigan. I assume you had dealings with all four of these senior leaders. Is that correct?

Sullivan: Yes, over the years. I don't remember dealing with Madigan directly in the '70s however. I dealt with him more when I took over Project Reality in the late '80s.

DePue: Okay, so let's move on to the Senate. Were you working with Senator Phil Rock who was Senate President those last couple of year?. It was fought over in the Senate.

Sullivan: Yes, and with Pate Philip.

DePue: James Pate Philip, okay. Your reflections on those two gentlemen.

Sullivan: Got along very well with them. Senator Rock and then the person that replaced him. Again, I'll think of the name in a minute.

DePue: Emil Jones?

Sullivan: Red, Red…

DePue: Bill Redmond?

Sullivan: No, not Redmond. His first name was Red. Well anyway, Phil Rock: I think he might have been listed as a yes vote, but he really was with us, is my recollection. I don't recall him being openly Stop ERA, but he was for the three-fifths amendment and he basically agreed; he had great concerns of all the different things that would be changed. Phil Rock was also pro-life, as far as his public statements and so on, and he saw the connection and the danger of what would happen. He did not really do anything to really push it or get rid of the three-fifths.

Pate Philip was very, very strong on our side. Again, I personally worked with Pate Philip's office on many other legislative issues. Again, in the education area, in many different things. Pate was a great help. His staff were very good at alerting me if anything came up, and they continued to be very helpful when I got Project Reality going.

DePue: Of course, James Pate Philip is one of the more colorful personalities at that time, an era when there is no shortage of colorful personalities. He was certainly known for making very politically incorrect statements—as we would say it today—including many statements that dealt with women, so that he was labeled as a legislator who hated women. What was your feeling about that?

Sullivan: Not at all. (chuckles) That was a good example of how they pinned what… He hated the feminist women I think. I don't think he hated them. He just thought they were so off the mark and so difficult to deal with; he didn't appreciate Giddy Dyer and the ones he had to put up with in his own Republican Party that were very difficult to deal with. But we certainly had no problem discussing and working with Pate Philip. He was a great admirer of Phyllis, and he had a very lovely wife that we got to know quite well. He was a good Leader of the Republican Senate.

DePue: Okay. I'm going to pick up the timeline here for 1982 and you can jump in any time that something reminds you of an incident or you want to reflect on things. By May and June the fight is really getting hot in Illinois. Thousands of ERA supporters are descending on Springfield for their last chance to pass ERA. The chant that's taken up by National Organization for Women who—obviously as we mentioned before—are always adept at getting publicity: "What do we want? E-R-A. When do we want it? NOW."

Sullivan: Which I think was ironic, that they were promoting and publicizing NOW. At the time, I remember thinking that has a double meaning—it's the National Organization of Women. They want the National Organization of Women at the very time that the culture, even in Illinois, was saying, You know we've really had enough of you, why don't you go away. So we saw it as a last cry. Things like that would show how difficult they were to deal with. I think they turned off a lot of the men who might have been more responsive or listened to them or talked to them. Instead, they just wanted to get away from them.

DePue: Well maybe this next example will illustrate what you just mentioned here. Somewhere in this timeframe there's a dinner for Governor Jim Thompson where President Ronald Reagan is the guest speaker. This is 1982, so now we're talking about Reagan being in office for a year and a half or so.

Sullivan: Right.

DePue: So he's the guest speaker. George Ryan is another featured speaker. The head of ERA Illinois—this is another strongly pro-ERA movement—is a Republican. She attends the dinner and meanwhile, NOW supporters are outside protesting the event.

Sullivan: (laughs) Yes. What was her name again, the head of ERA Illinois?

DePue: You know, I should know that. I don't know the name.

Sullivan: I knew who she was. Forgive me for being absent minded on some of these names. That was comical in a way, because I do think Jim Thompson, for one, was so looking forward to getting this all behind him. He'd had enough of it and I know George was too. And of course, Reagan was a big fan of Phyllis; she was being so helpful in many things, and Thompson and Ryan knew that. They knew how hard she was working at the national scene and how valuable the Stop ERA people in all the states were. We were really making headway in many areas and these feminists were just sort of, We won't let you get your job done. We're here, we're there, we're everywhere type of thing, but they really weren't. They were gasping.

I'll give you one personal situation. I don't know if it was right after that, when George got elected as Lieutenant Governor. Thompson was reelected and George was elected as Lieutenant Governor. The election results were held up for about a week; it was so close, they had to take time to count

and so on. And finally it was announced the two of them did win. The two of them flew up to Meigs Field.[8] My husband, who worked down in the loop at that time, called me up and said, I hear they're coming in to Meigs Field, I'm going to go over there and say hello. Because we had worked very hard for the two of them. I'm going to go over there and meet the plane as it comes down, so I'll give you a call after lunch after it's over. So he did call me and he said, "Guess what happened?" There was nobody there at Meigs Field except the press, and not too many press, so he was sort of a one-man welcoming committee. As Thompson and George Ryan stepped off the plane—my husband is quite tall—he said, "Congratulations, I'm Jerry Sullivan." And he said, "Yeah, but you're Kathleen Sullivan's husband aren't you? (both laugh)

So after he called me up later he said, "He knows who you are all right." That's our own behind-the-scenes contact you might say, which at this point—talking to you from a somewhat historic point of view—it does sort of illustrate the rapport we had behind the scenes.

DePue: Well you also talked about how the legislators—maybe on both sides of the aisle by that time after ten years or more of this battle— were kind of growing old on it. I want to read a quote from Jane Mansbridge's book, *Why We Lost the ERA*. Again, I think she's certainly a proponent of passage of ERA, but this is what she said about that whole issue.

> Far from rejoicing at this massive show of support, the members of ERA Illinois who talked every day to legislators, wrung their hands and agonized over the cumulative anger that these demonstrations were building up, even among sympathetic legislators, because these were the harried last days of the legislative session and the demonstrators demanded so much of the legislators' time that no ordinary business could get done.

And jumping a little bit down here:

> Late spring and early summer are also frantic days for the state legislators, whose work is underpaid and part-time, and who inevitability postpone the most difficult issues—budget, roads, taxes—until the last moments before they were themselves to go back to their neglected families and jobs for the summer.

Sullivan: Yes, yes. But see, looking at it from the not-quite-historic point of view, yet just a long range looking back because it's still in effect, their agenda is to cause disruption in family life. They don't want to have tranquility and a

[8] At that time Meigs Field was a small airfield on the lakeshore of Chicago near the downtown which served as a hub for small business aircraft. Mayor Daley later caused it to be shut down in March, 2003.

really functioning home-first situation. They don't want that. They want the chaos, they want the confusion of the representatives and the governmental process, and they want that demand of government: We're running your life, forget that family back home. That was not the makeup, and I still think it's not the makeup of most of our representatives in this country. It just isn't the American basic makeup, but the feminists don't understand that. They are very bitter individualists and they think they need to make life miserable for everybody else. That just didn't work.

DePue: Well, the feminist movement was certainly not going to go down without one last fight. May eighteenth is the next incident that I want to talk about. That's when Sonia Johnson and several other women begin their hunger strike. They're not going to eat until ERA has passed Illinois.

Just a little bit about Sonia Johnson. She's a Mormon. I mention that because she's taking a position that would be quite different from what the Mormon Church would take, but she's asserting that women hunger for justice. Do you remember that whole hunger strike?

Sullivan: Oh yes, yes. She had a lot of sympathy from other very disgruntled… There were one or two, I think, ex-nuns with her on that hunger strike, and it brought out the most vehement, radical individuals in the group. Again, I think half of that bunch there were from out of Illinois; they were from other states. So really, it was pathetic. We thought of it at the time as being pathetic and I really think it was a last gasp. It did not win them friends in Illinois. They thought of it as a threat and enough would collapse and go along. If anything, I think it won more people to our side; everybody was just saying, let's get this over with, goodbye, leave, you know; end this thing and let us go on with the business of the day. Because they disrupted so many things over the years and it's sad to see people that feel they have to do those extreme things. If they would only stop and think, is their cause really positive for the good of the culture? No. Over the years, what they have been fighting for and what they got in piecemeal has been a detriment in the view of a lot of us who would have been and are still fighting it now.

DePue: Was there any part of you or the Stop ERA movement that admired her dedication and her conviction and her willingness to sacrifice for something that she so obviously so strongly believed in?

Sullivan: No, there wasn't sympathy because basically she was doing it for the wrong goal. We don't admire people that do things like that when the purpose of it is negative, is bad. I mean you either believe that there is right and wrong, and positive and negative outcomes, or you don't. If you think everything is equal, that's the biggest problem to try and deal with, because suffering and sacrifice for a goal that is evil is not a good thing. So we didn't admire her, regardless of what she did. Because she did those things, didn't make her goal right. She was completely misled, just like the nuns that I knew that were in there. They

were misled and frankly today, we have this big crisis in the healthcare situation, on behalf of a Catholic nun who was misled and had her bad influence on the current administration, and look at the trouble it's got us into. Sister Carol Keehan is absolutely on the wrong track and her dedication to it does not justify that she's making a wrong decision or has made it.

DePue: Well, the next issue on the timeline I've got here is that in May, a famous constitutional scholar from Harvard University, Laurence Tribe, came and addressed the Illinois Legislature; obviously he was doing that to try to convince the legislators to vote for passage of ERA. Then on June seventh, a group of women chained themselves to the railing outside the Illinois Senate Chamber in protest, because the issue is bogged down in a Senate committee hearing. Do you remember the women chaining themselves to the railing?

Sullivan: Yes, very much so. But see even Tribe—if I remember correctly—admitted many of the things that we brought up and looked at as being detrimental, he admitted they would happen. He was not completely praiseworthy of ERA. He gave caution also, so his testimony—at the time I remember it seemed like he was verifying several of the points—therefore his testimony wasn't totally persuasive, because he really didn't agree with them completely. Again, he was influenced by them. And it seems to me, years after, he concurred even more. I don't remember the details now, but the people they were bringing in just were not persuasive; they didn't have anything to be persuasive about. Why was giving up all these things that women were blessed with going to be a positive? It didn't make sense.

DePue: Well, in 1982, the focus seemed to be more on what was going on in the Illinois Senate then, and the House. Senator Phil Rock, who is the President of the Senate at the time, realizes he doesn't have the votes he needs, so they basically just table the whole issue; it never even comes up for a vote. The proponent, Senator Jay Taylor says, "I certainly do feel I've been stabbed in the back." And Senator Netsch, who had been in the trenches all these many years says, "I don't like to see it go out with a whimper, but that's exactly how the whole issue ended in Illinois." The last year, the crucial year they were hoping to get it passed, it doesn't even come up to a procedural vote in the Senate Chamber.

Sullivan: I think many of them didn't want to be recorded on another vote. All it caused was problems for them, on either side. That was one reasonable thing: it seemed that they figured the best thing for their political future was no more votes.

DePue: Well it's right after that vote, on June twenty-fourth, that a group of pro-ERA women go outside the Senate Chamber and spill pig's blood outside the Senate Chamber floor, and writing the names of some of their opponents. I imagine George Ryan was one, maybe even Thompson, although he was a

supporter. But that's kind of the anticlimactic event that ended the whole debate in Illinois—the spilling of pig's blood outside the Senate Chamber.

Sullivan: That really did it; that was the last straw. You know looking at that in hindsight, how could anybody really stoop that low, to think that that was going to be a positive impression to anyone? Reasonable people just don't act like that, and it showed they were not reasonable. They never were but that was the last straw, and it sure turned off a lot more of the men. I don't think women were supporting them at that point either.

DePue: With this defeat, what was the mood among the Stop ERA forces that you were dealing with?

Sullivan: Oh, we were thrilled. We had beaten the deadline twice, and frankly, I think many of us realized the brilliance of Phyllis' strategy. Because just as you asked, wouldn't it have been possible to challenge the extension and so on, Phyllis had confidence that we could keep beating it. It was a prudent decision not to go the legal, expensive route, but to keep the grassroots movement going. At that point of the second deadline, her decision certainly was acclaimed. If anything, I think that really gave all of us, including her, much more influence in the conservative movement in the '80s, because by then she was really acknowledged as a very, very brilliant tactician. Of course I think she's probably the most brilliant person I've ever been aware of, and certainly amazing to have worked with her.

DePue: Well, I want to go back to a series of polls that were taken in Illinois on the issue of ERA. You'll recall that last session we talked about a poll in 1976, where 58 percent of the participants in the poll in Illinois favored passage, 27 percent opposed. So in 1976 at least, the Illinois public seemed to be strongly in favor of passage. By '78, it was 58 percent in favor and 29 percent opposed; so still, the Illinois public at that time seems to be strongly in favor of passage. In 1981 it had gone from 58 to 48 percent in favor and 42 percent opposed, so pretty close. In April of 1982, 45 percent in favor, 41 percent opposed, so still a majority, but within the margin of error for the poll, as they would say.

Sullivan: Mm-hmm.

DePue: And after all of this had transpired, in June of 1982: in favor, 38 percent; opposed, 45 percent.

Sullivan: By then we had really got the message worked out huh? (chuckles)

DePue: And maybe it illustrates what you've been saying here, that these tactics, especially those in the National Organization for Women were using, to include the final blow on June twenty-fourth with the spilling of pig's blood outside the Senate Chamber, were working against their own issue.

Sullivan: Yes. That was definitely the general feeling. Things like that, that high pressure confrontation, can't last forever, and there were other things to be concerned about, other things to take care of. With Reagan in the White House, things were really very challenging in the foreign affairs, the military and so on, and this really had to be closed down. I think the general public realized it and realized the need to get it over with.

But they still have accomplished a lot that they set out to, particularly in the key areas that we've discussed—the gay rights and attack on marriage and so on—and we just have to fight that one after the other and get the debate opened up a lot more. That's happening today, and that's where the beauty of modern communications is so important, because today you can get information out hourly, rather than days, and therefore people are much more conscious of what's happening and you can get a response so much faster. That's a whole other story as to how that's proceeding right now. We have explosive things almost every day, don't we?

DePue: I want to finish off today then, with your telling us about this end of ERA event that happened in Washington, D.C. shortly after this.

Sullivan: Yes. Did you get the package I sent?

DePue: Yes I did, with the pictures and some more brochures as well. I did.

Sullivan: The picture of Phyllis and myself is from that event. It's one of the few times she ever changed her hairdo. It was quite an evening. It was a real tribute to her and her talent and leadership by many people. I think it was certainly well to her, but also it was, I think, almost a shock to some of the opponents in the media that she could in fact have survived all that. It was extraordinary and really one of the highlights. Her husband was a marvelous man; he was very much a major part of that event. It wasn't sheer numbers but the people who were there to pay her tribute and celebrate with her were really amazing.

DePue: Was this event organized by Stop ERA or by other organizations?

Sullivan: No, it was mainly by Stop ERA. We worked to get everybody together. There was one couple—if I remember correctly—that did actually put together the tribute, a couple from Ohio who took that on. They wanted to get the representative views of key people that she had worked with and so on. Their names were Bill and Prudence Fields from Marietta, Ohio, their main home, I think, still. They did the actual program for the evening. That was one event of many things Phyllis was involved in, in those years, and she just kept going from one thing to another.

DePue: Well, we probably have, to a certain extent, misconstrued the nature of this fight over ERA's passage by focusing so much on Illinois. Illinois was by no means the only battleground state, but it seemed to garner much of the

national press attention. I wonder if you can reflect on the role that Illinois had, compared to some other states, in terms of the final defeat of ERA.

Sullivan: Well, that's a rather challenging question. We didn't make it any particular focal point as far as that big gala went, if I remember. We were just all very thrilled to be there and be part of it all. We knew what we had done. But in the overall picture of defeating it, I think word would get out there were other states. I think Phyllis spent a lot of time testifying in like five or seven different states, several times, would bring it up. Illinois was the battleground and others would bring it up here and there. She'd fly off and testify and it would be killed for a few months or a year. The other states knew about it and we had key Eagle [Forum] chapters that just knew pretty much the same plan. We kind of specialized the community organizing behind the legislators who were in agreement with us.

Florida, I think passed it and rescinded it twice in late '70s or '80s. No, no, I'll take that back. That's in fighting the Con-Cons, not ERA. I think Florida did rescind ERA however, once, and there were five other states, I think, that rescinded, and the question of were they recognized or not.

I do not recall that Illinois was any major showcase, let's say, until we started reviewing or debriefing. We took it in stride and Phyllis was the central point. When things happened that worked out well, we certainly shared them. We had annual conferences of Eagle Forum and we'd each give a report of the status in the different states. That was very helpful and very good.

DePue: I have one final question for you today to reflect on this. You were in this battle right from the very beginning. How do you think the ten-year fight that you led very much—in Illinois at least—changed you as a person?

Sullivan: I would rather use the word developed me as a person. I don't think of it in terms of changing. Certainly maturing, learning a lot, but oh, it really was an incredibly valuable experience, and working with Phyllis I couldn't have asked for a better mentor. It certainly gave me a fast course in American politics and history, which I have continued to use through the years. So it motivated me and made it possible for me to do much, much more than I might have done if I had not been part of it. She is an extraordinary mentor and teacher, and I think that was prevalent in our organization. There are groups today, all these years later, that are very active in their own states doing different things. There will never be another Phyllis Schlafly, but there certainly are going to be Eagle Forum or Eagle Forum type groups in the family conservative cause that are going to keep going and going and going.

DePue: I think that's a great way to finish for today. I want to thank you very much.

Sullivan: Okay, thank you.

(end of interview #6 #7 continues)

Interview with Kathleen Sullivan

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Interview # 7: March 21, 2012

Interviewer: Mark DePue

DePue: Today is Wednesday, March 21, 2012. My name is Mark DePue, the Director of Oral History with the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. This morning I'm talking to Mrs. Kathleen Sullivan. Good morning Mrs. Sullivan.

Sullivan: Good morning Mark.

DePue: Well, as we've been going through this series, there's always something that connects us with what you had dealt with in the past in long struggle with ERA and current events. Last night, the event was the 2012 primary in the State of Illinois. Any reflections on that before we dive into your life story?

Sullivan: Well, I do think it was disappointing—the results yesterday—but not really too surprising, because Illinois has really got into a very, very difficult and rather amazing control by the liberal philosophy, even on both sides of the aisle. However, I think something like this very often can really energize people into waking up—what is going on in my community and my state. I hope that's what's going to happen in Illinois, and that stronger leaders that are more concerned about the long range good of the state and the country will emerge, particularly in Illinois.

DePue: Well I suppose we should put a few specifics in here so the readers in the future aren't going to be wondering, what is she talking about? Last night in the primary Mitt Romney won rather decisively in Illinois over Rick Santorum. I think you've expressed in the past, that your preference is for Rick Santorum?

Sullivan: Yes. But Rick Santorum did get twelve delegates, and I think that's very important, because I understand some of them from Southern Illinois are quite new to the political scene. Hopefully they will emerge as being very effective leaders in the future, and try and get the state of Illinois back under the true Lincoln banner.

DePue: Well there you go. I should mention this is our seventh session. Does that seem possible, seven sessions now?

Sullivan: It is amazing. I guess when we started I certainly didn't think we would go that long. But you're right, it has been very interesting discussing the past with you. Constantly, I keep thinking in terms of how it relates to the current, and even how it could relate to the future. So it's been a very wonderful, extraordinary opportunity for me to study what I and others did twenty, thirty, even forty years ago, in Illinois, and how it relates to what's going on now. We saw so much of the change happening and hopefully we can see additional change in the near future to really have a more positive, all-American attitude toward government, which is frankly, less government interference in our general day-to-day lives.

DePue: Well let's get right into it, because I know both you and I have a pretty tight schedule this morning. I want to give you an opportunity to finish off with one more anecdote about the end of the ERA fight in Illinois, which of course was in 1982 right here in Springfield.

Sullivan: Well, there were many things at that point, but one that really has an extraordinarily pertinent, but humorous, aspect was the big demonstration that some of the feminists had in the Capitol. It was even in *LIFE Magazine* at the time. They literally chained themselves in front of the doors of the Governor and other offices in the state of Illinois. They had acquired blood from the local slaughterhouse and poured it all over the floor of the Illinois Capitol, an area where they were chained. It was really pretty gruesome and extraordinary as a type of demonstration that they chose.

But anyway, Governor Thompson at the time tried to get out of his office and they wouldn't move; they were blocking his exit. He said, "Excuse me, ladies," and two or three of them screamed, "We're not ladies!" And his response was, "You said it, not me." It was a very unusual form of admitting what they wanted to be heard. They didn't want to be ladies. They didn't want to really get along. They wanted to be obstructionists.

DePue: Okay. I thought that would be a good way for us to make the transition then, into what's beyond the ERA struggles, because the fight is hardly over. I think both sides are now committed to continuing the struggle in other different forms perhaps. But I want to maybe slip back a little bit into the 1970s and ask you to discuss some of the things that Mrs. Schlafly and your organization were already doing to kind of carry the fight on to different arenas. Specifically, I think you talked about this Committee on the Status of Women. Can we start with that?

Sullivan: Yes. That was organized I believe, in '72, right after the ERA passed Congress, or right before. I don't remember the exact date. But Eagle Forum really was a multi-issue interest group. At that time it was very much centered

in national defense, in the military, as well as education and the growth of government. But it was very much to hold on to a lot of consideration that was given to the family units and the career homemakers and so on. So our interest was really—after the Equal Rights Amendment passed Congress—many of us realized how affected all these other areas of interest would be because of that ERA. One in particular would be the social security system, the right for alimony, for support, child support, and would affect the divorce laws as well as many other areas.

So, it sort of all got together and our interest focused on realizing that the ERA was the greatest individual detriment to all those things that had been put in and were supported at that time. We didn't have the federal government Department of Education at that point. Education was handled more at the state level. So many of our Eagle Forum members became quite expert at how the governmental policies affected education at the state level and even at the county level. Unfortunately, the Department of Education went in, I believe in the '80s, or expanded tremendously there, and it's a very, very mega imposition on the culture right now. We'd like to see it abolished or certainly cut back.

But the ERA was the focal point, because many of us realized that through that determination of absolute sameness in everything, all different aspects would be affected: home, the culture, schools, military, everything. Really, due to Phyllis' marvelous ability to analyze and to condense the analysis and the reasoning into her four page monthly newsletter, we were able to really get the debate going in the general public, but mainly with the legislators, and particularly in Illinois.

DePue: The phrase, Committee on the Status of Women, almost sounds like it's a legislative committee, but I am assuming that is not the case.

Sullivan: No, that was a 501 not-for-profit organization that Phyllis established in order to center the discussion as a women's issue. It was a counter to the pro-ERA people.

DePue: Was that under the umbrella of the Eagle Forum then?

Sullivan: Yes, but not specifically tied in. It operated to a much lesser degree, but was mainly centered on, when it was needed, to have research or papers or speakers, speak out on the emphasis of how it would affect women.

Now, you're correct in that different states, and even at the federal level, there were committees popping up, commissions on the status of women. So we were debating back and forth: What is the status of women? From our point of view, we didn't want women to lose what were very beneficial things in the favor of the family, like the single income family having the right to double filing on income tax. Even that today has been

changed to a great degree; here we are in 2012 and Phyllis Schlafly has just put out an incredible newsletter explaining the changes in the IRS Code, which have taken a lot of rights away from the full-time career homemaker and dual filing. Today, now the single individuals have better breaks in the tax code than married couples do.

DePue: I want to give you a chance to talk about that in some more depth, but I'm going to wait until we get closer to the contemporary to do that, if you don't mind.

Sullivan: Okay, certainly.

DePue: Let's move on to the early 1980s then. I know that Senator Jeremiah Denton was doing some work as well, and maybe now the battle lines are shifting away from ERA towards other issues. Can you talk about what he was involved with.

Sullivan: Jeremiah Denton was the first Republican, I believe, to be elected from Alabama. He had come back from the Vietnam War; he was the longest held POW in that war. He was in prison seven years and seven months, and four of those years in solitary confinement. He had a very wonderful wife and seven kids back home. He came home to find a vast change in the culture and how it was affecting his own family and so on, and he was horrified at the promiscuousness among the young people. When he got in to be Senator, he started looking into what was being funded by the Federal Government.

One of the very, very vast expanding departments was what is referred to as Title X of the Department of Health and Human Services. Title X (Ten) was funding for school-based clinics, neighborhood clinics, of which Planned Parenthood was one of the largest recipients. They were given, at that time, something like—I think they were given, oh maybe it was $100 million or close to it back in the early '80s—and none of the money was going to teach the abstinence message. It was all going to promote contraceptives, what they called comprehensive healthcare, but it was funneled at young people mainly and to supplement and promote the abortion angle of Planned Parenthood and abortion clinics. The abortion question was really going full steam at that point, after the *Roe v. Wade* decision of '73.

So it was a shock to him to see how tax money was being put into the public promotion of what was becoming a bigger and bigger problem in the culture. So he instituted what was then referred to as Title XX (Twenty) that was a very small fraction of the funding that Title X got. I believe it started out with about $12 million. That money was to go to set up pregnancy counseling centers that would promote adoption, and to promote the teaching of the healthiest lifestyle, mainly teaching young people that abstinence was prudent and a safer health message, and how to do it.

Now, putting through legislation is one thing, but then monitoring it to get it implemented according to the intent of Congress is something else. So when he got it in—I believe it was in '82—up to about '85, there really was only one abstinence program, which was based in Spokane, Washington. The program is known as Teen-Aid. I didn't know them at the time. They were the only ones that were really adhering to the purpose of what Congress put that money and that program in for. So we got to hear of that and Phyllis talked to me about it in '85. We had put on a conference, The Role of Women in the Church, in New York City in June of '85. After that conference was over, Phyllis said to me, Okay Kathleen, I have a new challenge for you. She had gotten a call from Jerry Denton and he said, Look, these funds are going to the wrong people. They're turning them to use as part of their promotion of the more promiscuous lifestyle and they're not being used for what they were meant to be used for. Can you get some people who will do the job we need done to apply for the funds? So Phyllis suggested that I do that; she told me she had this Committee on the Status of Women and this would fit in beautifully because it is helping mothers and families do the job to teach kids to be healthy.

So at that point I took over that committee and had a board established. We applied for a grant early in '86 and got awarded the first grant that summer, and that's how we got started in the abstinence education. From then on, I ran that division, you might say, of Eagle Forum.

DePue: Well, this leads in a couple different directions here, but let me start with this. Taking federal funds, isn't that somewhat contrary to the philosophy that Mrs. Schlafly and Eagle Forum would normally pursue?

Sullivan: In general yes, very definitely. However, that's the beauty of our more traditional, conservative, whatever title you want to put on it. We're not beyond being very interested in how things play out. And upon studying it, we realized that, because of the bad programs, the trends in the culture were being funded by our tax money. They had a bottomless reach into the taxpayer pocket—"they" being officials in government—and they had the funds to be able to cause the problem.

Now, when the outside voices would speak up and say," No you can't do that, you shouldn't do that and here's why," we'd get a pat on the head and say, Well that's all very well and good. But we didn't have the money to be able to counter it. We were not recognized as a viable debate part of it, because we didn't have the influence in the educational systems, on the school boards and so on, and we didn't have the funds. Upon studying that, I felt very strongly. Following Jerry Denton's lead, you might say, he said we would get into the playing field on the same turf. We'd get in there and show, that with our tax money, the job could be done the way it ought to be done. The government programs, the government funding, should be given on an equal basis, and that's why he put in Title XX. I felt this was a very good route to

try, because we really believed that with the true prevention message, we could in fact be able to eliminate a lot of the government funded programs that were being set up at that time, to try and take care of the problem as it happened.

DePue: Well, you kind of led into my next question. I guess my curiosity is, if Senator Denton thinks that what Title X is doing is very counterproductive, then why wouldn't the push be to eliminate these Title X funds in the first place, rather than kind of going through the back door and adding some other funds that might ameliorate some of those impacts?

Sullivan: Well, because of practical politics at the time. The practical headcount of, was it possible to get rid of Title X? No. We knew enough about who was elected and who was in charge and what was happening there, frankly on both sides of the aisle. The Republicans and Democrats had been, Oh well, you know, these kids aren't going to listen and we have to— The thrust was really taking hold: the worst thing they could do is produce a baby, not stopping the sexual activity so much. That was more, Oh, face the fact; they're going to do it anyway. Their goal really was, don't let them have a baby. So, they would go for the contraceptives and if that didn't work, well abortion was then practiced and okay.

Our point of view was no, there were many other negatives besides getting pregnant or having a baby, and that's what we have shown in the last thirty years. The emotional trauma was becoming more and more evident. The use of drugs at an earlier age, all these things were coming along. We saw, and Jeremiah Denton saw, that that needed to be addressed. Now, where we could not get the support and the count was not there to be able to abolish Title X, the discussion and arguments were very reasonable and very well supported by the vast majority of legislators who, if given the option of real prevention and keeping kids out of this trouble, they supported that, yes. They could see the need to have the efforts funded to at least try and keep the kids healthy in general, so that we got a lot of support for Title XX, where they would not necessarily have supported abolishing Title X. The fair angle, you might say, of teaching both messages is what we were after and in hindsight, over thirty years, it's worked beautifully where it was tried.

DePue: Again, I don't want to get too far ahead here, but I'm going to violate my own rule to a certain extent. This whole issue that we're talking about here, especially as it applies to contraceptives and the new healthcare law, is very much part of the Republican primary debate, but my question is much more specific. At that time, was restricting the funds that were going to Planned Parenthood and other organizations so that it wouldn't be supporting abortion, was that part of the bill or was that something that came in later?

Sullivan: That was part of the debate from the very beginning, as I remember it, back in the '70s '80s, definitely. The momentum for de-funding Planned Parenthood

really got going more in the ‘90s and 2000s, because the extent, the numbers, the sheer numbers of abortions had grown so incredibly, that I think the general population has recognized this is just too, too much, and it should be cut back. They realized too, that Planned Parenthood let’s say, is not exactly truthful in what they do with their money. They’ll tell you they provide mammograms. Well they don’t. That’s come out recently now. They refer somebody but they don’t provide it, they don’t use their funding. Their funds are fungible and most of the fungibility goes toward performing the abortions; that’s their specialty. And one more, now they are getting at the younger children for contraceptives, and they want that access to the children at a young age, because they see that that could provide them with clients for the rest of their life.

DePue: I know that abstinence education has been central to what you have done for the rest of your life since 1985, ’86.

Sullivan: Right.

DePue: I want you to shift gears from what was going on at the federal level then, to this whole issue of abstinence education in the State of Illinois.

Sullivan: Well that was very interesting, because we got our first federal grant in ’86, and by the end of the first year, I had more applications from schools than I could service with our federal grant. I forget the exact numbers, but we were set up to service a certain number of—I think it was 5,000 students—and more and more schools were asking to have the program put in. So I went to the State of Illinois legislators, many of whom I knew, and got almost unanimous support, again both sides of the aisle. The Democrats were very supportive of putting it in, and Gary Hannig, John McNamara. There were a lot of Democrats who supported it, as well as the Republicans. So we were given our first grant—the Committee on the Status of Women—in ’87, and that was for $55,000 to cover whatever applications we had over and above the federal grant. That’s how the State of Illinois grant started in ’87. It grew every year after that, until ’08.

The last five years, from’03 to ’08, our grant was up to $1.2 million per year, but we were covering 120,000 students throughout the State of Illinois. Now that is ten dollars per student. Prior to that even, the figures of teen pregnancies were dropping in Illinois, but the thing that I kept trying to get were the stats for sexually transmitted diseases, which they never could give me. I kept saying, Don’t you have that question on your intake forms at the clinics? and so on. In the teenage group you couldn’t get the figures of how it was affecting. In other words, the self-reporting questionnaires of the students would tell us, I stopped having sex or I am not going to have sex. Our evaluations were beautiful, but getting the stats out of the state was another question.

Then I started checking into what other programs are there in the State of Illinois, funded through the Illinois health department, that affect teenagers. That was really, a very, very amazing thing. There were thirteen or fourteen different programs that spent anywhere from two, three thousand—up to seven thousand per client—in the teen range, trying to service Parents Too Soon and Male Responsibility. There were two clinics in Chicago; what exactly they did I never quite found out, but their cost per client was exorbitant. So, it turned out that prevention at ten dollars a student that was working, was actually reducing the client count for these other programs, as recorded by their own records, so we started affecting their advocacy for more funds because they were not getting more clients—it was going down. I started bringing that to the attention of the legislators, who did listen, and we were funded by the legislature openly. [Michael] Madigan, both sides of the aisle. Unfortunately, it was the Governor's more, let's say close administrative staff, and certain of the pro-ERA women in Illinois, who literally said de-fund Project Reality, which was doing business as named. Project Reality was a dba[9] of the Committee on the Status of Women. I have the records of that.

I have a CD of the actual meeting, where, of the four feminist legislators, one says, "How about Project Reality? Where's that?" And the chairman says, "It's gone." She says, "You said that last year, but you still paid them." "No, this year it's really gone." That was very much of a joke: when I had signed the contract for '08 and it was sent back to the state health department, I just never got it from May until, it was October before they told me I was not going to get any money whatsoever.

DePue: This was October of 2007 or 2008?

Sullivan: 2008.

DePue: Well it sounds then like the climate for Project Reality and abstinence education in Illinois changed once Rod Blagojevich got into office. Would that be a fair statement?

Sullivan: The administration. Key people were fighting it—the feminists, I'd say—for several years prior to that.

DePue: Well, January of 2003 is when Blagojevich was first taking office.

Sullivan: Right.

DePue: So even before that, there was some resistance.

Sullivan: Yes, yes, there was resistance from certain of the feminist legislators; there always was resistance from them, but they didn't have an impact until… I believe I sent you a letter written by Blagojevich admiring our speaker and

[9] dba: short for "doing business as"

Project Reality's work. That letter was written like a month before his aide, Ms. Louanna Peters, finally returned my call from this office and told me, "Ms. Sullivan, I do not have any money to give you." Because I had given a line and chapter and verse of the budget, where Mr. Madigan told me the allocation was in the budget, and he gave me the exact place to find it. And on a call from the Governor's office she said, "I have no money to give you." And I said, "Ms. Peters, I'm not asking you for your money. That money was authorized and appropriated by the Illinois Legislature and I am to get a contract." "I have no money to give you," she repeated. She'd been programmed that that was their line, and that was the end of it.

DePue: We do have that letter you're referring to, signed by Blagojevich, dated October 5, 2007.

Sullivan: That's right.

DePue: The next question I have for you then is, why do you need this funding from the state to make sure that abstinence education is happening in the local schools? Can't the local school boards decide that's the approach they want to take, without any requests for state-level grants?

Sullivan: Yes, technically they could. On the other hand, there we go again, where the outreach into the schools, to teach the comprehensive or contraceptive angle of sex ed, was very prevalent and being funded at the state level. Title X funds, coming from the Federal Government to Illinois, were being used to teach where to go and how to get contraceptives and abortions. So we were entitled to have attention given, because the law in the state of Illinois says that abstinence is mandated to be taught. In fact, I think there are three different sections where it is mandated: in the general health code, in the AIDS education code, and—there are three different areas. I don't have the reference in front of me.

So, the state had mandated that abstinence must be taught. The state should be funding, and they did—for twenty-one years they funded teaching that mandate. So it was perfectly legitimate. Again, I'd like to stress that my thinking and analysis was that if we got into it on the same playing field and had access to the schools in general, we could prove that the kids did, in fact, respond to the message and they did practice it, which we did prove. And because we were able to prove it and show the comparison of cost effectiveness, was why certain people didn't agree with this, figured we had to get out of the scene and be pushed aside because we were showing them up as not being effective and they shouldn't be funded.

DePue: Can you tell us a little bit more about how the money is actually spent, what you got with the money that you had, how it impacted a local school and a local student in a school?

Sullivan: We published textbooks, two of them, which were most successful. One was called *Game Plan*, which was written with A.C. Green; it's a format of a basketball game in eight chapters. And *Navigator:* how to navigate your planning, your long range goals as well as short range goals, for a healthy lifestyle. The books were very attractive, they were consumable. The kids wrote in them. The discussion was built around what was on each page, so the teachers really loved them, because it was a good teaching tool. The teacher's manual was exactly like the student book, except it had the answers in a particular column on the right and left of each page. And we provided teacher training for schools throughout the whole state. I believe I sent you, for the record, a breakdown of all the counties in the state of how many schools we had in each county or how many students, for the last three years. So it was extensive use throughout the whole state.

Now, if it was done school district by school district, it would have taken a massive, larger, administrative set of people, just to make the contacts with all the different school districts. This way, we could blanket email as the years went by—but fax in earlier years—to all the schools, saying this is provided by the State of Illinois, it's been approved—which they were—and we can provide you with teacher training for using these materials, as well as speakers. We had motivational speakers that would go to the different schools, and we could handle that with a skeleton crew at the office, which was much more efficient and economical. Once they had signed up, we had very few schools that would then back out. They loved the idea of teaching kids to be healthy. I mean let's face it, whether it's in athletics, whether it's in the regular classroom, if you've got healthy kids—emotional and physically healthy—they are much easier to teach, they're much better students. They're not all messed up in their emotional life, than if you don't teach them how to be healthy. So the teachers appreciated it and it was amazing, even in the city of Chicago. We did have great support, by the way, from Arne Duncan, and Paul Vallas was the superintendent at the beginning. He was very, very supportive and it just took off through the schools.

Now, there were a few opponents even back then, but Paul Vallas was marvelous at how he dealt with them. It was just very clear to all the teachers: We want you to have healthy kids and not kids that need to go to clinics for contraceptives and abortions.

DePue: Was the message, in your experience, more effective, more received by the girls or the boys?

Sullivan: Both. And this is what was really a discovery for us, and it happened, I would say, early in the '90s. The books centered on your emotional development, your thinking, your confidence, your respectfulness. As we did that, the discussion in the class, we started getting reports back from the teachers that the young guys were getting in on the discussion. And what emerged was that, particularly at the early ages, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, which would be

middle school, ninth grade, most people think that boys just don't pay attention and you know, boys will be boys and forget it. But most relationships at those very young ages are broken off by the girls, who are just nature-wise more mature than boys of twelve, thirteen and fourteen.

What saw happening, and was brought to the attention of the teachers, was that this really had a major effect on the young males. Their emotions were hurt. They didn't like being rejected. Susie-Q suddenly decided, oh, somebody a little bit older is more attractive; the girls would dump the young guys and move on to older guys. So the young guys started speaking up in class; yeah, I went through that. They would respond to the discussion because it didn't center on where do you get your contraceptives and did you use them. It centers on their thinking, their emotional development, their attitude towards each other, and long range and so on. So the boys got in the discussion to a great degree.

I personally started doing some media coverage, bringing out this factor of the reaction of the young male to broken relationships and attitude toward the girls. The teachers would tell us. One teacher—I I think it was in Aurora—called one day and said, Okay, here's my situation.

This morning, ninth grade, this young guy came storming in, furious, upset, "I want to know, can you sue the condom company?" "Well wait a minute, wait a minute, what's going on here?" "Well, I tried to use it but it didn't work, it fell off." This young male, ninth grade, is just so upset, furious about it all. Nobody bothered to tell him that.

So we got this report and believe me, we would get these reports constantly. It was an incredible education for all of my organization, believe me. So I decided to do a little survey of my own. Now remember, I have six kids who are all pretty much grown up by this point, so I knew something about teenagers. So I went to the drugstore and I asked the pharmacist behind the counter, "Do condoms come in junior sizes?" And they looked at me and, "Um, ah, well um, what do you mean?" I said, "No, I'm serious and here's why I want to know. We have an education program in schools and the kids are being told at nine and ten years old, If you're going to have sex, be sure you get condoms or whatever. And let's face it, there are a lot of males, young boys, that have not really matured very much at this point; so I'm wondering, do you sell condoms in junior sizes?" "Well, no."

For about three years I would do this at different pharmacies, and if you want to see real surprise on the faces of the people behind the counter, that question really was very interesting. Now believe me, I never dreamed I would be in a position of doing something like this, but I was driven to it, to be able to bring out the stupidity of what was being done to our young people.

DePue: Did you find that the boys were even receptive to the notion of being abstinent?

Sullivan: Oh yes, oh yes. That's where we really saw the turnaround, because they realized that in many cases, the girls were becoming the aggressors, and they didn't like when they were then thrown aside for somebody else. Now, boys react very differently after a broken relationship. They either become very macho—No girl is going to do this to me any more—or the different degrees of—Well, I'll just try another and another and another—and it becomes very casual.

But after a few times, like when I started doing… I did a radio show out of New York City, a talk show. I got five call-ins, all men who heard me. For instance—and this is back in the early '90s, remember, before all this fast communication type of high tech—one guy said, "That lady is absolutely right, I am a living proof of it. I was taken in early, and it's like an imprint on my computer mind and I wish I could erase it. I'm now happily married and we never forget those hurts and what went on, but I can't get rid of it from my computer mind."

Now, back then, nobody really understood, at least I wasn't sure myself, that things are imprinted in the hard drive forever and you can't get rid of it. It was a very good reference.

Another time I was speaking to a parent group. This great big thirty-something waited until everybody left and he said, "If I had heard you eighteen years ago, I never would have done it, but I thought, oh, everybody is doing it. I was pressured into it and thought, well, you're just not in and so I did. I've never forgotten it, I regret it all the time, and I wish I never had."

DePue: I guess what I'm hearing is that you've talked a lot about these relationships; boys get in these young relationships and then get emotionally hurt because of the experiences. Are you suggesting that the society, the culture, was really pushing kids into these things much earlier than they were prepared for?

Sullivan: The feminists were pushing them, because they knew. That's my analysis now, looking back. They knew this is how you could have an influence, if not control, men.

DePue: Well that's a very conspiratorial kind of a comment. Do you really think that was part of "the plan?"

Sullivan: Well, let's look back on what happened to the culture in the last thirty years. The promiscuity is everyplace, and so much of what happens in our culture is through vindictiveness—I'm going to get back at you—all the litigation. It's everywhere.

DePue: But you're suggesting that it's not just societal trends, but that there were designs by early feminist groups like the National Organization for Women, to deliberately do this, so they could have more control over things.

Sullivan: Yes. It's how you control a culture, a society.

DePue: Do you have any proof of that though?

Sullivan: There's tons of it. I don't think at this point I'd like to specify one or two, but believe me, I do have a lot of it. So much is done today out of, I'll get back at you, and it's spiteful, rather than being trustworthy and cooperative. That's the big battle in our culture today.

DePue: But you're suggesting that even in the '70s and '80s, there would be women who would get together, and said we want to push this kind of education because that will strengthen our position in the long run.

Sullivan: Yes. For that matter, Eagle Forum has put out an education report, a publication, a magazine format, small newspaper, every month for years and years. They publish the results of the NEA convention which is held every summer. If you follow what goes on at those conventions—the resolutions from those conventions and so on—it is very much in line with this thinking of how to get the students—the young ones, and the males in many instances—promoting the antagonism, the gender fight. It's amazing what goes on at their convention. That's probably the fastest thing that might be able to show it up, but many of their meetings are in line with that, and it plays out that way. We could see the difference in the legislators who are elected.

Thirty years ago we didn't have that bitter… I mean, I don't think any assistant would have dared tell a grantee thirty years ago, I have no money to give you, when the legislator put it in. That never would have happened, no matter who the grantee was, under any of the other governors that I worked with.

DePue: But we are talking about the Blagojevich Administration. He's in jail now, having just gone there for federal abuses, but he was impeached because of his constitutional abuses, and this would fall under that category.

Sullivan: Well I don't know if this would fall under the constitutional thing. It was the people who surrounded him, who did what they wanted to do, period. I'm not absolving him, by the way, but I'm saying I saw the staff of the governmental bodies deteriorate.

DePue: You mentioned the feminist legislators. Can you put some names to those?

Sullivan: Yes. Rosemary Mulligan was one of them. There's one from Hyde Park. I forget. I did find my Illinois book. Barbara Flynn Currie. And one from

Evanston, Sara Fegenholtz. Jan Schakowsky is in Congress now, but was in the Illinois House earlier and was very influential.

DePue: Without putting you on the spot and slowing things down here, we can always get those into the written record later on, if that's okay. [inserted at edit]

Sullivan: Yes. In fact, I will look up the transcript of that CD I have, because there were four that were at that meeting.

DePue: Okay. We'd like to get that as part of our official archives here as well, if you've got the actual recording of it.

Sullivan: Okay. I'd have to give some thought as to just where that's stored. I know we held on to that, but I'll try and find it.

DePue: I've got one or two other questions, then we can move on, but this is an important subject. I know you've spent a huge portion of your life dealing with it, so it's certainly fair that we're spending a lot of time on it. My question is, How receptive were the teachers? We're in the dangerous area of you're going to have to generalize about the teachers in the state of Illinois. Educators, at least as we sit today, the educational community, has a reputation for being, let's say more liberal than the general population, and I'm wondering what the teachers reception was like back in the '80s and the '90s.

Sullivan: Teachers were extraordinarily thankful for giving them this helpful material. They did not like teaching kids to go get your contraceptives on Friday night, whether it was in a school clinic or at their clinic across the street or anything. They instinctively knew that was not good for the kids. And even the administration were very supportive and very thankful. It was the teachers' union people that were in opposition to it, and the members of ERA Illinois and the more blatant feminists that would scream and yell; they would be mad at the ones that were cooperating with us.

We had a lot of support from some legislators in the city of Chicago even, and I'm talking of Representatives Mary Flowers, Mike Madigan, Deborah Graham, and Art Turner, and Senators Jerimiah Joyce and Emil Jones, that were very, very helpful all along. It was a good example of how a handful of people get into key positions, which I think is the situation today, and they are able to block things—which literally is what they did with our funding and put us out of business—and/or run things.

DePue: I'm wondering why the teachers' union? I'm thinking, why should they even have a dog in this fight?

Sullivan: You get back to the basic thing of unions. The unions and the leadership of unions are, and have been for years and years—always have been, I think—very liberal. They believe in government control. They want and they believe

in kids being controlled by them and the government. They don't want the individual parents to deal with, and that's why they go for the pre- pre-school, daycare, all those things. They want the kids raised in group situations, because let's face it, it's more controllable. In fact, that's how they've been able to get control of the State of Illinois to the degree they have.

DePue: Okay. Well I'm going to use this as an excuse to transition to a different subject here. I want to ask you, after eight years of the Ronald Reagan administration—so now we're at the federal level again—your feelings about George H. W. Bush and his presidential campaign. I'm asking from the perspective of, he isn't nearly the social conservative that Ronald Reagan had the reputation of being by that time.

Sullivan: That's true. You're talking about the first Bush President, right?

DePue: Right.

Sullivan: Well, that's why many of us were not particularly happy when he was put on the ticket with Reagan in 1980, because we felt that was a compromise. Now, he did improve—I think greatly—in many areas through serving with Reagan, yet he was not able to continue that when he ran for reelection. I think by then he was breaking away and wanted to set his own record, I guess, or whatever. There were many areas, including both he and his wife were supporters of Planned Parenthood, as was Mrs. Goldwater; way back in the '60s we had a problem with her.

In fact, in the 1980, I believe it was, convention, or it might have been '84, Senator Denton himself spoke to him. He's a good friend of George Bush, played tennis with him, and he spoke to him specifically to try and get him better understanding this fight on the family. He brought Bush along tremendously in understanding the dangers of playing along with those people.

As years go by, it sort of floats in and out, the importance of one issue at a certain time and another one at a different time. That's where the feminists have their constant presence in certain ways. Fortunately, many of us have lasted over a period of time and therefore, the two sides of the debate keeps going on and on. Right now we are in dire straits, I would say.

DePue: Well, getting back to the '88 election, I would assume you had no problem though, in making a selection between Bush and his democratic rival, who was Michael Dukakis.

Sullivan: That's correct, that's correct. He again, was representative of—if I remember correctly—major union influence; at that point, the Kennedys from Massachusetts were running a heck of a lot, and he was part of that whole entourage. So we were not expecting anything positive to come out of Dukakis.

DePue: Okay. This is the timeframe in your life now, where you're obviously starting to think seriously about making a difference, not just as a private citizen running 501(c)(3)s and being involved with Eagle Forum, but actually jumping into the political fray. Can you talk to us about how you get to the decision in 1990 to actually run for Congress?

Sullivan: Yes. That was very definitely an outgrowth of my work in the '80s, because the congressional district we lived in was represented by Congressman John Porter; his wife was one of the top echelon of International Planned Parenthood, Kathryn Porter. Actually, John Porter went to Springfield as a State Representative many years before. He got divorced and soon after he went down to Springfield and married Kathryn, who was his aide in Springfield. I think, looking back, she probably had connections with the feminist movement to a greater degree than anybody realized at the time.

But by 1990, John was doing the work that she and Planned Parenthood needed done in our Congress. He was sort of their point man and would push things for them, and she really ran him. I was very upset with her the more I found out the connection, so I thought, okay, we've had a good bit—we being our connections, the Eagle Forum and other connections around Illinois—so I decided to file and challenge him in the Republican primary, which was quite an experience. I had a good bit of experience in the actual campaigning, but did not have the funds to match his. He went heavy on advertising and mailing and so on, which I couldn't afford to do, but I did get 40 percent of the vote. That was the first time I ran against him. He would not talk about the abortion issue. He would not talk really much on the education issues at all. He kept portraying himself—and I think the papers did portray him—as he was a businessman. That was a district north of Chicago, north suburban, so the general feeling was oh, we really need a businessman in D.C.

I had a tough challenge, getting him to really consider and think about family issues and education and so on. We were just getting going with Project Reality, three and a half years old. But 40 percent was pretty good on a shoestring, and some people encouraged me to try again in '92, which I did.

I made a trip to D.C. to visit Mrs. Porter before I decided to run the second time. I got there a little bit early and her assistant let me into her office. She was a little late for the meeting that morning, which is fine, understandable, but in letting me into the office, I stood at the door and it was surprise and even shock. Her office was decorated with snakes. Not real ones of course, but stuffed ones, ceramic ones. There were two windows facing out and each windowsill had three curled up snakes on the windowsill. There was a rather large one wound around a tree in the corner, and they were just all over. I thought, this is really strange. It took me back and when she came in, I did not comment on them at all but believe me, I'd never seen anything like that before.

DePue: This was Mrs. Porter's office?

Sullivan: Yes, Kathryn Porter's office. I forget the name of the organization, but it was a fancy sounding international something-or-the-other. It was not officially International Planned Parenthood. It had some other title. But she was very involved in foreign aid distribution for population programs and so on. We knew each other from back in the district, and she was friendly. In fact, she tried to encourage me. She said Kathleen, would you consider—and why wouldn't you want to get involved in some of these programs in Latin America and so on, and we could even wind your message in. We're making TV programs and we're getting into all these different outlets. She literally told me how they infiltrate other countries' media and getting their message out. She was making a suggestion that I should consider doing this as part of her group, not that I should do it individually; for that matter she knew I didn't have the money to do that, but to do it together. I really pleaded with her on a personal friendly situation and suggested to her that I had real problems with what her plans were and her organization, and didn't understand how she could do this, how she could spend her life thinking up how to reduce populations in other countries.

Now, I got back home and thought about it and said okay, I'm going to run against him again. Not that I ever brought out that episode as part of the campaign, but I knew the importance of trying to not let her use him in the way she had been. Well, six months after the second election—which I only got 37 percent of the primary vote the second time—six months after that she left him. I never found out exactly what the reasons were or what happened but it all broke apart.

DePue: She left him?

Sullivan: Kathryn left John Porter; their marriage fell apart.

DePue: But it wasn't his doing it was hers?

Sullivan: Yes.

DePue: Was her involvement with International Planned Parenthood ever an issue in your campaign, where you were bringing that out?

Sullivan: No, because I felt that in our district it would not have been a positive for me to bring it up.

DePue: But certainly, you're running on a family-friendly platform. Everybody would have known your opposition to Planned Parenthood by this time, wouldn't they?

Sullivan: Yes, and many people knew that she was connected with them, but specifically challenging the candidate's spouse was not a good idea. I just did

not feel that was an appropriate thing to do and did not believe it would be a positive issue for winning votes.

DePue: Why did you decide to run at the federal level and not in the state of Illinois as a Representative, or perhaps an Illinois Senator?

Sullivan: Because my goal was to stop his influence. He particularly was the one I wanted to get out of there and change. I didn't want to be a legislator. I wasn't interested in just running for office. I ran to try and put the brakes on his being used to hurt the whole country. And you might say, the way it turned out he did give up the seat then, or he left in '94 I guess.

DePue: Is this a way to say that you had no expectation of actually winning?

Sullivan: Yes, I think that's accurate. I realized, by some very strange out-of-the-blue situation, I could have won, but that was not in my hands to plan. I was doing the challenging and things would work out the way they were meant to work out.

DePue: Well, everything you've said up to this point, you're essentially a one issue candidate. Would that be a fair assessment?

Sullivan: No, no, no, no.

DePue: I knew that would be your answer.

Sullivan: From '85 to now, my emphasis is on education, young people and so on, but besides that, I also was very involved in general issues with Eagle Forum and others. In national defense, the Strategic Defense Initiative back in the '80s, which Reagan developed, I was very active in bringing that issue to the attention of party officials. I worked a lot with the party representatives and administration at different levels, because I really recognized and respected the amount of time and effort that party officials put in; they're important, not just the legislators.

DePue: How about fiscal or tax issues?

Sullivan: Well that too, and mainly that all these other things involve the economics. They can only put in bad education programs if they first take the money from us, the taxpayer, and put it to fund and hire more people that will portray their bad programs. If they don't have the money to do that, they can't do it. So tax issues are connected with everything. If the government didn't give our taxes to Planned Parenthood, they would not be able to provide close to 400,000 abortions each year. They could never raise that money individually. The only place they can get it is from our taxes.

Let me get back to the young people's health issue. If we really wanted to cut government programs, if we could keep 50 percent of the young people

from getting involved sexually, drugs or alcohol through high school and even through college—the sexual activity is the most expensive an outcome—think of all the government programs that would be unnecessary. It would be the fastest way of cutting the size of government. As shown in Illinois, the kids chose to be healthy and were not involved sexually; they could close down thirteen different outlets in the Illinois Department of Health, and they get millions of dollars.

DePue: Okay. I know you said that you've got to get moving on here pretty quickly. I want to just ask one or two more questions that deal with your political campaigns. I'll just put it this way: Politics can be a pretty bruising business. Did you walk away from this experience with any bruises?

Sullivan: No, no. I honestly can say it was an incredible learning experience, one of the areas being, that in campaigning as a candidate, you really have to depend on prudence, on knowing how to analyze the situation and when to speak up and what to say and how to deal with others. I had had some experience in that area, just building up on the issues prior, but as a candidate, you learn a lot more, because a lot of those things you have to deal with fast, the moment it's brought up and so on. Fortunately, my family were extremely cooperative. My husband, I think, has always felt we were in this together. He would tell me how to do it and what to do, but was very happy that I was the one out there doing it.

DePue: How did Congressman Porter portray you to the general public?

Sullivan: The first time around I caught him off guard and it was very civil and not particularly grueling. The second time, I think his advisors really came in, and he portrayed me as the gun representative. In fact, one of his ads said that I was a solely owned subsidiary of the NRA, which is ridiculous. I never owned a gun, but he did own a gun. But he was really playing on the gun control people, who were quite prevalent in Evanston and the eastern end of the district at that point, and he pounded me on this gun… I was representing the National Rifle Association. To the point I called the NRA up at one point and said, Look, I'm taking all the fire for you, the least you could do is send me a donation, which they did. I don't think outside the district people took it seriously, because they knew how ridiculous it was. I had never been to an NRA meeting in my life. I definitely wasn't any spokesman for them or had not been involved with them.

DePue: It's an interesting thing to be labeled when you're running as a Republican in a district that's held by Republicans. Normally that would be you're going to the conservative base, and he's playing just the opposite. What does that say about the district?

Sullivan: The district is somewhat schizophrenic, but also the district is more liberal Republicans, particularly on the eastern side. There had been—I think—a

murder of a young adult in Evanston, and the gun control people were quite active. Remember too, in Illinois we have the—they can go in and change votes in a primary.[10] I don't remember just what… Let's see, '90 was an off year, not a presidential election year; I think there was quite a turnover of independents or Democrats voting in the Republican primary.

DePue: Can you describe your district real quickly. What was the number and then where it was geographically.

Sullivan: It was from Evanston through New Trier Township, Wilmette, Glenview, Elk Grove, Wheeling, Palatine, all the way out to Hoffman Estates. It went east from the lake, all the way west, covered, I believe it was eight townships.

DePue: Well, we probably ought to close with that, unless you want some final comments for today.

Sullivan: No. I think this is a good place to stop.

DePue: Okay, let me go ahead and close for today.

(end of interview #7 #8 continues)

[10] In Illinois, voters can ask for either a Republican or Democratic ballot, regardless of registration. This information, which party's ballot a voter requested, is a matter of public record, which is a powerful tool often used by party leaders.

Interview with Kathleen Sullivan

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Interview # 8: April 2, 2012

Interviewer: Mark DePue

DePue: Today is Monday, April 2, 2012. My name is Mark DePue, the Director of Oral History with the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. Today is my eighth session with Mrs. Kathleen Sullivan. Good morning Mrs. Sullivan.

Sullivan: Good morning Mark, it's a pleasure to be with you.

DePue: Well, we've gotten to know each other pretty well for two people who have never actually met in person.

Sullivan: Well I'm looking forward to it. I may be making a trip up to Illinois in June, to the Chicago area; if you happen to be up there we'll see if we can say hello.

DePue: Well, we've got to figure out something, having spent this much time together, on the telephone at least.

Last time we finished off with your career as a professional politician running for Congress, and as we discussed, you lost both of your bids. But I want to start off today with another piece of political information, and that's the 1992 presidential election, and your reflections on Bill Clinton beating George H. W. Bush, who was never your kind of conservative but was a Republican nonetheless. Your reaction to that victory for Bill Clinton.

Sullivan: Well, it was not exactly surprising, because I think the interest or the pressure to try more of a progressive, liberal program had been mounting in the Bush presidency there. After [Ronald] Reagan, we kind of plateaued as far as keeping government at a minimum, and in fact a lot of the younger people who were then, say the twenty year-olds—they're the forty year-olds today—seemed to want to try more of the government associated plans and programs on a bigger scale, not just state but national, and so it wasn't a surprise.

Bill Clinton was a good candidate as far as attracting the newer, younger people, so he got in there and indeed made a great leap in the progressive angle of expanding government. He did do some good things, and I think it was partly due to the heavily more conservative Congress that he had to work with. The Welfare Reform of '96 was, I think, an improvement in the area of Health and Human Services type programs. But there was also a very negative effect on the respect for marriage, on the permissiveness of education programs, and I think to a great degree, greater than people realized, there was a lot more federal government interference in the educational process.

DePue: How so?

Sullivan: Oh, the opening up of the idea of changing the emphasis on history was one thing. The history of our country was looked over, modified to where the feminist role, which of course those of us who had fought very strong against the Equal Rights Amendment, noticed that in many of the history books and literature textbooks but mainly it was history and civics, the role of the feminist was becoming more evident and more prominent, to the detriment of the true American history, not just the founding fathers but the role of many of the male prominent leaders was diminished.

I remember noting for instance at one point, the reference and role of General Douglas MacArthur was sort of downplayed, and we had much more emphasis appearing in civil rights and feminist causes. And the sad thing was, that what they were promoting as worthwhile, mainly Jane Fonda, Betty Friedan type of activities, Sarah Weddington. The head of Planned Parenthood, Faye Wattleton, was one that I debated on TV a good bit. And what they were promoting as in the best interest of women and children and families was actually the opposite of what not just many of us felt, but we knew was the right thing for a good family structure. It was against natural law basically. Abortion was very much promoted, the whole concept of birth control, let's limit the families, and we are now seeing the fallout from that. Instead of the family and children being a thought after, really positive benefit to adulthood, male and female. They were thought of as a burden and today we're reaping the downside of that to a great degree, where we don't have the cohesive family unit as much any more. It's everybody for themselves, whether it's adults or teenagers or kids, and the number of kids, of course, is way down.

DePue: I wonder if you can reflect, since I asked you about the election of 1992—sometimes that's known as the year of the women—and a big part of that was the reaction to the fight over the Clarence Thomas nomination for the Supreme Court in 1991.

Sullivan: Well, the Clarence Thomas situation was really interesting, because there was a case of an outstanding, brilliant, African American male. He was just ripped apart, and here he was married. I don't know how many people know this, but

his wife actually was a member of Eagle Forum. I didn't know her personally but I knew of her. He was, and they as a couple, were the epitome of what many of the feminists said they wanted. Here was a combination in a married couple and they got along beautifully, and they were conservative and married, traditional marriage and so on, and yet they were vilified and really torn apart personally, as well as intellectually. It was very horrible to see what was done to them, and yet it was very evident. So in a way, that really showed the fallacies of what the feminists said they wanted, as compared to what they really wanted, which was nothing to do with anything in the form of a traditional home or culture. They wanted their progressive, government-run operation, not success of the conservative programs or thoughts or plans.

DePue: But the big controversy in his hearings was centered on the Anita Hill testimony against him and against his character, his personality.

Sullivan: That's right, and that's what made it so pathetic. They really couldn't attack his intellectual record in the judicial system, so they went after him personally and just tried to rip him apart. Of course they've done that in other cases since then, of any African American conservative; they just will not tolerate them becoming popular. The most recent one of course is Herman Cain. So you really stop and think, how much was really fact or fiction in the Anita Hill situation. A lot of it was really just so trivial, it would never have been mentioned had the characters been reversed, and a challenge to a liberal person being nominated for that position. I don't think conservatives or even moderates would have thought of bringing up the charges and things. If I remember correctly, at the time we all said it's so phony, and there never was any proof—it was her word. Many, many other people really respected him and not supported her.

I've often wondered what's happened to her since. She just kind of faded from the scene. She played the part they needed her to play, whether it was media or the feminist, and then she disappeared, as has happened in many cases. In other words, they don't stick around to really continue their interest. They just come on the scene when needed, and that's unfortunate.

DePue: Does that mean that you didn't believe the allegations she was making?

Sullivan: Not for a moment. No. I've dealt with so many of them that it is a routine practice, that they will say whatever is needed to be said at the moment to get their point.

DePue: When you say "they", what "they" are you talking about?

Sullivan: The feminists. I'm talking about any of them that had been active, the ones I've known personally in Illinois, and even on the national scene. Faye Wattleton, the head of Planned Parenthood. There for quite a few years she'd just make general statements and promote her cause as if it was the most

worthwhile thing to get rid of problem pregnancies. As the grandmother of ten adopted grandchildren, I know very, very well, that there are millions… At that point there was, I believe, two million couples waiting to adopt. Now it is way higher and yet, for her to make the case that they were doing women a favor by aborting an unwanted pregnancy was very, very much the opposite of what all of us thought of the fact of pregnancy.

DePue: Well you characterized this fight over Clarence Thomas as one that was being led by the feminists, rather than just a larger progressive or democratic community. Would that be right?

Sullivan: Yes. And at that point, many of the feminists were really emerging in the powerful positions in the Democratic Party. They were, at that point, taking over the Democratic Party and that's one of the items where it showed very strongly, that many others were in the field of promoting abortion. The expansion of the whole birth control services, through the school I might say, school-based clinics really got going in Title X, which I think we've discussed. Then it sort of ground to a halt or a plateau I should say. It isn't diminished, it's just not moving as fast in the last three to five years. However, the current "Obamacare" as of 2012, would greatly expand them throughout the educational system, literally in the school buildings, and that's one of the very unknown aspects of Obamacare. Very few people know that in those 2,700 pages, is provision to establish medical clinics within the educational system, on a national scale.

DePue: Just one more question on the Clarence Thomas hearings. You say it was primarily something that the feminists were especially concerned about. What was their fundamental issue with Clarence Thomas?

Sullivan: Oh, he was just conservative. They didn't like him at all, and I think they resented the fact that he was married to a conservative white woman. That just didn't fit their plans at all. I really wonder, if he had been married to a liberal white woman and his views were liberal, they wouldn't have opposed him at all.

DePue: Okay. Let's move on then, to the 1990s. Any comments about the resurgence of the conservative movement in 1994, with for the first time in, I think, something like forty years, the Republicans controlled the U.S. House of Representatives, very much focused on Newt Gingrich and the "Contract for America."

Sullivan: Yes. And that created tremendous interest in the role of government, the size of it, how can we cut it back. Because what was emerging then in the '90s, was a very clear pattern of, if the government was funding something they were going to tell you how to run it. And that was showing up tremendously in the Health and Human Services programs and in education. Those were the two areas where massive expansion of government regulations came into

being. With the Republicans taking control of Congress in ’94, the main interest was putting a stop to that government expansion. Even Clinton had to pay attention to that, both Mr. and Mrs. Clinton. Mrs. Clinton was pushing tremendously at that point for healthcare, national healthcare known as “HillaryCare,” but she couldn’t get it through. That whole basic program has been sitting around ever since ’90, and of course came right upfront with [Barack] Obama.

But we had a short period of time there where people really were paying attention to what is government regulating and intends to control, with giving us back some of our taxes. It always seemed amazing to me that people thought of government money as some separate entity out there that just grew money, that we could take part in. They have lost the realization that government money, whether it is state or federal, is first taken out of our pockets in taxes. Most people today, particularly the younger ones, I don’t think they stop to think where that money is coming from. But they’re beginning to wake up, and when they really do, it’s likely to be with a vengeance, that stop taking my money; I can spend it better than government can. That’s what we really need.

DePue: Let’s talk about the second term for Clinton. Of course in 1996, Clinton miraculously restores his reputation and wins his second term. I want you to reflect. You have kind of already, but a little bit more about the scandals that Clinton found himself in that second administration, especially with Monica Lewinsky.

Sullivan: Well, we had come across the infamous reference and practice happening in schools, namely the reference to oral sex had come up in the late ’80s, right around ’90, in a school in Illinois. I’d rather not say exactly where. And it was reported to us, an episode that was becoming—let’s say I don’t think it was a one-time thing—but happening on school buses: oral sex. That was prior to the reference of it being something tied to Bill Clinton, with several years before he was involved with that.

So I don’t really completely blame him for that item coming forward or becoming a custom. It was there, to our great chagrin, and actually it was first discovered by some of our teachers in, I would say, more affluent areas even. And then we traced it back to some brochures. In fact, it was one Planned Parenthood brochure that was printed in ’84, with the reference on it that said, “Other suggestions for gratification and sexual involvement besides intercourse.”

Now, I would like to put on your record here that this type of discussion is something I never dreamed I would be involved in, whether it was in the ’90s, when it was happening, or here in a recorded history. It is a sign of, let’s say, a negative turn in our culture, that we have got to the point where we discuss this. However, because of the work that my organization

was doing in trying to teach young people how to be healthy, we realized that we had to bring it out and make the public debate open to the fact that this is not only medically very, very risky behavior, but it is psychologically very disturbing. And I would dare to say that today, in 2012, we are seeing the emotional, let's say hard heartedness, of a lot of our people who really have lost respect for each other, respect for the opposite sex. I just wonder how much of it is due to unnatural behaviors that have been promoted by organizations such as Planned Parenthood, which is still unfortunately heavily funded by the State of Illinois and the national government.

DePue: Would you say that Bill Clinton's scandal helped erode what you've been describing here—the cultural aspects of the country—or was he just a reflection of what was going on in society?

Sullivan: Do you know what the first reaction was after I heard about his situation. My first thought was, I wonder what type of sex ed program he went through in his high school in Arkansas. I never was able to track that down, but I really wonder, what was the impression that he got from whatever sex ed he experienced in school, or did he just fall into this and think it up himself. I don't know what the answer to that is.

But yes, it became then, oh, the latest, newest thing, and those that didn't like him and resented him and so on, tended to just blame it on him. But he was simply a sign of the times. The whole lack of respect and the unnatural behavior—which I would like to emphasize really is what it is—was becoming more prevalent in the culture in general. But a lot of the, let's say, forty, fifty crowd, the parents back then really were not ready to face reality, and I'm not sure now they even want to face it. They just don't want to talk about it.

DePue: Well you just used the word reality. This is the perfect segue then, to talk about your response to what had been happening in society at that time: Project Reality. Can you go into that some more? I know we've talked about it quite a bit, but I think this is the perfect time to expand on it.

Sullivan: Well, our authentic abstinence program was developed with the main goal being teach the young people the benefits—emotional, psychological, medical—of not getting into practices and habits when it wasn't meant to be in teen years, middle school, high school, or in the case of sexual involvement, until you get married. Here are the benefits of waiting and here are the negative consequences if you don't wait.

So our programs were developed and we found amazingly, that the schools wanted these materials. They had been given, in the '80s and the '90s, this vague, If it feels good, do anything you want type of thing, and the teachers weren't comfortable with it. So it was somewhat of a surprise when we approached the school in Illinois—and Chicago was our pilot area you

might say—Oh yes, we'll put them in. But if they had to go and put it in a budget item for their school board or school administration, that's when they ran into the feminists and the more progressives; no, no, no, we don't want to fund that. However, if the books were given to them by a not-for-profit, separate entity, a group of citizens, they were delighted to get the books and they used them. Project Reality built from servicing fifteen schools back in '87, to 600 schools throughout the state in '07, which is when we were de-funded and closed down.

That was quite an incredible experience to go through, where the feminist forces decided that the abstinence message was just so successful, they were losing clients in these other government funded programs that the Illinois Health Department was running, and their client count was going down, down, down. They couldn't justify asking for more money and Project Reality was the main cause of them losing clients, because the kids were staying away from sexual involvement. I could never actually get figures for what was the sexually transmitted disease statistics for the state during a ten or fifteen year period so that we could compare it, in the teen and early twenties age range. My theory is that that probably went down also, but that was very hard, to obtain those statistics.

DePue: What were some of the statistical evidence of success that you had?

Sullivan: Well, our evaluations, which was done by Northwestern University and was funded by the state of Illinois, showed a remarkable understanding of the concept of abstinence. That was the main thing we tested: Did the students understand the message? And yes, it would go way up. Did they decide to stop being sexually active and start over again? That went up tremendously.

I'm looking for one of the evaluation sheets, which maybe we can fill in when we go through the transcript. But every one of the questions was a positive after the program; even taking it a year later, the number of sexually involved students would decline tremendously. So there was no question that the program was very successful. The teachers would tell us that they could see it.

Here's a big item that there isn't a written statistic to show, but the teachers report, over and over, the kids were more attentive in other subjects when they were not all confused and mixed up and under pressure from their own involvement in sex. And by the way, the sexual activity, drugs and alcohol all go together; there's no question of that.

Here's one for instance. Practicing abstinence is healthy. The pre-test showed 54 percent of them agreed or strongly agreed. After the program, post-test was 82 percent, which really shows they became aware of why it was healthy.

DePue: Did you see a decrease in the number of out-of-wedlock births, or especially of teen births?

Sullivan: Yes. Those figures were recorded in Illinois. Also, the number of abortions dropped. I don't have that detail, but we could possibly get that over from the health department back. But the rate of teen pregnancies went down definitely. At that time there were five schools in Chicago that had daycare centers and clinics in them, and the people who ran the nursery for the kids—Clemente High School, for instance—said to one of our teachers, I don't know what you are doing in the classroom there, but we only have two children to take care of now. So they saw a difference in the lack of pregnant students.

Now here's a question for instance. A person who has been sexually active is able to choose abstinence for the future. That went from 45 percent agree, strongly agree on pre-test, to 83 percent post-test. Choosing to avoid the use of drugs, alcohol, can help me to save sex for marriage. That went from 59 pre-test, to 78. So the program taught them the reasons why the three go together, how it would help them individually.

Another question. Abstinence is the only sure way to prevent pregnancy. Sixty-one pre-test, which was interesting. The majority of kids knew that that was a fact, but that went up to 82 percent afterwards. Now, the very negative numbers were amazing, how they changed. For instance, practicing abstinence is healthy. The ones that disagreed was only 11 percent pre-test. That went down to 7. The big number that changed were the ones that were not sure; pre-test was 35, that went down to 11 percent.

So what this shows is the kids got the message, and that's what was so interesting, because usually in tests like this, if you get a 5 to 10 percent movement, we were getting 30 and 40 percent movement.

DePue: A couple quick questions here. This one should be pretty straightforward. Why the name Project Reality?

Sullivan: Because that is really what we were teaching, the reality of adolescent health. It was trying to grab the attention of not just parents, but the education establishment, that this needed to be stressed in order to make students able to benefit from the regular educational process. The kids get very emotionally upset and none of these relationships last—very, very few—and they're usually broken off by the girl at well, fourteen, sixteen, because the female is more mature at that age level than the young male. But the young male is very emotionally hurt. They can't get pregnant. but boy can they be emotionally affected, and they react differently in that it makes them very macho, they are resentful of women, so that the attitude between the young male and female is strained—is not trustworthy and cooperative, it's strained, and that makes them very difficult to be able to teach and to benefit from, whether it's math, literature, history, anything else. That's where a lot of our difficulty with

young, legal, whatever you want to call them. I don't like calling them criminals, they aren't. They are misled in most cases. It is very evident that if they get involved… See, sexual activity is meant to be a powerful, powerful item in somebody's life, and it's meant to bond, to draw two together. You take it lightly and use somebody and throw them aside, that cannot do anything but cause a negative reaction, and really an interruption in their emotional development and they're lucky if they ever get it back.

DePue: I wanted to ask you then: As you've described here, you've claimed that Planned Parenthood, and feminists in general, had a real antipathy to what you were trying to do in terms of teaching abstinence. Can you explain why they would have that antipathy to it?

Sullivan: Because the feminists really knew early on that their role was to get rid of the family unit. Get mom out of the home, get the children doing whatever they want to do at a much earlier age, get them into government programs, hence the daycare and the pre-daycare became very popular. If it takes a village and a government to raise a child, then it's more possible to raise them the way the government wants.

DePue: But that's a pretty powerful allegation you made, that the feminists are anti-family. That's essentially what you're arguing.

Sullivan: They are. It's evident. I have never seen a feminist writer or speaker admire an intact family, particularly if there's more than one, two, or three children. I'd be happy to see it, but you never see them admiring a family of six, eight or ten, who may be very wonderful kids and successful, and you just don't hear them refer to it as something worthwhile, where it is. Talk about a worthwhile unit for society or culture, it's the family. That's the bedrock of a good, stable community.

DePue: Much of the discussion though, has centered on the notion of shame, that the culture was way too quick previously, to assign shame on unwed mothers for example. I don't want to characterize this. Anyway, that the feminists were suggesting that putting that much shame on a young woman was very detrimental, and then calling the child of a union like that a bastard, to use that word.

Sullivan: But that word hasn't been used for years. That's, let's say, an old fashioned term that they've pulled out, to try and beat everybody over the head with. Nobody is called that for sixty, seventy years.

DePue: Do you have any sympathy for that argument: society putting shame on an individual is a very counterproductive thing?

Sullivan: That too, I think is just not what has really happened. That, let's say empathy and wanting to help. The unwed mother has always been a very noble thing, particularly in the churches. Now there is another point however. The

feminists don't like to respect and have a major role of the church in the culture. You've got to get rid of that. That's what they don't want—the church to be able to take care of that unwed mother. No, they want the government to do it. They resent and that has evolved and shown itself even stronger by their now demanding how a church should run their adoption agencies, and demanding that adoption agencies place children with homosexual couples. That's interfering in religion-based and faith groups all across the country. So as the years go by, they prove what we saw coming way back in the '70s, '80s, '90s. We knew they did not want to help that unwed mother. They wanted to make life so dependent on Planned Parenthood and government, that they would never think of producing another baby. They didn't want to stop the sexual activity. They just wanted to make it the worst thing in the world to deliver a baby. That's their plan up to today.

They keep coming to us: We'll give you more and more birth control. It's their figure that says 90 percent of women have been or are on birth control, which frankly I don't believe. But they want that to happen because that's how you control them in many ways.

DePue: I want to ask you one other specific question here, and then we can get into some big issues and how this all plays out in contemporary life. We've been doing that quite a bit as we go along. But I want to talk about the Miss America contest in 2004 and why that is special to you.

Sullivan: Well, prior to that, starting in, I think it was '98 or '99, we began to realize that several of those very wonderful young ladies had, as their main item, their platform—it was called when we first got involved—the abstinence education message. They won their local contest on that and they were very strong in it. They were practicing abstinence and they were promoting it. The one in particular was Erika Harold, who came from Central Illinois. There was another wonderful, very little gal from Decatur, and another one from way southern Illinois. I think there were four or five that year.

So, the little gal from Decatur started contacting other candidates and realized there were several. At one point—I don't remember the exact year, it might have been '01 or '02—there were twelve, from not just Illinois but different states around, Wisconsin also, and all of them had the issue of abstinence education as their platform. So they agreed, they were happy to work with us and became spokesmen for our issue. We had a wonderful dinner in Chicago, celebrating their success and them as role models. These young ladies would go and speak at different high schools also. It was a great attention getter for our issue, because the kids in the high schools realized that, gee whiz, being an advocate of this healthy method really could get you somewhere, and it was not something to be ashamed of. So they were a very, very important role for us, and some of them still are active in promoting the cause.

One of them, Julie Laipply Carrier—her married name is Carrier—is out of northern Virginia now, and I think actually has always been from Virginia, but she's coming down to Florida in May. She's going to be doing eighteen different talks on leadership, and encouraging people to be outspoken in the healthy lifestyle and so on. She's doing eighteen talks in the public schools in Southwest Florida.

Erika Harold did win Miss Illinois, and Erika took quite a lot of heat for being a promoter of that issue, and personally for having worked with me. It was very interesting to see, but she is a very strong young lady and she handled it beautifully.

DePue: Where was she getting the heat? What were the criticisms?

Sullivan: Well, at one meeting I remember her telling me about—after it happened one night late, when she was preparing for the Miss America Pageant. She had won the Miss Illinois. She called me and said, Well, I need to tell you, I just spent half an hour explaining to them why I think it's fine to be associated with Project Reality, and even Phyllis Schlafly. One of them had asked her, Do you realize who Kathleen Sullivan is? She's a close friend of Phyllis Schlafly's. And Erika said, Oh I know that, in fact I've gone to the Eagle Forum Conference, and really, you'd like them; they are very fine people and they stand up for our rights. (chuckles) Needless to say, they were rather horrified, but Erika, being who she is, was not about to be thrown out. They did put her under tremendous pressure to change the issue however. They wanted her to talk on bullying, which of course is what they were doing to her.

DePue: Who is "they" when you say "they" wanted her to talk on bullying?

Sullivan: The people running the Miss Illinois Pageant, the ones who were in charge then. I think that was '02. It happened in the end of '02, so she was Miss America for '03.

DePue: I misspoke earlier. I was just checking the literature you sent me; she won for 2003.

Sullivan: Oh, excuse me, then I'm the one that made the mistake.

DePue: Well, we both did. I was over and you were under, so I'll split the difference and call it 2003.

Sullivan: She went on to Harvard Law School and graduated, and I believe is now working in New York City. I haven't talked to her in the last couple years actually, but I'll tell you one thing she did that was really marvelous and such a help. During the year where she was Miss Illinois, before the national conference she went and spoke at, as I say lots of schools, but the one that was

so meaningful—it was just marvelous to hear the reports—the head of the Cook County Juvenile Detention Center sent us a beautiful thank you letter.

Erika went down and spent a whole Saturday afternoon, several hours, with the juvenile… As I say, I don't like to think of them in terms of criminals. They were residents of the Cook County Juvenile Detention Center. The kids kept saying, How come you came here today? What made you come and talk to us? Why are you spending your time with us? She has a very, very friendly, winning way about her, and she says, Because any one of you can start all over again, and you can do things you probably never dreamed of.

So she was building their confidence, and that's what our message is all along. Because you've done something, made a mistake and done something wrong one time, you're not stuck in that negative mode; you can start all over again. Hence, the name of our textbook, *Game Plan*, is Halftime, it's time to start all over again. And those young people there, who I think went up to the late teens, were amazed that somebody like her would come and be that inspiring and friendly and encouraging. Now, why don't they do that on a more regular basis? I don't know.

DePue: Since we've got the clock that's ticking away, let's talk about these big issues that I know you want to address. These are all contemporary issues now, so we're now confined with a specific timeframe. Let's start with the military and the women's role in it.

Sullivan: I think the way they treat women in the military today is very, very disturbing. Even though we don't have a draft, they entice them into serving in the military with all kinds of promises and so on. Many of them, I know, do an outstanding job. But it's a sad indictment of our country that we have to depend on women to the degree that we do, and make it financially so compelling and attractive to draw women into all different branches, which seems to be what's happening now. My understanding is that there are very few departments where women do not serve and should not serve; there are many of them they shouldn't. Women should not at all be in the combat areas. It's just not a good practice for culture, and particularly in the countries that we are involved in now where the extraordinary difference of treatment of women between the local country and our military is so wide, that I think it may cause some of the antagonism and problems with the native situation and particularly the men in the country that we happen to be in.

It's just not good again, not good for the family situation. There are certain cases, I understand, where both mother and father are overseas and children have to be placed somewhere. That's not good. We should not be condoning or promoting that sort of thing in our military. I think it's even worse when it comes to single parenthood, and having the children left at home with relatives. In emergency situations that's one thing, but as a routine practice of the military, I do not think it's a wise situation at all.

DePue: Do you think then, that women have no role to play in the military, that they shouldn't be in the military at all?

Sullivan: I certainly did not say that and I do not believe that. There are certain roles that yes, could be very well filled and have been for years. Just not to the degree, not to the extent that it is today. A very serious study of the overall situation should be done. I work with Elaine Donnelly, who is out of Michigan, and her specialty is the military and women's role in the military. It is really quite astonishing, some of the stories she tells, and again, it is not in the best interest of women. I heard her lately, talk, for instance, on they're trying to put women in the unit with the Navy SEALs. Absolutely inappropriate and frankly, my personal opinion, that's getting close to even torture. Women have no business. It's disrespectful to women, to expect them to do that, and who's encouraging it? It's kind of an intriguing question.

DePue: You say it's torture because of the nature of the training that the SEALs go through?

Sullivan: That's right. And the actual procedures they are required to do.

DePue: How is that different from the men? You talked previously, that the government is enticing women, and aren't they enticing men?

Sullivan: Men and women are different. Certain things, particularly when it comes to the military and combat and war, men can do more efficiently and effectively and women do not belong there.

DePue: I know you wanted to talk also about Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Supreme Court Justice, and issues that are relevant to her.

Sullivan: Well, she's pretty much a typical feminist-thinking individual, and she makes no bones about it. She wants the government to run everything and she's very predictable on how she'd rule on just about everything. I think she has not been a good influence on the Supreme Court.

DePue: How about Mrs. Schlafly's comments here recently about the nature of the U.S. Tax Code and its impact on the family?

Sullivan: Yes. I think Phyllis has done a great service in getting that analyzed and condensed down to her four pages, explaining how our tax code has moved from one that actually favored the family and the single earner household, and it was meant to make that unit more able to exist and subsist on a single income. Now, the tax code is making it, where if you're not married, just happen to be living together or have two separate incomes, you're favored in the tax rate for being not married, and that's upside down. That is again, not in the best interest of future generations or families. It's promoting selfishness and so it's putting the question of what's good in the culture, what's really helpful in the culture for the future? Namely the family is the main item to

think of for the future. The best interest of the family ought to be able to have a recognition in the economic rules of the country, namely taxes, regulations, government, and the things they fund.

Very few people realize the advantages that are now given to that dual income or non-married partnership, which is contributing to the in-and-out relationship. They just do not stop to think of getting over their disagreements because of children or because of commitments they've made. It's sort of, Oh, I'm sick and tired of this relationship so I'm gone, and you fight it out yourself, to where government is becoming the spouse. We don't get along any more. so goodbye; go see what you can get from government. It's not a good thing.

DePue: How about the role of the church? You've talked a lot about the Catholic Church in particular, but the church in general and First Amendment rights and government requirements, and the conflict that sometimes exists between those.

Sullivan: Well actually, when I referred—I think in terms of all churches, not just the Catholic church. I'm more familiar with the details of the Catholic church. However, in all the years I've been politically active, I've worked with many, many non-Catholic groups: evangelicals, Mormons, many different groups. It was a very interesting thing for me to realize that it was the non-Catholics in Connecticut and Massachusetts that really were against contraception back in the '20s and '30s before the Catholic Church ever made any particular written document on it. The Humanae Vitae came out in the '60s in the Catholic Church, but many religions realized the importance of the family, is what they were recognizing, the importance of the next generation.

One of the greatest groups that I've worked with is the Howard Institute out of Rockford, Illinois; John Howard and Allan Carlson there have done fabulous work. Neither of them are Catholics, but they do a wonderful job. They now convene a conference every year—for the last ten years about—on the family. It's on the family and it is the family in all different countries; the conference is held in a different country each year, and it really is stressing that that solid foundation is at risk now and should be stabilized, should be encouraged. I understand a lot of the countries, Russia for one and some of the other former Soviet Union countries, are now paying a special stipend or subsidy to women who have children. That sure is a worthwhile thing to do when they see their populations being diminished, but it should be done out of justice. For many years, our American tax system recognized that and it does, in certain ways now, but the trend is going in the other direction, and that's what Phyllis wanted to put a stop to with her current newsletter.

DePue: Well this is very much part of the national discussion with the Republican primary race, in terms of going back to the central issue here; freedom-of-religion rights, which are part of the First Amendment, versus some of the

things that now, because of the healthcare bill, are government requirements. And that's kind of what I want you to address.

Sullivan: Well, this current test in the Supreme Court is really the outgrowth of what we've seen emerging, where government says I will do whatever I can get away with. It's very scary that they just might uphold this law which says government basically can do anything, rather than abolish it and let's get back to a more practical approach for healthcare. This law is an outgrowth of twenty years of work. Obama didn't think this up himself. He's just a very glib salesman for it and got it through; he railroaded it through. I hope it doesn't stand and for many reasons that are in there that people don't even know about.

One of the interesting things for instance: nobody realizes that the president—Obama at the moment, but any president—is exempt from this health law, as is Congress. Now if it were such a wonderful provision for healthcare, why did they exempt themselves? People can understand that; it's that simple. If it's so great, why aren't they covered? No, because they have a better plan.

School based clinics: that's government takeover or melding of education and medical healthcare. We don't want those departments melded. Number one, we want to get the federal government out of education completely, not add to it by putting in Health and Human Services medical clinics and regulations in every school. And there it would not be limited to just public schools, because all the private schools of any denomination, have certain tax or provisions, loans whatever, that the government will then say you're getting benefits from our programs, therefore you have to follow our regulations. We don't want medical services and education provided together. It's hard enough to get the education people, for instance, to do what they ought to be doing properly. They are not set up to run medical institutions and neither is the federal government for that matter. (laughter)

DePue: Okay, here's another one I think you wanted to address again; that's the whole notion that there's an element of our society that keeps fighting for ERA. Your comments earlier to me, that if that was the case, if ERA passed, that they would even want to dictate to the Catholic church the ordination of women.

Sullivan: Yes, very definitely, just as they're now dictating that the Catholic adoption agencies have to consider placing babies with homosexual couples. They will dictate that you cannot ordain only males, because our civil laws say no discrimination. Therefore again, if you are going to take tax money and have the government support this, that and the other, you're going to have to follow that rule as well as these others. If they can do it on a single item like insurance coverage in an institution that is self-insured, these institutions that happen to be run by Catholic entities—they're not officially part of the church

even, the hospitals and many of the nursing homes and so on—they are run by Catholic entities and the government is saying you must provide sterilization, abortifacients, as well as birth control; you must offer them and you must pay the premiums for them. That is dictating to the church on a very much lesser item than ordination of women.

The next thing, they'll come in—or I think they're already doing it to a degree—and demand that the Catholic institutions provide abortions. In fact, that's what the birth control issue and item also covers. Most people don't realize that many of the "birth control items" are in fact abortifacients. It does not prevent the egg and sperm from getting together; it prevents it from implanting. When that really gets out and they realize how serious it is, they realize government is already telling the church, You must provide abortions. I think the citizens are certainly waking up to it, and the officialdom of all the churches realize this is really government takeover of anything they want and it could be everything.

DePue: Okay. I want to turn our attention to some questions about the media. I want to ask that because this battle, from the early days of ERA up to today, has very much been waged in the national media. So, how would you characterize the nation's media coverage today of the issues that we've been talking about?

Sullivan: Oh, it's absolutely as extensive as it was back in the '70s, '80s and so on. It's just more sophisticated. They have changed their vocabulary. We never hear a plea for choice, a woman's right to choose; that's passé. They realize that defending choice is not really selling their idea any more, because too many of our younger people today come back and say, Well, what's the choice? What are you choosing between? Do you believe that's a baby or not? Choice doesn't fit any more, so you don't hear it on the media. They never identify candidates, for that matter, as being someone who is pro-choice. That's vanished from the political scene, whether it's on the media or at functions or anything. I think that's a very interesting sign that they realize the terminology that was used needs to be changed. It doesn't sell their plans any more.

Obamacare, the caring for everybody. But is it really good care or is it going to be whatever the bureaucrats decide is going to be the care to give. So that people are questioning a lot more, but the media is becoming much more sophisticated in glossing over how to present something.

Another main item is, seldom do we really ever see a lengthy discussion or debate, even the debates among candidates. You've got two minutes to say so and so, you've got three minutes, and they're all sound bites; I think that has changed the discourse considerably. It's like the verbal item of the iPod and texting: everything is abbreviated, so that they're looking for something that sounds nice and sounds good, but it really doesn't have any substance.

DePue: You characterized the media in the 1970s and early '80s, as not being objective, as being very much on the side of the pro-ERA forces. Would you say the media today is more objective?

Sullivan: Certain ones, certain stations. Back then, I don't know that we had any, but now with cable television, it is possible to get. I'll use a Catholic example here. EWTN, Eternal Word Television, Mother Angelica, she is the only station that you can tune in to and get a complete coverage—two, three, four hours—of the wonderful March for Life that happens in Washington every January 22nd. The other stations don't even mention that it happened.

DePue: Using the vernacular that we've heard for the last decade perhaps, mainstream media, meaning the main traditional outlets: the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the ABC, NBC, CBS of the world, those. Would you say they have become more objective and open to both sides of the argument over the last few years?

Sullivan: Not really. I often wonder what an interview situation must be like when somebody is applying for a job with those media outlets. You almost have to be of the progressive mind, able to follow their suggestions. They'll all tell you, Oh we're not told what to say, but they don't hire anybody that doesn't express themselves and represent what the governing or management wants. They might have a token person on a panel, but very seldom is anyone hired. There's some exceptions by the way. The fact that Rush Limbaugh is on so many stations on radio is phenomenal; he's very talented and very analytical and can express it very well. The Fox TV Network is basically of the more conservative management thinking. And so the same interest in interviewing for employees would apply to Fox as the others, and I daresay that more conservative thinkers get hired at Fox than liberals, and vice versa with the others. I've often wondered why conservative funding didn't go in and buy two or three other stations, so that we'd really have a good competition. It's interesting.

In regard to Rush Limbaugh: when he got pounded not too long ago on his remarks about the college student, one of his advertisers, I don't mind saying, is a flower company, ProFlowers. Well let's face it, liberals and progressives don't buy flowers for their spouses or their girlfriends, at least to my knowledge they just don't. And I daresay that ProFlowers is probably one of those that regrets having boycotted him, because a lot of us simply upped our interest. So it's interesting to see the reaction of people now and it's going to become more evident, I think, as this year goes on.

DePue: So is the emergence of the conservative media—the alternative media like Fox, like talk radio, which is now dominated by conservative voices—is that a healthy thing overall?

Sullivan: Yes. And I think the use of the internet has been a fabulous new item there. Conservative thought and humor and information can get around to millions of people in a matter of hours through the internet, so that's been a wonderful counter to just what you're normally hear. It's going to be interesting to see how it goes.

DePue: You mentioned the internet and you're characterizing that as a very positive influence on this overall debate, but some have felt that it's a two-edge sword, that it has coarsened society, it has made pornography much more accessible, it's giving lots of fanatics on both ends of the political spectrum a platform and, to a certain extent, some legitimacy.

Sullivan: Well, I guess yes, it's open to both sides. However, I would say that the objections that we conservatives have to the negative stuff on there, the pornography and the bad stuff and so on, shows itself. I think Facebook, for instance, can be very dangerous. These young people are putting things on there—pictures and references—that that they would not have thought of saying face-to-face; I think they're going to regret that. It's a wonderful item for certain ones to see family pictures and so on. On the other hand, it can be very detrimental.

But what I hope it's doing is saying, Hey parents or prospective parents, young adults, be careful, warning sign, what you put on there could come back to haunt you. What you put on there can really influence your job interview, your future careers, no matter what it is. So it's bringing it out in the open, it's shedding the light of truth. Young people do stupid things and they are going to learn the hard way, that that can end up hurting them. But at least it's coming out, it's not brushed over, it's not hidden. Frankly, I think the more established media, I still feel, is quite heavily on the liberal side. They're going to sooner or later begin to realize they're not really open about it and they either will be moved aside—as some of them have already changed slots—or they're going to have to truly open up and be honest about it, instead of trying to cover it up.

DePue: Recently, there have been a whole group of conservative women who have entered into politics and been very successful. It's part of what the ERA movement was about in the first place, that there would be a lot more women who entered into politics. I'm not sure that the ERA forces thought that people like Sarah Palin and Michele Bachmann would be part of that equation.

Sullivan: Oh, I'm sure they counted against it. (laughter)

DePue: The conservatives now say that the media is especially brutal to some of these conservative women who are coming up, but maybe the same can be said about how people like Hillary Clinton were really beaten up pretty well.

Sullivan: Not to the extent that Sarah Palin was. I mean, she really, really was; it was overboard, and all we have to do is go back and replay some of the audio or visual blasts that she was subjected to, to prove it. But in doing that, we're not really gaining ground. It's known, it's there.

Where Sarah Palin, I think is extremely talented, she didn't get to be Governor of the State of Alaska as a figurehead. She had been part of it; she knew what was going on, and she does today. She is sitting as a former governor of the largest state and the largest resource in our future energy plans. Some day I could see her emerging as an incredibly important official, whether inside government or outside government, on this whole energy question. She knows it and her state is a core of this whole new approach to energy. She's extremely intelligent on and well grounded in that area. I think her decision to stay out of this fracas this year was very wise. She will come forward at her own planning.

And the same with Michele Bachmann. She was, I think, very prudent. She's an outstanding person. I mean how many people have foster cared for twenty-three children? There isn't anybody else that I can think of. Have any feminists ever done anything like that? No. She's happily married, she has a business, she's done everything—like Phyllis. She's accomplished all the things they say they believe in, and yet they can't stand her. Why can't they stand her? Because her conservatism is proving to be positive, right, good for the country. They don't like that, "they" being the feminists, the people who started the whole ERA. Basically, what they are after is enshrining abortion, in making sure that equality of sexes, is just short wording of ERA says, is absolute. That means homosexual rights, and not just as individuals, but that the culture teach it, defend it, promote it, and that's not good for the country. And socialism, where the government runs and controls everything, because they are the government. They don't want to sit on the sideline and let conservatives run big government. No. The feminists, believe me, want to run the government of the United States.

DePue: Okay. We're running a little short on time, so I have some questions that I want to conclude the interview series we've had. Let's start with this. Why did you agree to do this interview?

Sullivan: A very good question. There are several reasons, one being that I do recognize I have been very, very fortunate in living in this country and for the years I've lived here, I've had extraordinary opportunity to associate with people who have really made a difference, who I greatly respect. My husband and I shared that interest, which is very fortunate, because had he not shared the interest and encouraged me to be involved and active, and our kids didn't participate—if they were not, the family wasn't supportive—I would not have done it out of need. However, with their encouragement, even to the point of them encouraging me to run for Congress twice, it was a tremendous privilege.

Phyllis is one of the most incredible people I've ever met, male or female. She's just an outstanding role model and just a magnificent person. When she said you were doing this for the State of Illinois and I most likely would get a call from you, I said, Oh, well, what's the goal and what would you recommend we cover and so on. That was just my immediate remark and her answer was very succinct, which is the way she is. She said, Kathleen, you've lived an awful lot of it; put on there whatever you think would be helpful to others, what you think history should know about what we did. That was my guide to talking to you from the very first time. I appreciate your broad interest in, let's say, all the activities, even up to the current. I did not expect we were going to cover this much, but it has been a wonderful opportunity to put on the record a great part of my life that was quite extraordinary. I hope would be helpful to others. I can see where the details of a lot of this is helping our own grandchildren, so I hope others will be helped also.

DePue: That's certainly our goal, that students, historians, researchers, journalists, will find all of these things interesting and relevant as they try to understand the events that you've lived through. What would you say is the accomplishment for which you're most proud?

Sullivan: My marriage. Fifty-eight and a half years and my husband and I have never had an argument. I think that's quite an accomplishment.

DePue: I'm sure there's some that will be skeptical of that.

Sullivan: I'm sure they will. (laughs) My husband's explanation of it is one angle that's rather humorous. He said when we disagree, we just compromise and do it her way. And my angle on it is when we disagree, we just go on to something else and never let it get to a point of saying things we might regret later. As the years went by, it was just a wonderful way to approach it. But basically we are, and have been, really, really blessed with being on the same wavelength. Our philosophies we share, we share our faith, we share our interests, and we have been blessed with a wonderful family. So we've just had lots of opportunities to get involved and do worthwhile things, and never really had time to argue.

DePue: How about the accomplishment in the public arena that you would be most proud of?

Sullivan: Setting up Project Reality. I think that was a culmination of my learning experience through Eagle Forum and working in the Reagan campaign and so on. But as far as something very different, getting that organization going and introducing it on the national scene as a good health alternative—and it still is, is a very great step I think, I feel, in my public work—that has been very, very worthwhile.

DePue: Would you say that the defeat of ERA in 1982 was one of your more exhilarating moments?

Sullivan: Oh yes, yes, and that lasted over a year of time I think. But we knew it was still going to raise its ugly head here and there, so we're always conscious of that. I might add that the initial thrust to get the abstinence movement going was really associated with Admiral Jerry Denton, who was a Senator at that time; he is a marvelous patriot, was the longest held prisoner of war in Vietnam, seven years and seven months. It was a marvelous partnership, hearing his views, when he returned to this country, and what he saw the culture to be and what he thought should be done. It was a matter of, Oh, that should be done and I'd like to help you. So it's working with people like him and Phyllis' encouragement too, that I did have the encouragement to grab a hold of that and just do it. So optimism pays off.

DePue: Okay. Again, this is in the public arena. What would you consider to be the most disappointing failure that you've seen or encountered?

Sullivan: Barack Obama in general.

DePue: Because…?

Sullivan: Of his policies. Not him as an individual. He is epitomizing things that have been building for years. He moved fast and got a lot of things in there that had been buried or slowed up, and that's the way history works. However, I do think that sometimes it takes a jolt like him to come on the scene in order to wake people up and turn it around, and I see lots of signs that that is happening. So I don't necessarily think of it as a failure. It certainly is a roadblock, but it could be used and turned around as a very positive, energizing effort to straighten things out and even make people think about things that would have been impossible a year or two ago.

If anybody had asked me, What's the likelihood of having a national debate on the positive and negatives of birth control?—no, completely unlikely. Yet he comes along with this mandate and all of a sudden people—I'm talking of even people of faith, Catholics—Oh, well, I never heard there was anything wrong in that. Oh, well, let's talk about it. So it is opening up discussion at a fast pace, and a more in-depth discussion, and then let people really decide: it is a positive or a negative.

DePue: Some political pundits have even suggested that the Obama campaign, whether it was [Obama himself] one of his advisors, thought that this issue would be one that plays very well into the Democrats' hands, so why not interject it into the discussion.

Sullivan: Well, that's something we're going to see how it plays out, but it took something like this to happen in order to wake people up to even think about it or want to discuss it. If we had just quietly tried to talk to them one-on-one or

in local groups it would not have occurred, where this blast on the national scene gave the opportunity to really open it up, and with the internet and with the general media now saying well, what's this all about? Now, it's going to be a while I guess, before we get good teams of media, inform people to be able to get on there and say here's why it is a church teaching and here is the reasoning and the documentation and so on. So it's going to go on for a while. Whether it moves fast enough to affect the election this year, only time will tell.

DePue: Well, let's talk about time and the future. You just mentioned Barack Obama is your most disappointing failure, at the national level at least. Any predictions for the future, since we are in an election year and most say it's going to be a pretty ugly, brutal election year. What would you say the outcome is going to be?

Sullivan: Unfortunately, I think that is likely to happen. I have not completely given up the idea that it might be an open convention, though I don't know just who could be pulled in at the last minute, but that is a possibility. One particular candidate seems to stay ahead of the others, but not to the degree that he or anybody can think that's really a foregone conclusion. So I think it's going to be June or July before we have a clearer picture of just what's going to happen. But as far as really being tough, I think Obama is going to be vetted to a much greater degree than his supporters ever thought would come out. Unfortunately, it wasn't brought out in his first election but I think it will be this time.

DePue: And a prediction on who's going to win?

Sullivan: Well, I certainly am going to do everything I can to make sure the Republican wins, to get us back cutting government. The timing is right. Government has shown its true problems by overstepping to the degree they have right now, and I think that the turnaround is becoming of interest to a lot of people.

DePue: Well you said earlier that you're an optimist, so you're optimistic about a Republican victory this fall?

Sullivan: Yes, yes, very much so.

DePue: How about a prediction for what's going to happen with all of these social issues you've spent your entire life fighting for?

Sullivan: I think abortion is going to be outlawed and it could come in the next year. It will be forty years; throughout history the number forty has a great significance, and it's going to be interesting to see. The greatest hope is when you look at the number of people that go to that March for Life in D.C. every year; 55 percent of them this past January were under thirty. That is the new wave. There's a group called Students for Life, that are now on 640 college campuses in just six years. They've only been in existence six years and

they're growing by leaps and bounds. The younger people are paying attention. They're looking around and saying, How come I don't have any brothers or sisters; or mom and dad, did you ever think of aborting me? They're looking into things like that and they realize how unjust this is.

What's happened, there's a group of young people out in California called Survivors; they figure they are survivors of the abortion holocaust. This is college level, twenty-, thirty-year-olds. So with groups emerging like that, which you don't see referred to in the general media, but boy do they have a lot of action on the internet. So we all know of it, it's very encouraging, and my optimism is based on what I've observed happening now that wasn't there ten years ago.

DePue: Okay. Well, we've had quite a long run. This has been a very interesting interview. I'm certainly glad that you agreed to do it. I think you and I both discovered we ended up having a lot more to talk about than we might have imagined early on, but I think it's all very important discussion that we need to get on the record. So what would you like to say in conclusion?

Sullivan: Well, I would really like to thank you, as a representative of the [Abraham] Lincoln [Presidential] Library in Illinois, for this opportunity. I look at it as one more item along a very, very involved and really numerous opportunities that have come my way in my lifetime. Getting this recorded with you as part of, not just Illinois history, but sort of the national issues in general and how it affects Illinois, and young people coming along, I feel it has been a most unusual opportunity. So I really appreciate it. I hope it is helpful to others, because I sure appreciated the examples of others that I met along the way and learned from. I think that can be done on a much wider scale now, with the communications we have today. So thank you and the state of Illinois and the Lincoln Library in particular.

DePue: Well thank you Mrs. Sullivan, it's been wonderful to talk to you all these times.

Sullivan: Okay, have a great day.

(end of final interview, #8)