Interview with Pauline Kayes
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Interviewer: Mark DePue

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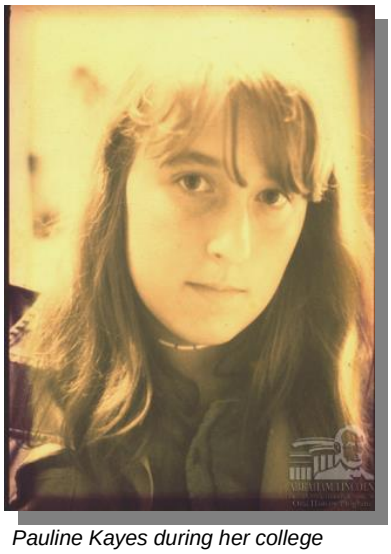
DePue: Today is Monday, the twenty-ninth of April, 2013. My name is Mark DePue, the Director of Oral History with the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. Today I'm in Champaign, Illinois with Pauline Kayes. Am I saying your last name right?



Pauline Kayes during her college student days, in 1971.

Kayes: Correct.

DePue: Pauline, we're going to have some fun here. Today the focus is on learning about your early career and your early life. But we're going to end up talking about your involvement with the ERA [Equal Rights Amendment] fight in Springfield in 1982, especially. There's lots of history between your birth and 1982…

Kayes: And lots of history after.

DePue: And lots of history after. We'll be talking a little bit about that as well, but that's the theme; it's the Equal Rights

Amendment fight. But let's start where I always like to start. When and where were you born?

Kayes: I was born on June 27, 1951, in East Chicago, Indiana, which is a small community in northwestern Indiana called the Calumet region, which is in the southern tip of Lake Michigan and adjacent to Chicago, so right across the Illinois-Indiana border.

DePue: It definitely was within the Chicago metropolitan area, then?

Kayes: Well, it's in Indiana, but it's considered northwest Indiana. But it is Chicagoland, if you want to call it that, even though it's in Indiana.

DePue: Were there farms and farmland and open fields between you and the Chicago metro area?

Ten year old Pauline Kayes sits between her grandmother, Mary Kulak, and mother Pauline in the family home in Chicago, Illinois, circa 1961. She was named after her mother, as was her brother Paul.

Kayes: No, no. Both sets of grandparents... My mother's parents, who came over here from Poland and Czechoslovakia, lived in Hegewisch, Illinois. And my father's parents, one who was born here in the States, who was of German-Sioux Indian background, and my father's mother, who came over from Ireland, they also lived in Hegewisch. Hegewisch was a small community on the southeast side of Chicago. You just crossed the border into Indiana and there you'd be in Hammond and East Chicago.

DePue: Hegewisch?

Kayes: Hegewisch, H-e-g-e-w-i-s-c-h, a little bit north of Calumet City, but part of Chicago, a neighborhood of Chicago.

DePue: We should identify that you are an English teacher. I love when you spell things; it helps out immensely (Kayes laughs). Tell me a little bit more about your parents' backgrounds.

Kayes: As I said, both sets of grandparents lived in Hegewisch. My mother's parents, Mary Kulak and Frank Kulak, came over to the United States around the turn of the century, 1890, through Ellis Island. They lived in South Chicago, Hegewisch. My mother was born in 1914, and she was a twin, so she had an identical twin sister named Antoinette. Frank and Mary Kulak had six girls, and my mother was one of those six girls. They didn't have much money; they were very, very poor. In fact, my mother and her sisters were taken out of school, I think maybe when they were in fourth or fifth grade, and made to work and pick up coal along the railroad tracks. I heard a lot of those kinds of stories.

DePue: Where did you say the Kulak family came from originally?

Kayes: My grandfather, Frank Kulak, was from Poland. He used to always brag that he had been a soldier in the Polish Army. Therefore, he thought he shouldn't really work in the United States, that they should take care of him because he had been a soldier in the Polish Army. His wife, my grandmother, Mary Kulak, came from Czechoslovakia.

DePue: I'm asking you because it sounds like they got to the United States before the First World War. As poor as they might have been, it was much better to be here than in Europe at that time.

Kayes: Yeah, yeah, definitely.

DePue: How about your dad's side of the family?

Kayes: My dad's side of the family, his father is William Kayes, and his mother, Mae Olive Kayes, spelled M-a-e O-l-i-v-e, interesting name. She came over with her parents from Ireland, probably when she was seven or eight, nine years, ten years old, probably leaving the Irish famine. As soon as they got here, her parents both died. She was sent to Chicago to live with an Irish family whose last name was Ferry, F-e-r-r-y. So, there was a very distinct Irish population, as well as Polish population, in Chicago. I don't know who sent her there. I just know that that's where she was. I don't know how she met my grandfather, but his father was German. In fact, the original name was spelled Kaiser, K-a-i-s-e-r. Then they changed that to Kayes, probably because of the anti-German…

DePue: During the First World War, most likely.

Kayes: Right. His mother was Lakota Sioux Indian. He was born in Council Bluffs, Iowa.

DePue: This would be your grandfather's wife, your great…?

Kayes: Grandfather's mother, my father's father's mother, so it would be my father's grandmother. He was born in Council Bluffs, Iowa, which was Lakota Sioux area, and there was two children in his family. One was William Kayes, and the other was Alice. I do remember meeting Alice. They would oftentimes say that I, as I grew up, that I had the kind of body structure like Alice Kayes (laughs), my grandfather's sister.

DePue: Like the Lakota Sioux side of the family.

Kayes: (laughs) I don't know, the German side. Anyway, his mother left the family; she deserted them. And probably… Who knows what the circumstances of their marriage was or whether it was a forced marriage or what. I want to do some more research into that side of the family. But if you look at pictures of… I've got a picture upstairs of my father and several of his siblings when they were younger. They have a very kind of Indian look to them. I mean, you

could probably put them in some of those old black-and-white photos of Indians, and they would kind of look like that.

DePue: But did the family grow up away from that Indian culture?

Kayes: I don't know exactly when he moved from Iowa to Chicago, William Kayes. I'm very unclear about that.

DePue: Tell me more about your dad. What did he do for a living?

Kayes: Well, my dad… First of all, he served in World War II, and he was stationed in the Caribbean, in Trinidad first and then in Curacao for a couple of years. Then he came back, and he started working in the steel mills. I don't know where he first worked, but his long time job for forty-two years was at Blaw Knox, B-l-a-w K-n-o-x, in East Chicago, Indiana. That was his life.

He had more education than my mother because he always had to write the letters. He knew how to write letters better. It's kind of funny that I became an English teacher because, you know, here I had two parents, one who probably had a sixth, seventh grade education; the other one had a fourth, fifth grade education. I remember that was a big kind of argument in the family because my mother would say, "Now Eddie, you need to write a letter to my sister, Helen, who's in Phoenix." And he'd say, "I don't want to write a letter," and then his handwriting was just so bad.

DePue: What's your dad's name?

Kayes: Edwin, Edwin Charles, Edwin Charles Kayes. And he was a twin too. He had a twin sister, Dorothy. So both of my parents were twins. If I had had children, I might have had twins myself.

DePue: It sounds like your father was a World War II veteran but never actually saw combat.

Kayes: No. He had the best, cushy… I like to say, he had the best situation in Curacao, according to my brother. My brother is sixteen years older than me. Paul is my mother's son by her first marriage. He was sixteen when I was born, so he knew a lot about my father's history because they kind of hung out together and drank beer. He said that my father was a sergeant, and he ran the supply depot or whatever. He was probably getting bribes all the time (DePue laughs), and he just had a good old time, smoking Lucky Strikes, drinking rum, lost his virginity there.[1] That's what my brother told me, like I really wanted to know that. So, (laughs) he had a great time. But then, when he came back, his life hit the skids, working in the steel mills. He was a finisher, so he was working with a lot of bad chemicals. Then he died in 1978

1Lucky Strike is an American brand of cigarettes owned by the British American Tobacco group. Individual cigarettes of the brand are often referred to colloquially as "Luckies". Lucky Strike was the top-selling cigarette brand in the United States during the 1930s and 1940s. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lucky_Strike)

of lung cancer, from all those Lucky Strikes, as well as the chemicals in the steel plant.

DePue: That World War II era, it seems like practically everybody was smoking in that generation.

Kayes: Oh, yeah, that Lucky Strike was definitely the cigarette of that...and Camels [Camel cigarettes].

DePue: You've given us a little window into his personality, but tell us more about his personality, if you will.

Kayes: His personality, I have a lot of his traits. That was, he liked to make jokes; he liked to tease my mother. We had great times, sitting on the front porch of our house in Hammond, Indiana, Hickory Avenue, sitting on the front porch and kind of making fun of my mother (laughs). He liked to sit and just kind of be introspective. My mother would always get upset about that. She'd say, "Eddie, what are you doing sitting there? You know, there are things to do! Go pick up nails in the alley." And he'd say, "Go to hell! I work all day," blah, blah.

But I got a lot of that. That's one of my favorite things to do. I just lie on the couch and stare out the window and just think. I get a lot of ideas that way. I was just reading the other day that they've got some research to show that people who do that more often during the day—just lie down and just stare into space—tend to have… Their minds work much better doing that. I got that from him.

He was very supportive of me. He liked to go to the bars and sit and drink beer and whistle, and he loved big band music. His idea of a good time was to sit in the living room with a beer, have the FM radio on, and just listen to all his favorite old music. That was his favorite activity. Or his other was to watch old movies. He was totally into all these old movies. That was one of his activities when he was young

DePue: Our idea of old movies or his idea of old movies? (Kayes laughs)

Kayes: (laughs) Our ideas of old movies.

DePue: So, thirties and forties and fifties era music?

Kayes: Yeah, right.

DePue: How about your mother? How would you describe her?

Kayes: Well, unfortunately, I have some of her personality traits too. She was much more… Well, she had gone through… She in some ways maybe had a harder life than he had, having a father who didn't work and a mother who was taking in laundry, and they were on relief for a while, then living with these six sisters and having to battle over things. I have the dresser in my living room that the six sisters shared.

DePue: I would assume they were all growing up in the heart of the Depression era.

Kayes: Yes, definitely. So, very, very hard. What shall I say…concerned about money, tight about money, very much restricting food. (They) got a lot of weird habits out of that background. If we'd sit around and watch TV, my mother would have a bag of potato chips, and she'd give me six potato chips. Or, if there was a Hershey bar, she would take off one square and give me one. She would take the good stuff (laughs) and kind of put it in the closet of her bedroom. I'm sure there is a lot of Depression era behavior, and then very much looking for sales all the time, canned goods in the basement, in case we were going to have another Depression. [She was] very, very thrifty, managed to save a lot of money, considering my father didn't make that much, and she didn't work, very much into keeping a clean house and being upset if it got dirty.

DePue: Your dad wasn't that way?

Kayes: No, no. She was very obsessed about keeping everything clean. She'd get on her hands and knees and wipe the floor. She she loved to garden, so I got that from both sides of the family. She had peonies and green onions and rhubarb. We had a cherry tree, so she was always making cherry pie and stewed rhubarb and all that. She was also probably much more of a… She was definitely a worrywart, but she'd gone through… She had a lot to worry about. There was all these fears that were surrounding that.

My father was much more happy-go-lucky. One of his favorite sayings was, "Who gives a shit? They're not paying my bills," or "It'll all come out in the wash," or, "All around the mulberry bush." I've got a lot of that, fortunately. Fortunately, I had (laughs) him to balance her off.

DePue: You mentioned that he liked to make fun of your mom. Was this good-natured fun? I would…

Kayes: Oh, yeah, good-natured fun, yeah.

DePue: What was the theme?

Kayes: Well, okay, let's say she was obsessively cleaning the Venetian blinds and making noise. He'd say, "Why do you have to make all that clatter? How much dust could there be on it from last week?" It was very good-natured teasing. We would both be laughing about her because we both had to live with her (laughs).

DePue: Did she take it that way?

Kayes: Well, she would come in and say, "What are you talking about?" She didn't find it funny (laughs). There was always a battle in that house; she was always trying to control him. She tried to control the smoking. Just like she doled out the chocolate and the chips, she doled out the cigarettes, partly for money reasons—they were expensive; she didn't want to spend money on it—and

partly because she knew it was bad for him. In fact, when he was dying in the hospital, I was so mad at her—the two of us were having huge fights over this—because she was yelling at him, saying, "Eddie, I told you if you didn't stop smoking, this was going to happen!"

She very seriously took her job as taking care of us. Like when I got hurt as a kid, I would try to sneak in and hide (both laugh). I remember one time I was riding my bicycle and got my foot caught in the spokes, kind of chopped off my heel. I had a wound, and I would kind of sneak in and go in the bathroom. A closed bathroom in our house was a sign of something was going on. "What were you doing in there?" "Nothing, nothing, nothing" because whenever I got hurt, she would just go crazy. You just didn't want that reaction anymore.

DePue: It sounds like your father was not necessarily really good with structure and discipline and those kinds of things?

Kayes: No. I very much have that. When I first bought this house, for example, after my mother died and my father had already died, I was just like, "Oh, god, I've got to have this job, and I've got to clean every weekend, and I've got to plant a garden, and I've got to start canning things." I was getting all this stuff, these messages, from her, her family, plus kind of the current ethos, which was to be kind of a hippie kind of person. You plant your own garden, do your own food. Finally I just said, "I can't do this." My mother didn't have a full-time job outside the home, so she could be obsessive-compulsive about the stove and how clean it is. I just couldn't do it. I just was driving myself crazy. I was more like him. I was more like, "Okay, let me go; I'll mop that floor, and then I'll lie down on the couch for a while."

DePue: You mentioned that you grew up in Hammond, Indiana.

Kayes: Um-hmm.

DePue: How would you describe your childhood? It sounds like you had a lot of fun. It was the typical childhood of the era.

Kayes: Hammond was… Okay, it's an urban, industrial area, a lot of pollution. The river that ran through there, the Calumet River… I was just thinking about this the other day, about what a noxious river that was. Just go close to it, you'd feel like, oh, nature. But it was like bubbling horrible stuff. In fact, one of the places I used to play as a kid with some of my friends became one of those Superfund sites, over there in the northern part of Hammond, very close to Chicago.[2]

I went to Washington Irving Grade School, which is in Hammond, and I was very smart. That set up jealousy among other students. Some of my

2The federal Superfund program, administered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is designed to investigate and clean up sites contaminated with hazardous substances. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Superfund)

horrible stuff in grade school was getting bullied by others who were kind of jealous.

DePue: You knew you were smarter than most of the other kids?

Kayes: I kind of was getting that information from the teachers talking to my parents, etc. Then, of course, my parents would argue back, "She didn't get the brains from your side of the family! Well, it definitely was my side of the family!"

DePue: Were there expectations that you'd better be coming home with very good grades?

Kayes: Not so much of them, but I learned to get rewards from my teachers. I got rewards for being smart. So, while the other girls were getting rewards for being cute or pretty or having the certain clothes, I could never keep up with that, because my mother would never… She would never give money to keep up with that. I got very much reinforced for being smart, by my teachers, whether it was first grade, second grade, third grade.

One time I came out to the school, and these twins, Joyce and Janet—I remember their names—they were waiting to beat me up (laughs). I don't know what I did, but they were... Then I was also starting to be very athletic at this time, and they didn't have girls' sports. But I was playing basketball, and we had gym. I was very good at basketball, very good at field hockey, and very good at track and field. Ironically, now my knees are...(laughs) I was probably in Washington Irving, when eighth grade... I was probably was in the upper three or four students in that group.

DePue: You mentioned when we first met a story about wearing pants, slacks, in grade school.

Kayes: Yeah, because it was cold up there, that oftentimes the apparel… I like to wear pants because it was much more comfortable and warm, and you could run around and play and not worry about it. But my mother… The second grade teacher, third grade teacher told my mother, "Pauline needs to stop wearing pants because she's a little girl now, and she has to start wearing dresses," etc., etc. I remember feeling very kind of embarrassed that the teacher told my mother that and feeling very like, I don't want to do that. I don't feel comfortable doing that. I never felt comfortable wearing dresses. My mother, you'll see a lot of pictures of her dressing me in dresses, because she loved to dress up.

My mother was definitely… Her and her twin sister used to dress the same and fool guys. They're very identical twins. In fact, I watched some *Lucy* episodes, and I'm always saying to a friend of mine, "Oh, that dress, my mother would love that dress because Lucy in *I Love Lucy* just wears these

wonderful [dresses], her and Ethel [Lucy's sidekick] both.[3] That would be my mother, loving that she had a little girl, which she had always wanted. [She] curled my hair, dressed me as a girl. It's like I hated it. I absolutely hated it. We had a lot of battles over that.

DePue: But it sounds like you ended up wearing dresses to grade school.

Kayes: Yes, yes, I did. [I'm] trying to think about high school. Yeah, high school, we still had a dress code. By the time I got to college, you could definitely wear pants. It was also good, as a professor, that I could pretty much wear what I wanted to.

DePue: Was the family at all religious?

Kayes: My father's mother was exceptionally religious. She was, of course, Irish Catholic. She just thought the greatest thing in the world was for her to have relatives that became priests or nuns. She was very much wanting that. One of my cousins became a nun, but then she left. She [the grandmother] always wanted my brother to become a priest. So, at one point, I did think about becoming a nun because my grandmother, my Grandma Kayes, was very much into that.

My mother's side of the family, my grandfather didn't go to church. He said, "The hell with it." But my grandmother, they went to a Polish church in Hegewisch called St. Florian's. And my father's mother, they went to another church on the other side of Hegewisch, which was more... I think it was St. Francis De Sales; it was more Irish.

My mother, we followed it. I was baptized. I went through everything; I went to catechism. Since my mother had been divorced, she was excommunicated from the church. That was always like there was this stigma attached because she was a divorced woman.

Then as I got into high school, I definitely thought, There's a lot of this stuff that's pretty stupid and contradictory and hypocritical. Of course, then, when I went to a Catholic college, that all kind of…that was the tipping point.

DePue: Where did you go to high school?

Kayes: I went to high school at Hammond High School, graduated in… Let's see, graduated in '69. This was right around the beginning of the Vietnam War. A number of boys that I was going to high school with were starting to be drafted. There were others who were becoming the protesters. I was more drawn to the protester ones.

3*I love Lucy*, staring Lucille Ball, is an American multinational television sitcom that originally ran on CBS from October 15, 1951 to May 6, 1957, with a total of 180 half-hour episodes spanning six seasons. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/I_Love_Lucy)

DePue: I definitely want to touch on that, especially since those years were traumatic years in American society. But let's start with your academic interests. Once you got to high school, what did you start to gravitate toward?

Kayes: I was really into reading because, as I told you earlier, from eighth grade on, I worked at the Hammond Public Library, Keeler Branch, which was in North Hammond, right by Washington Irving School. I was an avid reader, reading twelve books a week, entering all the reading contests.

That was a big battle between my mother and I. I wanted to read, and she wanted me to clean (laughs). She'd say, "How can you read, Pauline?"—just like [she did to] my father—"How can you read? You need to be dusting the dressers." Now you can see my least favorite thing to do in the world is dusting dressers. I'm still having this battle with her, after all these years later (both laugh). "No, I'm not going to dust my dressers!" I worked in the library, checking out books, arranging shelves, reading shelves, putting the books back on, doing decoration. I really was very much into reading the literature. I went to the main branch of the Hammond Public Library to work when I was in college, so I worked all through high school and all four years of college.

DePue: What were you reading?

Kayes: I loved literature, loved novels. At one point, I was into reading the biographies of the saints (laughs).

DePue: That must have been your era, when you were thinking about being a…

Kayes: Yeah, I was always thinking of me in the biography of the saints. Then I was also reading—I remember the book *Kon-Tiki*, about the adventures of Thor Heyerdahl—kind of adventure things. Then I was into mysteries for a while. At the Hammond Public Library, I did a lot of different things. I was operating the switchboard, working in adult services, and I was always surrounded by these female librarians who really took me on as a project (laughs).

DePue: A project, as they were mentoring you, or they needed to fix you?

Kayes: Both (laughs). They were mentoring me and... A lot of them were friends. The librarian, Georgia Barnette, who worked at Keeler Branch Library, was a major force in my life. I was her, what they called a page, and I was working for her in this little branch. She just really took me on as a project; she probably felt sorry for me because I had these uneducated, immigrant parents, second generation. She had friends at the main library, and they would…

Once during the fall, there would be a theater thing at the Goodman Theater in Chicago. The librarians, four of them, would come pick me up, and I would go with them to see these plays at the Goodman Theater. That started really gravitating me towards literature.

But I was also… As I told you earlier, I was in high school, in a special math class called UICSM [University of Illinois Committee on School

Mathematics] University of Illinois, probably… I don't know what it stood for, UICSM. [It was] special mathematics for students who had high math scores. I really liked the teacher; Mr. Clark was his name, Don Clark. He was also a wrestling coach. There weren't a lot of girls, but I would just remember loving it, and doing well.

Then, after two years of that, you would go to the third and fourth year, where Mr. Garrett, who was a horrible, horrible, mean guy, hated girls in math and would just humiliate them. We all knew it, and I just didn't want to go into his class, so I stopped doing that special math stuff.

DePue: What you knew about Mr. Garrett, though, was strictly by reputation from other students?

Kayes: Yes, yes. And only one girl, I think, went into his class, who he really liked. But then I was also taking things like physics. I really got into writing, writing composition. I had a teacher named Karl Deak, who was also a wrestling coach, ironically. He was totally into grammar and writing. That's where I probably really got into honing my writing skills.

DePue: What kind of things were you writing?

Kayes: Essays, mostly essays. He was very into expository writing. But now I just remembered that when I was in grade school, I won an award for a poem I wrote about a bee, when I was probably in fourth or fifth grade.

DePue: Everything you've discussed so far is on the fiction side of things, or it's not requiring a lot of research on your part. Would that be fair to say?

Kayes: Yeah, more interpretive. But with Karl Deak it was much more starting to do writing involving research and expository writing and correct grammar, etc. He was a stickler about that.

Then I was also taking Latin; I had four years of Latin. I don't know how I got convinced to take that. In some ways that was a real stupid decision. I should have been taking Spanish. But I was told, Latin's really good if you're going to go on to school, blah, blah, blah. I had this teacher named Miss Margaret Work; she was a hysterical spinster who was obsessed with Latin (laughs). When we got our lessons wrong, she would just stand at the front of the room and cry, "Oh, you didn't interpret that sentence…" Being in her class was like being in the middle of her nervous breakdown. I don't know if she was menopausal (both laugh) or what.

But I got all As; I did very good in Latin. That really did help me as an English teacher because of vocabulary. But I'm someone who doesn't know how to speak Spanish. I don't really have another language because Latin is not really a language that is spoken.

DePue: Unless you're going to go into the ministry of some type or medicine.

Kayes: In the Catholic Church there was the Latin mass, so that kind of fit in with that. But, I think I told you earlier, I had no understanding how high my math scores were until many, many years later, when I was teaching at Parkland and clearing out a desk or something. I found my high school transcripts and looked and found that my math scores were higher than my verbal scores. I went, What? I was like shocked because I don't remember them telling me that. I think that must have been the reason I was in the special math, but no one ever said, "Pauline, you have really high math scores, and you should be thinking about going into a math/science career." The opposite message was, "You need to become an elementary school teacher."

DePue: Who was saying that to you?

Kayes: Oh, the counselors were telling you, "Okay, so what you want to do after here is to become a grade school teacher." And I kept thinking, Boy, I don't even like kids, I just can't imagine. But I'm thinking, Okay, well, I don't want to be a secretary; I know that (laughs).

DePue: Nobody was thinking in terms of nursing or medicine of some type?

Kayes: No. I don't think that was… Well, that may have been mentioned to some people, but that kind of ticked me off when I found out I had such high math scores. If someone had really told me that… I became an English teacher with my verbal scores. You can imagine if my math scores were even higher than that.

DePue: Do you think the trajectory of your life would have been different if you had known that and had gone more into the math and science side?

Kayes: Maybe, because now I'm totally into marine biology. I very much like to look at environmental science and things like that. I might have gone a different way because that's always been an interest of mine. I've always been interested in nature, even though there wasn't much nature to find in the Calumet region, except for the Dunes in Lake Michigan. You know, that, to me, was… I loved that. I just always wanted to go to the beach, always wanted to go to Lake Michigan, over there in Gary and the Indiana Dunes because I just loved the water and the mountains of sand, etc. Maybe I would have gone another direction.

DePue: So your teachers and other counselor were suggesting you should be an elementary school teacher. They weren't telling you about your math scores. What did you think you wanted to do?

Kayes: I didn't know; I really didn't know. When I went to St. Joe's, I got a scholarship because I was fifth in my class at Hammond High School.

DePue: St. Joseph's?

Kayes: St. Joseph's College. I went from Hammond High School to St. Joseph's. I was fifth in my class, so I got an all-expense paid scholarship, and I, of

course, was enrolled in the elementary school education program, which I kept feeling, this is not for me; this is not for me; this is not for me.

DePue: How about your parents, what were they suggesting to you?

Kayes: They didn't really suggest. I think they, at a certain point, when I started getting really smart and having much more education than them, I think there was a sense of maybe feeling a little threatened by it. My father used to say to me, "Pauline, you may be smart, but you ain't got much common sense." (both laugh) That is definitely true. I do a lot of stupid things, like try to clean the gutters myself, and hit myself in the head, and get a… I always think, He is so right about that.

DePue: Did you agree with him at the time?

Kayes: No, no, I used to be irritated by that when he'd say it. But now, in retrospect, I think it's kind of funny. Another thing he used to say is, "If everybody gets so smart around here, who's going to pick up the garbage?" (both laugh) Saying those kinds of things, I had a sense they were supportive, but I was kind of going beyond their… I was getting smarter than them.

DePue: It sounds like your father had very much of a… I guess I would say a blue collar mentality?

Kayes: Oh, definitely, very blue collar, very pro-union, very anti-authority. I inherited a lot from him… When he went on strike at Blaw Knox, I felt like we felt so proud that he was on the picket line, and that we had to watch how we were spending money. He had to roll his own cigarettes, out of Bull Durham.[4] Then it's like, "Wow, we're all in this together." Yeah, I really got a lot of those values from him.

DePue: We've already alluded to this a little bit, but I did want to talk more about the time frame when you're going to high school, '65 through '69. So, by the time you get to late '67 and '68, the Vietnam War is dominating the news. How much did that dominate what you were thinking about at the time?

Kayes: Well, I was noticing it. I noticed that there were some of my peers, especially some of the guys, who were, of course, very much threatened by it because they were getting drafted., many people were getting drafted. In fact, one of my boyfriends in high school—his name was Darrel Noojin; he was a football player; I was always helping him in class—he ended up being drafted. But that probably was after high school. He was a year older than me.

I knew that there were these guys that were kind of starting to be antiwar. They were starting to kind of let their hair grow a little long and all of

4Bull Durham Smoking Tobacco was a world-famous brand of loose-leaf tobacco, manufactured in Durham, North Carolina, that originated around the 1850s and remained in production until 1988. One of the most successful slogan campaigns for Bull Durham was its "Roll Your Own" campaign. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bull_Durham_Smoking_Tobacco)

that. And, of course, the music, definitely, you know, the Motown music and all of that.[5] But I really didn't really take notice and get radicalized until I ended up at St. Joe's. So, 1970 is when I went, "Wow, this is wrong."

DePue: You talked about your dad being a huge big band era fan.

Kayes: Um-hmm.

DePue: What kind of music were you listening to at the time?

Kayes: Oh, I was listening to Beatles; I was listening to Motown, totally obsessed with Motown, loved Motown. And into the '70s, [I] was listening to things like Cream and Led Zeppelin and all the hallucinogenic, Jethro Tull. Then [I] also starting to listen to Bob Dylan, Joni Mitchell, Laura Nyro and listening to music that had more social and political lyrics.

DePue: Were you paying attention at all to the civil rights movement?

Kayes: Yes, definitely paying attention. It all kind of came together in 1970.

DePue: During the time, you were in high school though?

Kayes: Oh, yes. Oh, oh, yeah, because I worked on Robert F. Kennedy's campaign in '68.[6] Okay, so I was part of this group of high school students working on his campaign. I remember we were picked up, and my friend Virginia and I went and leafleted or did this or did that or worked at the campaign. I actually got to shake hands with him when he came through campaigning. I was totally in love with him, and a lot of my peers were really into Eugene McCarthy.[7] If you were really antiwar, you'd be into Eugene McCarthy. I was just so drawn to Robert F. Kennedy's charisma, especially his empathy for the downtrodden, going to work with the poor in Appalachia. So, when he got shot, oh, that was like...devastated me. When Martin Luther King got shot, that really was also incredible, but Robert F. Kennedy, I ended up...because he got assassinated in June. I remember lying around in the backyard, just being in the sun and being so depressed. My mother was really worried. She kept saying, "Pauline, are you okay? Why are you just lying around like that?" I was just so defeated, felt so depressed.

DePue: You weren't even able to explain to her why you felt that way?

5Motown specialized in a type of soul music it referred to with the trademark "The Motown Sound". Crafted with an ear towards pop appeal, the Motown Sound typically used tambourines to accent the back beat, prominent and often melodic electric bass-guitar lines, distinctive melodic and chord structures, and a call-and-response singing style that originated in gospel music. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Motown)

6The Robert F. Kennedy presidential campaign began on March 16, 1968, when Robert Francis Kennedy, a United States Senator from New York who had won a Senate seat in 1964, entered an unlikely primary election as a challenger to incumbent Democratic United States President Lyndon B. Johnson. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_F._Kennedy_1968_presidential_campaign)

7The Eugene McCarthy presidential campaign of 1968 was launched by United States Senator Eugene McCarthy of Minnesota in the latter part of 1967 to vie for the 1968 Democratic Party nomination for President of the United States Following McCarthy's 42% showing in New Hampshire, United States Senator Robert F. Kennedy entered the race. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eugene_McCarthy_1968_presidential_campaign)

Kayes: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, and I was starting to give huge lectures to her (laughs). But, you see, I had also watched... I'd experienced the assassination of John F. Kennedy at… Let's see, that would have been… That was '63; I was twelve years old.

I remember watching the shooting of Lee Harvey Oswald on the television. I was sitting there watching it. I said, "Ma, something has just happened!" She was on the phone talking to someone. I had experienced the Kennedy assassination, even though I didn't understand it totally. But then, Robert F. Kennedy in '68. So, yeah, I was kind of… But it didn't really all come together until probably '70 and '71.

DePue: What was the racial make-up of your high school?

Kayes: We had a number of African-Americans, and I had a number of African-American friends. I felt much more comfortable with them because they were similar in terms of class. They were much more accepting. I came from the north side of Hammond, which was considered to be the low class, blue collar…

DePue: The wrong side of the tracks?

Kayes: Yes (both laugh). That's exactly it! And a lot of the students came from South Hammond, which was near Munster. Munster was like where... All the rich people lived, in Munster.

The librarians had gotten me involved with one of their sororities, and they gave me a scholarship also to buy books to go to St. Joe's. I remember going once to visit this woman's house in Munster. In retrospect, she was probably an alcoholic, because she was just totally out of it and kind of hysterical, and they seemed kind of embarrassed by her. I just remember feeling so uncomfortable being in Munster and being in this woman's house, where the sorority thing was being hosted.

I always felt much more comfortable with either the African-American students, or in grade school, I was very much drawn to Mexican students. My first crush in grade school was Ricky Hidalgo, whose mother brought in Mexican hot chocolate one time. I was, like, "Wow, Mexican hot chocolate."

Of course, my mother very much had this thing, "You should not be playing with Mexican kids," or "You shouldn't be playing with the hillbillies down the street!" I was thinking to myself, Wow, where does she get off? I mean, look at the kind of shit she put up with as a Polish person in South Chicago. That was kind of an ongoing argument between my father and mother; Who was better, the Polish or the Irish?

DePue: Did the Lakota Sioux ever enter into the equation?

Kayes: No (laughs).

DePue: Your dad was half Lakota Sioux, right?

Kayes: No, he was one quarter, so he didn't really... That kind of got lost in the shuffle. I learned that way later. My mother even accused him sometimes of being Dutch. I don't know where she got that, unless he was Pennsylvanian Dutch. I don't know why she'd say, "Your family's Dutch." I don't know.

But it's interesting that there was this kind of ethnocentrism that was going on from the time I was a kid, about who I should play with and who I shouldn't. You shouldn't play with someone who's not Catholic; you shouldn't play with the Mexicans. I tell a lot of these stories in the multi-cultural education stuff I do now because that's my business, Diversity Works. That's what I do, is multi-cultural education.

I look back, and I think, Wow, it started here with them, arguing about who is better, the Irish or the Polish. And from my perspective as a kid, well, my father's Irish family always felt superior to my mother's Polish family because, by that time, the Irish were a little bit more assimilated, and the Polish were the newcomers. I just remember thinking they were so off because my Polish grandmother was so cool. I loved her; she treated me well. So, where do they get off?

And then, of course, my father had… Let's see, how many siblings he had. He had, I think, what was it, twelve? No, it couldn't be that many, but there were a lot more. The boys were always drunk. I just remember thinking—I don't know—where do you get off? You know, here you all are drunk, and... (both laugh) But that was kind of an ongoing thing. I was always drawn to people who were kind of on the margins because I felt very much on the margins myself because of my parents not having a lot of education, us not having a lot of money. I kind of always gravitated towards others who were on the margin.

DePue: You said that you had quite a few friends in high school who were African-American. What did your mom say about that?

Kayes: Well, these were friends who were at school. They weren't friends necessarily who I brought home.

DePue: Because of that?

Kayes: No. Yeah, because we didn't really socialize outside of school. But in school, in my classes, I had a lot of fun with them. Yeah, my main friends in high school, who I hung around with at my home, were… I had a friend, Virginia Keller, who was a friend of mine, all the way from grade school through high school and as I was going into college. She was working in the steel mill while I was in college. Then another one, Carol Buckmaster, who ended up… She was always the cute girl, skinny cute girl. She ended up married with kids. I don't know what happened to her. She didn't go to college. Like I said, I was working a lot. I was going to school and working in the library.

DePue: Did the library…

Kayes: And I was also a member of the debate club. I was going and doing debates, entering in debate. I had a female partner. We were one of the only all-female debate teams.

DePue: Well, debate requires an awful lot of research.

Kayes: Yeah. That was another mentor of mine, Mrs. Hall. She was the speech and debate coach. She enlisted me, and I used to have to get up at 6:00 in the morning and go do these debates. I'd learn the whole structure of argument. I have a friend of mine who says to me all the time, "You are so argumentative. You are so argumentative." I go, "I was like trained from high school on, you know, to be a debater."

DePue: Do you remember what the debate topics were?

Kayes: One was something about wiretapping; I remember that. That had to do with Miranda [warnings] and all that. I can't remember the others. We almost won first in our region. We went against two guys from Munster High School. They were the top, and it was me and… What was her name, my debate partner? She was kind of dumpy. I was much more of a charismatic speaker. I did really well at speech and debate.

DePue: So, you weren't shy in high school.

Kayes: (laughs) Well, no. When I first started doing the speeches I was really nervous. I was always nervous, but I loved being that way. My partner in debate, she was just kind of dumpy and was just kind of monotonal. I would have to kind of coach her, etc. We almost beat these two guys from Munster, which would have been a major coup. But they won by three or four points.

DePue: One other question that's related to the year 1968; this would have been right before you started your senior year, I would guess. The Democratic Convention was in Chicago, just a few miles away, and here you were, a huge Robert Kennedy fan.

Kayes: Yeah. Yeah, oh.

DePue: You had to be watching what was going on there.

Kayes: Yeah, I wanted to… I didn't end up going, but I was watching it. I was just horrified; we were all horrified. Sixty-eight was a major radicalization. But I wasn't really acting on it, you know. I wasn't marching, etc. When I got to college, that's when I started organizing antiwar marches.

DePue: Let's go to college then. You've already talked about St. Joseph's quite a bit. Describe the school for us.

Kayes: Well, small liberal arts, Catholic college.

DePue: Where?

Kayes: Main place was Rensselaer, but I went to a campus called Calumet. That was a campus of St. Joe's. I was a little bit insecure about leaving my parents' house and going off on my own, like everybody else was. I got a full scholarship, and I could live at home. So, even though I wanted to get out of home because you want to get away from your parents, you're starting to have sex, and it's really inconvenient when your parents are home (laughs). Small liberal arts college.

I told you I was majoring in elementary education, which I wasn't really into. We had to take these courses on theology and the Bible, which was, like, blah. I was already feeling alienated from the Catholic Church because they didn't make a stand about the Vietnam War and all of that.

DePue: We're going to pause real quick.

Kayes: Okay.

(pause in recording)

DePue: We had to get the microphone hooked up again. We were talking about St. Joseph's, and you started as a… Your major was elementary education, but you've already said your heart was never in it in the first place. Here was one point in your life that you kind of surrendered what everybody said you ought to be doing.

Kayes: Yeah, but then I had an English teacher named Charles Radey. Charles Radey, educated at Notre Dame, was my freshman comp teacher and wonderful, young, progressive. We analyzed Jimi Hendrix's music. We read, Nikki Giovanni, Leroy Jones, Eldridge Cleaver; we read radical things. We interpreted it and discussed them and analyzed them. That's when I started writing essays and just getting incredible feedback. He was a major mentor.

We became very close friends too. That was kind of something that happened to me in college is I became—very probably inappropriately sometimes—closely involved with my professors, several of them. I just went, "This is what I want to do." So I changed my major to English, and also, I started taking philosophy classes. I was like, "Wow, this is so cool!"

Of course, I'm starting to smoke marijuana. So this kind of goes along with the (laughs) philosophy classes, to sit around in metaphysics and talk about when you get up out of that chair, what happens to the space, and what happens to your molecules and all that? That went very well with smoking marijuana.

DePue: But theology classes, which is just a branch of philosophy...

Kayes: Yeah. Not the way they taught it. I mean, it was very dogmatic. That was the thing. Here I was in this college at a time when we had these very progressive, charismatic professors, who just all happened to be there from the University of Chicago or Notre Dame or California Berkeley because it was near the

Chicagoland area, so they got jobs there. Then the overall administrative structure was this very Catholic, dogmatic view. There was big tension between some of these faculty and the administration.

DePue: This is in the same time frame, kind of at the tail end, but the students' rights movement was very big during that era as well, certainly in the late '60s.

Kayes: Yeah. That definitely, definitely.

DePue: Did it land at St. Joseph's?

Kayes: Well, yeah, I'm getting to that. So, I (laughs) ended up changing my major to English and, in addition, to Charles Radey as a major mentor... He left and went somewhere else. But then, Dante Lanzetta, Jr. became my next major mentor. He was from the University of Chicago, lived in Hyde Park. I took literature classes with him, and he was just so charismatic and passionate.

We became, I think, probably inappropriately too close. I mean, we smoked marijuana in his car. He would drive me to the library and drop me off for me to work, and I would be reeking of marijuana from inside his station wagon. We played tennis together. He became kind of a major figure. And at this time I became editor of the newspaper of St. Joe's, called *Shavings*.

DePue: *Shavings*?

Kayes: *Shavings*, yes, that was the… I actually have some old—I should get up and find them for you—old newspapers. The choice was between me and this other woman, who was very conservative. I ended up being chosen, although I'm sure they regretted it (laughs) because I was hanging around with these folks, who were definitely antiwar, artist types, progressive types. I really made the newspaper a voice of that.

We even played around with the newspaper. Instead of having vertical columns, we had horizontal columns. Instead of photographs, some of my friends, who were artists, drew kind of pictures. It became a place for us to be very activists as students, in terms of the politics of the college, with other students, as well as the politics of what was going on with the administration and faculty, which we had to report on. So that became kind of my vantage point for all kinds of issues.

Pauline Kayes during her days as a college student 1971.

We became a major irritant (laughs) because, for example, one of my friends who worked on the newspaper with me, Pat Bednar—I don't think he's alive anymore—he was an artist, and he wrote. He did for Christmas a cartoon for the Christmas issue where a kid comes into this kind of broken down apartment, holding a rat, and says, "Mom, look! Santa Claus did bring me a present!" And then, he started doing

things like, "God is dog spelled backwards, and what does that mean?" You can imagine, in a Catholic college, we were really starting to bug them in a big way.

DePue: Would you describe St. Joseph's, in general, as still a pretty conservative place?

Kayes: I have no idea. I have no idea what it's like. It moved its campus…

DePue: No, then.

Kayes: Then? Oh, very conservative, definitely. We sponsored antiwar marches…

DePue: Who's we? Were you in a leadership role in that or just kind of…?

Kayes: Yeah, a leadership role with other students and planning marches. Then I got involved with the theater and started doing acting and had a major role in the play, *The Trojan Women*.[8] Then we did some plays that have to do with women, women playwrights. I got involved with that group too. It was very much, again, hanging out with those on the margins and the fringes in the art department, the theater department, the English department, the philosophy department, including the instructors. We were all what you would kind of call becoming the antiwar, hippie group. I mean, my standard thing, one of the things I used to wear then was bell bottoms and an army jacket (laughs), or as that picture that you see over there, I have a khaki shirt and beads around the neck, just looking so intense, just intense. DePue: Intense? Not the happy-go-lucky girl that your dad would have wanted you to be?

Pauline Kayes leads her first poetry discussion of Sylvia Plath as an English philosophy major at St. Joseph's College, circa 1971.

Kayes: Yeah, having fun but very passionate about things. Then insert into this, my third major mentor in college was Judith Nissman Taylor, who was from the University of California, Berkeley, Chicago, from a wealthy Jewish family in Chicago. She lived also in Hyde Park, near the University of Chicago.

A lot of times I was hanging out over in Hyde Park, at the University of Chicago, so I was picking up a lot of radical stuff. I went to a big antiwar march there and hung out with some of the students in the dorms. Judy and Dante both were in Hyde Park, so at various times I was being over there. I

8*The Trojan Women*, also translated as *The Women of Troy*, and also known by its transliterated Greek title *Troades*, is a tragedy by the Greek playwright Euripides. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Trojan_Women)

got more into hanging out in the city and going to the Art Institute and continuing that kind of cultural exposure in the big city, Chicago, which was very easy. It was like… To get there was thirty minutes.

DePue: What was she teaching?

Kayes: She was teaching women's studies. She taught one of the first Women in Literature courses in the country, 1971. It was a Women in Literature class, and we were reading all women writers, which was my first big exposure to women writers.

DePue: You hadn't read some of the Brontës or...?

Kayes: Oh, probably a few of them in high school. But this was really, you know, Doris Lessing, Sylvia Plath, Anne Sexton, because she [Judith Nissman Taylor] was very much into women's poetry. In fact, she lives in LA now, and she writes poetry and works for a poetry journal.

It was a very unconventional class. I mean, we met for a while in a classroom, and then we just started meeting at one of my classmates' house that was close by. We would be sitting around, drinking wine, and it was like smoking marijuana (laughs) and studying. And it became quite… What shall I say? I'd never been in a class like that. I mean, where people are telling their personal stories and their experiences, and people are crying, and other people are storming out. It was kind of like a continuation of my mother's family (laughs) because they were six sisters, always fighting in Polish and storming out. So, this was like consciousness-raising, first exposure to real consciousness-raising, from a feminist perspective.

DePue: Were there any men in the class?

Kayes: No, not one. She [Judy] became another major mentor of mine. There was, again, inappropriate closeness, which later on in life I really learned from this because because as an instructor myself, I try to avoid any of that kind of inappropriate stuff because I remember what it felt like as a student to be on the end of that, to like be in love with one of your professors, and how the power difference was just very troubling. As a professor, I had a major ethos, which was never to get involved with any of my students, whatsoever.

DePue: Were all of the instructors you've talked about as mentors—these that were very progressive during that time frame—would they tend to be much, much younger than the rest of the faculty?

Kayes: Yeah.

DePue: Very much caught up in the whole radicalization of the late 1960s, where you're rejecting every part of the old structure and culture of society?

Kayes: Yeah. Except Dante, very much… He really was into interpreting literature in very formal ways that he was getting at the University of Chicago. So, although he was radical and hippie-ish in a way, he was also very conservative

about what makes good writing and literary criticism and all that. I got very much of that stuff from him.

DePue: Were you still very interested in the philosophy as well?

Kayes: Oh, yeah. I did a major… After being radicalized by Judy's class, everything after that, I was like women, women, women and women, women, women. I remember the chair of the department, Robert Banet. He, of course, had hired some of these faculty. He was very formal and droll, very much about the literary canon. He'd say, "Pauline, you need to do more than read women. You need to read Milton or Chaucer." And I would say, "Yeah, but they're...you know, they're boring to me. I want to read others who are much more exciting." He was always like, blah, blah.

But I got A's out of his classes too. So I had exposure from taking comedy and satire with him. I can't remember what other courses, advanced writing.

That's another thing, I was becoming more and more effective as a writer. I really had honed my skills, being editor of the newspaper and writing all these critical papers for my English classes and my philosophy classes. Then I ended up doing an independent study for the philosophy department on Simone de Beauvoir, on *The Second Sex*.[9, 10] So, that was like my turning point, from majoring in English to reading more progressive poetry and literature and fiction and now moving into reading women writers and women poets.DePue: How about the female philosophers?

Kayes: Yeah, there was none. That's another… So, that's why I was like, "Hey!"

DePue: Were you asking why aren't there?

Kayes: Yeah, why aren't they? That's how I got into the project with Simone de Beauvoir because she was one of the only that… That was mostly because she was the lover of Jean Paul Sartre.[11]DePue: What you haven't mentioned up to this point... You're very much gravitating toward women's studies and fighting against actually having to read some of these classics that were written by men, etc. But I haven't heard any discussion about entering any feminist movement of any type.

9Simone Lucie Ernestine Marie Bertrand de Beauvoir was a French writer, intellectual, existentialist philosopher, political activist, feminist and social theorist. Though she did not consider herself a philosopher, she had a significant influence on both feminist existentialism and feminist theory. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simone_de_Beauvoir)

The Second Sex is a 1949 book by the French existentialist Simone de Beauvoir, in which the author discusses the treatment of women throughout history. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Second_Sex)

11Jean-Paul Charles Aymard Sartre was a French philosopher, playwright, novelist, screenwriter, political activist, biographer, and literary critic. He was one of the key figures in the philosophy of existentialism and phenomenology, and one of the leading figures in 20th-century French philosophy and Marxism. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean-Paul_Sartre)

Kayes: Well, yes, I was towards moving that, but then Judy left. She was only there a year. It's amazing when you think about it, that someone would just drop into your life for a year and totally change your life, boing, and then disappear.

DePue: This Judy again?

Kayes: Judith Nissman Taylor. She ended up going to California and working at San Diego State, which had one of the first Women's Studies programs in the country. We were left to fend for ourselves. We started having sort of a women's group that read various things and Betty Friedan.[12] We started reading more coming out of the feminist movement. We even had a community center in East Chicago, where that's what we did, consciousness-raising, reading things, discussing them, getting active in issues about rape because that was becoming really... Something that we were confronting was this whole idea that a woman can't go into a bar, and if she does, she deserves to be raped. And if she wears these clothes… That was the beginning of that whole discussion because the way rape victims were being treated in 1970 were horrible. You still see it today, but really, it was really bad then. And then [we began] getting involved in issues of day care, etc.

So, after she left, we really gravitated towards the theater. That's what we did, a play about women's issues, picking various writers like... Who did we do? Oh, I started a play called, *What Have You Done for Me Lately*, which was a feminist play. It was all about a woman who is in the Congress, and she got pregnant. She couldn't have an abortion, or she had real problems finding an abortion. So, she has found a way to impregnate her boyfriend—who was in the legislature—and made it very restrictive. So, now she's found this… It's a kind of a science fiction thing, where she's impregnated him, and he's saying, "But you can't do this to me. I have a life to live," blah, blah, blah, blah (laughs).

DePue: And this was a play you wrote?

Kayes: No, no. It was a play by a feminist playwright, Myrna Laws. It's called, *What Have You Done for Me Lately*. I was the star in that play, [for which] we had created a whole series of vignettes through the St. Joe Theater. I started gravitating over towards the theater. Of course, several of those women had been in Judy's class, so they were over there doing things. We were doing more and more kind of feminist plays, with feminist material, like *The Trojan Women*, for example, this whole play about women in the Trojan War.

DePue: Did you reach a wider audience than just women who were becoming…?

Kayes: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah, yeah. I mean, it was the theater, and it was the theater department. Christy Thamm and Maureen Heffernan were the two who were

12Betty Friedan was an American feminist writer and activist. A leading figure in the women's movement in the United States, her 1963 book The Feminine Mystique is often credited with sparking the second wave of American feminism in the 20th century. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Betty_Friedan)

in my Women in Lit class, and they were over in the theater, just doing incredible, radical things.

DePue: And finding an audience doing this?

Kayes: Yeah, finding an audience. But there was always competition between them and me. You know, we were competitive with one another. They didn't really want me to come to the theater and try out. In fact, the first time I tried out, I was totally stoned and reading this part. The director said, "Pauline, you must..." I almost beat out Maureen for one of the main parts. She got really ticked off about that.

So, theater really brought out a whole other aspect of me, performance, that added to that whole debate, speech-debate background, as well as working for the newspaper. It was through the newspaper that I ended up getting involved in the McGovern campaign in '72 and became chair of College Students for McGovern.

DePue: On the campus?

Kayes: On the campus, as well as in the area. Actually, this photo here is taken at the Gary airport, where I'm giving a speech.

DePue: You look very respectable in this photo.

Kayes: I do; I do (laughs).

DePue: This is not the person that you were describing earlier.

Kayes: Yeah. No, I kind of cleaned up pretty good for that.

DePue: For George [McGovern]?

Kayes: Yeah, yeah. But I was very much got involved with a number of the people who worked on the newspaper with me. We were all involved in the campaign. So, the newspaper at St. Joe's became kind of a locus for a lot of political activism, feminism, antiwar, McGovern, and then, of course, the whole [Richard M.] Nixon thing was going on.[13] That was just…

Pauline Kayes was a strong supporter of Senator George McGovern during his run for the presidentsy in 1972. She spoke at this rally for McGovern at the Gary Airport in the fall of 1972.

DePue: That was just starting to break about a couple of months before the election itself.

13The Watergate scandal was a political scandal in the United States involving the administration of U.S. President Richard Nixon from 1972 to 1974 that led to Nixon's resignation. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Watergate_scandal)

Kayes: Right, right.

DePue: One thing you haven't mentioned—and I assume that you certainly were paying attention to this—was the Cambodian invasion in 1970 and then what happened at Kent State.

Kayes: Oh, yes, the Kent State. What year was that?

DePue: Nineteen seventy, about May of 1970.

Kayes: Oh, yes. That was shocking, just shocking. The song by Crosby, Stills & Nash, "*Ohio;*" that whole song, just…[14] Every time I heard it, I would just cry. We were thinking, this could happen to us because…DePue: Was there any kind of protest at St. Joseph's? Or, did you head to downtown Chicago or the University of Chicago?

Kayes: No, we had a protest right down the main drag, in front of St. Joseph's. I remember one of the board of trustees member for St. Joe's, who was Jewish, ironically, he was chair, Irv Lewin was his name, and he was standing on the corner, shaking his fists, "Nobody from St. Joe's should be protesting the war." (laughs) But, like I said, I was also going over to Chicago and participating in some things at the University of Chicago.

DePue: Just to get a better idea, can you describe what you did to help organize the protest and the protest itself?

Kayes: We organized the march down the main drag, created the posters we were carrying, what we were chanting. I don't think we had… I don't remember; we might have had some speakers. I really became very savvy then about how to organize protests, what kind of signs to do, and also getting more into thinking about doing performance kind of stuff. That was starting to seep in, becoming more of a spectacle too.

DePue: Is that why you say that you became savvy? Can you describe what you mean by that?

Kayes: Just learning how to do it, learning how to do it. You know, what to put on your poster, what to wear, what to say. That kind of became a starting point because many years later I really gone into political performance art, when I moved to Champaign and got involved with the Grassroots Group of Second Class Citizens.[15] That was very much the theater background, that protest background, came together. I loved doing that kind of stuff, the skit kind of stuff, to create the drama, the drama. That's very much part of what's happened with the Grassroots Group of Second Class Citizens, that when we

14"Ohio" is a protest song and counterculture anthem written and composed by Neil Young in reaction to the Kent State shootings of May 4, 1970, and performed by Crosby, Stills & Nash, a folk rock supergroup made up of American singer-songwriters. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ohio_(Crosby._Stills._Nash%26_Young_song))

15The Grassroots Group of Second Class Citizens is an organization of women willing to take more dramatic action in the fight to convince the Illinois legislature to pass the Equal Rights Amendment. (https://www.nprillinois.org/post/illinois-issues-era-yesterday-and-today-0#stream/0)

planned the protest in Springfield, very much thinking about how to make it dramatic and how to get noticed and get publicity and to really get people to think about things in an different way.

DePue: What I'm thinking about, though, was that first step. How do you get the word out about the protests? And how do you get people to actually come to these things?

Kayes: Oh yeah, that was another. Posters, flyers, agitation (laughs), soliciting people. That became another part of it, is how to organize all these different people. Then I remember, there was starting to form in the Calcumet region at that time, the Calumet Congress, which was all about unions and working class and trying to bring some of this radicalism into the workforce. I kind of got involved with them, on the fringes.

There were many kind of different groups and how to work with them and get people involved. But the protests that we did, like the one where he was yelling at us from the side...because it was quite successful.

DePue: You were the editor of the school newspaper. Were you able to use the school newspaper to help you organize these things?

Kayes: Oh, yes, yes. And the editorials became so critical of the college. I've got several copies upstairs. I'll have to find them, so you can get an idea. It was a radical newspaper, in form and content.

DePue: You've used the term "radical" several times. Would you have defined yourself then as a radical?

Kayes: Yes, I would have.

DePue: Proudly radical?

Kayes: Yeah. But I was non-violent. I very much took seriously Martin Luther King's philosophy. I was kind of appalled with the SDS [Students for a Democratic Society] when they went through Chicago, smashing windows and all that kind of other stuff that they did. That, I didn't approve of all that.[16] That wouldn't have been me. I was more radical in speech and thinking and willing to stand up, stand up but not do violence.

DePue: What kind of changes were you wanting to achieve?

Kayes: In what area?

DePue: Let's start with politics.

16 Students for a Democratic Society [SDS] was a radical leftist student organization that began in the United States in the mid-1960s and was active until 1969. SDS advocated for student power through direct action and actively criticized the United States' involvement in the Vietnam war. (https://digilab.libs.uga.edu/exhibits/exhibits/show/civil-rights-digital-history-p/students-for-a-democratic-soci)

Kayes: I wanted to get rid of Nixon, and I wanted to stop the Vietnam War and wanted to empower women and stop discrimination against African-American, also the beginning of the environmental movement, Earth Day, all that. I mean, here we were living in a community with tons of pollution and carcinogenic stuff you're inhaling.

I had a **long** agenda. It seems like I would get interested in one area, like women's rights, and then suddenly it would be the environment over here. So, it was like one area after another.

DePue: How about from an economic sense? Was there any objective in that respect?

Kayes: Oh, definitely. It was getting a lot of ideas like that. I mean, Judy very much described herself as a Marxist, although I don't… In retrospect, I think, How could she? She was independently wealthy. She's living out in LA [Los Angeles, CA] right now, writing poetry and doesn't have to work. But she brought in a lot of that Marxist feminist stuff about class. I think she thought it was really cool to hang around with me because I was this blue collar, kind of smart girl. So yeah, that was a big undercurrent.

We were reading [Karl] Marx; we were reading [Friedrich] Engels and philosophy, and we were reading… Judy brought in R.D. Laing, *Sanity, Madness and the Family*, a dysfunctional family.[17] So I was like, wow.

DePue: Would you have described yourself at that time as a Socialist or a Marxist?

Kayes: Probably not; I wouldn't. I wouldn't have described myself that way, but I would have described myself as very much pro-union, pro-union and anti-authoritarian.

DePue: A couple of other events were going on about the same time. You graduated from college in '73?

Kayes: Um-hmm.

DePue: You've already talked a little bit about the Women's Movement and how you were involved in that. But let me ask about a couple of things, in particular. In 1972 Congress adopts Title IX. Does that ring a bell at all?

Kayes: Nineteen seventy-two, Title IX...

DePue: Title IX being basically requires gender equity for boys and girls programs.

Kayes: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah, I do remember that. I remember thinking, Wow, this came too late, because I was a great basketball player. I loved doing sports, but at that time, there was nothing organized for women to compete and…

DePue: No girls' sports in Hammond High School?

17In the late 1950s the psychiatrist R.D.Laing and psychoanalyst Aaron Esterson spent five years interviewing eleven families of female patients diagnosed as 'schizophrenic'. *Sanity, Madness and the Family* is the result of their work. (https://www.booktopia.com.au/sanity-madness-and-the-family-r-d-laing/book/781138687745.html)

Kayes: Well, girls' sports, but not official, where we were going and playing with other schools. It was just kind of within the high school; it wasn't going somewhere.

DePue: Intramurals.

Kayes: Yeah. I was just thinking, "Wow, this is..." I was very happy about it, but I also felt like, Wow, I got short-changed because I would have loved to have been a basketball player (both laugh), because I was tall.

DePue: How tall were you?

Kayes: Five foot, nine and a half in my youth, there, very skinny, skinny, very good at basketball and volleyball and softball. But, you know, at a certain point, I started kind of turning away from sports and had other interests. It's okay. Well, that's great; there's women…

DePue: And normally, you don't consider the people who are on the artsy side and the literature of side of things as being in the same group as the athletic.

Kayes: Yeah, yeah. My group was the artsy-fartsy, radical theater weirdoes group.

DePue: Would you identify yourself as a hippie as well?

Kayes: Oh, yeah, I would have definitely identified myself as a hippie because Woodstock was what year?

DePue: Sixty-nine.

Kayes: Oh yeah. That was another major influence, was Woodstock. I was starting to have some friends at the… What time is it, by the way?

DePue: We've got about fifteen more minutes.

Kayes: Okay. I was working at the library and had a couple friends who were… While I was going to St. Joe's, they were getting their degree at Purdue, so I would visit them at the West Lafayette campus and worked with them at the library. I saw the film *Woodstock* when it came out, like twelve times (laughs). That was, wow! I just remember watching it with my mouth open and major, major influence.

Then you start listening to the lyrics. So, it was very much geared for me, the lyrics of the music, particularly protest movement music, like Joan Baez and Bob Dylan. But Janis Joplin, the passion in her, the fact that she was so different, as a woman. These [were] new role models, like Grace Slick and Janis Joplin and Joan Baez, who were onstage rock and rollers.

DePue: I'm thinking you're an audio learner; you're not a visual learner as much as you are audio.

Kayes: No, I'm a visual learner too. I'm a visual learner too.

DePue: The next thing I wanted to ask you about was the ERA. It passed Congress in 1972, and it then has seven years to pass. It's got to be passed in thirty-eight states. Were you paying much attention to that in 1972?

Kayes: No, I don't think I was paying that much attention to it. I mean, I knew that it was out there, but I wasn't really paying that much attention. I was paying more attention to the Vietnam War and the McGovern campaign and those kinds of things.

DePue: One more event, in terms of this time line, January, 1973—I think it's January—the Supreme Court comes down with this Roe v. Wade decision[18]. Do you remember that, when it first came out?

Kayes: Yeah, I do remember that, because we really started talking a lot about contraception and reproductive rights, reproductive freedom. That became part of an offshoot of that Women in Literature class, one of the areas where we were starting to look at things from a feminist's perspective. That was a big issue.

I had a friend who I took for an abortion, I think maybe twice. I remember—into Chicago, some doctor—I remember thinking, There's got to be a better way. There's got to be more access to contraception, blah, blah, blah. And for me, taking the pill made me sick; I didn't like it. I didn't even feel like having sex. Maybe that was the point of the pill, was that (laughs) you don't feel like having sex, so you don't get pregnant.

But I just remember a number of friends getting pregnant, having to have an abortion, and where do we go? This did give it a context of things being a little bit more safe, etc. So, it never happened to me; I didn't get pregnant until a long time later, when I was in graduate school.

DePue: Yeah, well, a little bit later.

Kayes: Yeah.

DePue: I would think that everything you're talking about, and especially the issues of abortion and contraception and everything else, are running totally contrary to what St. Joseph's College is supposed to be about.

Kayes: Oh, yes, I was totally in a major collision. And then what kind of brought it to a head was when the college fired Dante Lanzetta, Jr., my major mentor. They didn't renew his contract.

DePue: Because?

Kayes: Because he was abrasive. He was questioning their policies; he was arguing with them; he was very pro-students. That became a galvanizing campus

18 Roe v. Wade, 410 U.S. 113, was a landmark decision of the U.S. Supreme Court in which the Court ruled that the Constitution of the United States protects a pregnant woman's liberty to choose to have an abortion without excessive government restriction. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roe_v._Wade)

issue. In fact, we did a huge issue [of the college newspaper] about him being fired. That—personally because I loved him and also politically—became the motivation that made me, when I graduated as valedictorian, to give the valedictory address, to totally castigate them all.

DePue: We're going to get to that pretty quick (Kayes laughs). But you used the word "love" in talking about your relationship.

Kayes: Um-hmm.

DePue: Was this a romantic love?

Kayes: Oh, yeah. Yeah, for all three of them, Charles Radey, Dante Lanzetta, Jr., Judith Nissman Taylor, all three of them. I mean, not necessarily consummated, but obsessive. It was reciprocal. But all those power dynamics of student-professor really...as a student, ended up on the short end of the stick, so to speak,which was, again, why I never did it as when I was the opposite position.

DePue: In retrospect, did you think they were taking advantage of you? Or, it was just...

Kayes: Well, that I adored them so much and admired them so much, that they were huge influences on me.

DePue: That you lost perspective to a certain extent?

Kayes: Yeah, I would say that could be some of it. My mother was like totally confused. You could imagine…(laughs)

DePue: I was going to ask you about how your parents were feeling about all of this because certainly they knew. Were you still living at home?

Kayes: Oh, yeah, yeah, and I was having relationships with a number of different [people]. I can't even remember them all. But my mother, especially with Dante and Judy... She would say to me—because he was married—she'd say to me, "Well now, isn't he married? Well, you know..." She just couldn't figure it out. She couldn't figure it out.

Judy, she didn't like, because she [Judy] was Jewish. There was this Polish-Jewish thing going on. And also Judy was like a PhD from the University of Chicago. My mother, was intimidated by her. Judy was very charismatic, looked like a kind of a Jewish Gloria Steinem—well, Gloria Steinem is Jewish, which I should say—she very much looked like a Gloria Steinem character.[19] My mother was very jealous, I think, and

19 Gloria Marie Steinem is an American feminist, journalist, and social political activist who became nationally recognized as a leader and a spokeswoman for the American feminist movement in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Steinem was a columnist for New York magazine, and a co-founder of *Ms.* magazine. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gloria_Steinem)

confused, very much confused. My father didn't seem to pay much attention.
DePue: Because he was doing his own thing, or...? (Kayes laughs)

Kayes: He didn't seem to… He was working 3:00 to 11:00; so he missed a lot of this stuff. Then I was smoking marijuana, starting to take a little mescaline, etc, and living at home was kind of problematic to do that (laughs).

DePue: Were you getting into any hard drugs at all?

Kayes: No, no. No, never. Well, I did, yeah, LSD later. I never really liked that stuff, never any heroin or anything, no cocaine, maybe tried that one time and didn't like it. So, it was mostly smoking marijuana.

When I think about that drug culture—and I tell my students about this—is that we really… Marijuana was like what we did, and then we listened to music and talked about it, or we read a poem and talked about it. I mean, it really fueled kind of intellectual, creative energy, rather than… At a certain point, it started being associated with violence.

I was kind of shocked when it started taking that turn, because I was used to thinking we'd go smoke marijuana and listen to the latest Bob Dylan and sit there and talk about the lyrics and then eat out something and hang out and fall asleep or whatever (laughs). But it was very much seen as kind of something to lubricate intellectual discourse and creative energy.

Pauline Kayes gave the Valedictorian address at Saint Joseph's College Calumet Campus in 1973, delivering a scathing critique of her alma mater during her speech.

DePue: Let's finish today talking about the speech you gave as the valedictorian.

Kayes: Yeah. Yeah, my speech.

DePue: In preparation, you were able to find the actual speech…

Kayes: Yeah, I found the article from the *Hammond Times,* talking about (reads) "Grand Speaker Rips School Policy. In the ceremony, unexpectedly injected with controversy, the largest class in the history of St. Joseph Calumet College graduated Saturday…The incident that follows..." (laughs) "The incident involved the valedictory address of Pauline Kayes, 4832 Hickory Avenue, Hammond. The diplomas had just been awarded by Irwin Lewin, Chairman of the school's Board of Trustees. The valedictorian just received a BA in English and philosophy and rose to speak. The young woman soon stunned her audience by attacking the rigidity of the college, which she said had failed to give her the Christian liberal education they profess to give students. She

called school administrators and faculty members surrogate parents, and the school engaged in disguising its own dictates behind a mask of Christianity." (laughs)

My mother and my father and my mother's twin sister were all attending this. My mother had heard me composing this speech. I was in the living room with my colleague in the newspaper, John Sczcepanski, who was very close, who was also a lover. He was married at the time. He was helping me write this. My mother was in the kitchen doing something. She'd come out and go, "Pauline, what are you saying?" (laughs) I mean, "What are you saying? Are you sure you should say that?" (laughs)

DePue: *S*o she knew ahead of time that this was going to be a bombshell.

Kayes: She kind of knew. But then, when I gave it, and she saw people yelling and booing, I think she was just very upset for me. Of course, my father, as I told you earlier, he… When my mother was saying, "Gee, I don't know if she should have…" my father said, "Well, she went there; she ought to know what she's talking about." Anyway, I found the speech. I haven't read it in about twenty years.

DePue: But I asked you to find a couple of paragraphs that you can actually read into the record for us.

Kayes: Yeah, okay. All right, I'm going to read you:

> "And the reality of St. Joseph's College, as you and I know it, the educational processes and philosophies of most of the administrators and the faculty make that concept of Christian liberal education a very blatant and pathetic hypocrisy."

Now, as I'm reading this many years later, part of me goes, Wow, this was really well-written," and the other part of me goes, "Wow, that is so pretentious and convoluted, Pauline." Okay, here's more.

> "The sad truth of the matter is that St. Joseph's College is not the least bit interested in what comprises the reality of a Christian liberal education. Their reality consists not of faith, hope and charity, but of money, power and pride."

What I really noticed this time is that all these years ago, I was calling for things that they could do that I still advocate today, all these years later. Okay, here, here's what I'm saying what the college could do to change:

> "Special minorities' studies programs should be implemented to correlate with the 22 percent minority population on which the college prides itself."

And this has become a theme for me. Community colleges, for example, love to brag about how many minority students they have. But how do they serve those students? Do they really retain them? Do they graduate? That's a big issue, and that's something that has been a theme as long as I've been at Parkland, a concern, and here I was asking for it at St. Joe's.

> "Perhaps now the faculty population will be enhanced by serious educators who will increase its number of women and minority members."

They had one black faculty member at St. Joe's, taught biology. That was it. And here, one of my workshops that I do now all over the country is on diverse faculty hiring. That's what my business, Diversity Works, which is now what I'm doing now, out of retirement, that's a whole area that we become famous for, is diverse faculty hiring.

> "Perhaps now more attention will be paid to the creative arts of the college. Perhaps now a flexible, individually-oriented academic program will be developed. Perhaps now, students will…"

Uh-oh, did I lose a page? (papers being shuffled)

> "...will bear the responsibilities of their educations and challenge their surrogate parents more eagerly. Perhaps now St. Joseph's College will become more intent on giving an education, rather than selling a degree."

I really started to see them as a business. This was just so upsetting to me, that education, which we had put on a pedestal, could be operated in this way, that it's like a business, and it's not really about critical thinking and challenging people to change the status quo, etc. We're kind of in the same boat. I mean, if you think of the U of I [University of Illinois] and the last couple of presidents that got booted out, it's been because they've been trying to turn the U of I into a business, a more corporate model. That is really the direction education's going.

Of course, the faculty at the U of I, they don't want that, so they pressured him out. That is something I noticed way, way back then. It just made it kind of a pinnacle of my own being in academia, is to challenge, like at Parkland. That was a big issue, was trying to challenge them, to stop just thinking about how much money we're making, but really, what kind of education we're giving our students?

DePue: Everything up to this point, though, and talking about the kind of education you're getting, you've found plenty of outlets that broke away from the pattern that you were very critical of in here.

Kayes: Yeah, yeah, I'm glad you brought that up because that became my professional role as a faculty member because I wanted to be like my mentors. I wanted to emulate them. I wanted to do for my students what they had done

for me, so that they would have options. From what I see from my faculty evaluations, I succeeded with a number of students in that regard.

DePue: I guess I brought up the point, though, to ask you, do you think you were maybe too critical of that, because you were given the opportunities that you were being critical that others were denied?

Kayes: But the thing is, they drove those faculty away, when they fired them or they left. And so, as a result…

DePue: So this is very much in part a response to… I'm going to say the name wrong, Dante Lesetta.

Kayes: Lanzetta, yes.

DePue: Lanzetta being driven away?

Kayes: Um-hmm.

DePue: Was he the only example?

Kayes: He was the one who was outwardly fired. The other two left because it was not only personally, but they just… There were others besides those that I mentioned that were at the college, like there was a philosophy professor, an Asian Studies professor, who also eventually left because they just couldn't teach the way they wanted to. That happens a lot. We see that still.

When that happens, you end up reinforcing a certain kind of teaching and a certain ideology of education, and then students don't get what I got. You see what I'm saying? If you drive those, what I could call iconoclasts, away, then the traditionalists become the dominant, and students don't have a chance to experience these iconoclasts at all. They just get very much a traditionalist way of looking at things.

DePue: This is probably a great place to finish for today.

Kayes: Yeah.

DePue: There's much more to follow, but I think…

Kayes: Yeah.

DePue: …we're going to have to wait for a couple of months, aren't we?

Kayes: (laughs) Yeah. Will we remember where we left off?

DePue: I will.

Kayes: I think that is kind of the overall theme for me, I just realized, is that. That's the whole emphasis of doing multi-cultural education for me, is trying to empower the iconoclasts, because the iconoclasts are those on the margins of society, oftentimes are the ones who are making change. You know, traditionalists aren't saying, "Hey, let's change the status quo." (laughs)

DePue: And it's because of this last story and the speech and how you got to the point of delivering that speech. That's why we took so much time in laying out your early life, and…

Kayes: Wow.

DePue: It's been a fun ride.

Kayes: Yeah.

DePue: Thank you.

(end of transcript #1)

Interview with Pauline Kayes
ISE-A-L-2013-025

Interview # 2: August 28, 2013
Interviewer: Mark DePue

A Note to the Reader

The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir nor for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge. This transcript is based on an interview recorded by the ALPL Oral History Program. Readers are reminded that the interview of record is the original video or audio file; they are encouraged to listen to portions of the original recording to get a better sense of the interviewee's personality and state of mind. The interview has been transcribed in near-verbatim format, then edited for clarity and readability, and reviewed by the interviewee. For many interviews, the ALPL Oral History Program retains substantial files with further information about the interviewee and the interview itself. Please contact us for information about accessing these materials.

DePue: Today is Wednesday, August 28, 2013. My name is Mark DePue, the Director of Oral History with the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. Today I'm in Champaign and talking to Pauline Kayes. Good afternoon, Pauline.

Kayes: Good afternoon, Mark.

DePue: It has been a while since we've had a chance to talk.

Kayes: Yeah, so it has.

DePue: Tell me why it's been a while since we've last talked.

Kayes: Because I've been just traveling all over. I've been to the Caribbean twice; I've been to Missouri. I'm just busy.

DePue: It sounds like it's a good kind of busy.

Kayes: Yeah, it is a good kind of busy.

DePue: Let me say this, first of all. It's an interesting day to have the interview because this is the fiftieth anniversary of Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech.

Kayes: Yeah.

DePue: So, everybody's focusing on and celebrating that, as they should. And today we get to talk about the ERA, probably with quite a bit of a discussion on that and your involvement with it. But I wanted to start today with a bit of a digression and ask you about how you ended up being Pauline, which is a somewhat unique name. I think you have a brother named Paul?

Kayes: Yes, and my mother's name was Pauline. She's the only woman I know that named both of her children after herself. I mean, I've never heard of another woman...maybe having one child, but both children named after herself. In retrospect, it says a lot about my mother, my mother being very… Well, some people would say, "She was so narcissistic." Some of my friends [said], "She's so narcissistic, she named both of her kids after herself." But so often, in a patriarchal family, children are named after their fathers, Edward Junior, Edward the 3rd. And it's very—rare that children are named after their mothers, usually a girl, but not a boy and a girl.

DePue: I don't know that I've ever heard a woman being referred to as Pauline Junior. Are you Pauline Junior?

Kayes: No. No, I never have called myself that. But my father, he insisted on my middle name, Evelyn, which, he loved the movies, so he thought Evelyn Keyes, since my name is Kayes. A lot of people would mispronounce his name and say, "Keyes." Evelyn Keyes was an actress that starred in *Gone with the Wind*.[20]DePue: Evelyn Keyes played what role?

Kayes: I don't; I don't know.

DePue: Was she one of the sisters, maybe?

20Evelyn Louise Keyes was an American film actress, best known for her role as Suellen O'Hara in the 1939 film Gone with the Wind. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evelyn_Keyes)

Kayes: I don't know. But, so... (phone rings)

DePue: We forgot about that, didn't we?

Kayes: Yeah.

DePue: Shall we pause, or...

Kayes: Yeah, pause.

(pause in recording)

DePue: We're back at it again. We were talking about Evelyn Keyes and *Gone with the Wind.*

Kayes: Yeah, Evelyn Keyes.

DePue: And *Gone with the Wind*.

Kayes: Right. Here's kind of another part of this story is that my brother's son, my nephew, Brian… He is forty-three. He and his wife have a three-year-old, and they just had the birth of a girl on June 9, first girl in our family since me. Her name is Aria Evelyn. They gave her my middle name. There was no way that they were going to have another Pauline in the family (both laugh), but they wanted to have, somehow, a female name from the family. So, they gave her my middle name. My father ended up kind of—what shall I say?—having the name that continued on. The one he chose, Evelyn, is now my great-niece's middle name.

DePue: That's quite an honor for you.

Kayes: Yeah, it is.

DePue: Have you seen…

Kayes: I don't know if my brother and sister-in-law were too happy about it. My brother kind of teased me, "Hey, I see that she's got your middle name," you know, "She's got your middle name."

DePue: Have you seen your namesake?

Kayes: Yes, I visited her about a month ago, and I'm going to definitely visit her again and again. She's having colic issues right now (laughs).

DePue: Maybe this is the time not to go visit, huh?

Kayes: Yes. Yeah, she's getting better.

DePue: We got you graduated last time, and we ended with that discussion about the speech, where you made a mark out there. We talked quite a bit about that. You went to graduate school as I understand, after that.

Kayes: Right. I was applying all over for graduate school, University of Hawaii, University of Chicago, all kinds of places. It turned out that one of the

professors at Purdue University, the Calumet Campus, read about my speech in the newspaper. She called me and said, "How would you like to have a position at Purdue?"

DePue: Have a position?

Kayes: Yes, as a grad assistant, you know, come to school, major in English, and we'll give you an assistantship. So, there was a direct connection between the speech and the next step in my life.

DePue: What was her name?

Kayes: Her name was Betty Gawthrop, G-a-w-t-h-r-o-p, professor at Purdue University. She was so excited about my speech and just thought it was so wonderful. She never read the speech; she just saw the article in the *Hammond Times*.

DePue: That's just what I was going to ask. So, she only saw excerpts of it?

Kayes: Yeah. So, I accepted because I was kind of a little afraid to kind of venture away from home yet. That's how I ended up at Purdue University, the Calumet Campus.

DePue: Now remind me again, your major in college?

Kayes: I was an English and philosophy, double major. I got a BA in English and philosophy.

DePue: Were you thinking at all about the possibility of hitting the working world? Or did you always intend to go to graduate school?

Kayes: Well, those last year or so, I was definitely—the last two years of my bachelor's— thinking I wanted to go on and get a graduate degree. I somehow knew that, if I went to work, I would never go back, I figured. So it was really nice that someone was there, just reaching out and saying, "Hey, here, come, make some money, and start going to graduate school."

DePue: What kind of an assistantship did you have?

Kayes: It was a teaching assistantship. I was teaching writing classes, then I was also very much involved in the beginning of women's studies at Purdue Calumet. I was serving on committees. I was getting grants and doing conferences there. I was teaching community courses on women's studies, one on women's history that I remember that my mother attended with a friend of mine, her mother. The two of them came, were sitting in the back.

DePue: For this one class, or for the…

Kayes: Well, it was like a series, like eight Wednesdays or something. I became very much active in women's studies at Purdue, Calumet. That's where I made my next major connection, as with a mentor named Shirley Staton, Shirley S-t-a-t-o-n. One of the first classes I took as a graduate English student was her

Introduction to Methods of Literary Criticism, blah, blah, blah. I was so taken with her because of her mind and critical theory and all that. She was so taken with me on women's studies that, in a sense, she became my protégé, me teaching her women's studies, and she was teaching me literary methods and literary theory.

DePue: Were you roughly the same age?

Kayes: No, no, no. She's older than me. She was a PhD; her area was Shakespeare and Renaissance. She became a major proponent for women's studies at Purdue, and really, things started to take off.

DePue: Teaching now and teaching writing classes, what was your impression of the quality of the students that you were encountering once you got there?

Kayes: Well, I think that they were much better than the students all these years later. But I do have a story about my idealism, my first teaching college writing, teaching a college course.

I remember walking in, and we were going to have a discussion about something we were going to read. Of course, only a third of them had read it. I said, "The rest of you didn't read it?" No, no, they didn't read it. I said, "Well, how can we have a discussion if you haven't read anything?" I said, "Okay, see you; see you next time." I just dismissed class. I got in trouble for that. The supervisor of graduate teaching assistants called me in and said, "You can't do that." I said, "Yeah, but they needed to learn a lesson, that we're not just coming, just sitting here shooting the breeze, you know. We're supposed to be reading something and discussing it." Maybe I even sent those who hadn't read it away; I did something that they really, you know...

DePue: That somehow the administration heard about.

Kayes: Yes, and they called me in and said, blah, blah, blah. I think my reputation had kind of preceded me from Purdue. I mean, from St. Joe's to Purdue. Betty Gawthrop was such an advocate for me there, and so was Shirley Staton, that I became very much a kind of a star of the English Department at Purdue Calumet.

They started offering courses like Women in Literature. After my coursework, I worked on a master's thesis on women writers, one of the first ones at Purdue University, in the entire university. That was called, *The Search for The Authentic Female Voice: The Poetry of Sylvia Plath, Adrienne Rich and Erica Jong.*

DePue: Now, I don't know enough about the field. Are these more contemporary authors? I know who Erica Jong was.

Kayes: Yeah, Erica Jong is still living. Sylvia Plath, of course, you've probably heard of, committed suicide, and Adrienne Rich just died recently.[21, 22, 23] This was 1976. I was working on this thesis. It was like a year of work. You have to have people on your committee when you're working on a thesis. There were so few people who knew anything about women writers that my committee had like six people on it.

DePue: I guess I'm kind of surprised, not so much if you're talking about the three authors you mentioned, but if you're talking about nineteenth century English and American literature, there are plenty of women authors to be working with, are there not?

Kayes: Oh, yeah, but the way this was structured, this thesis, was the first chapter was the history of women writers and how they had been regarded through time, how they had dealt with being punished, everything from taking a man's name, like George Sand, to being ostracized, to writing anonymously, all the criticism.[24] The whole first chapter was a history of how women writers had been regarded, blah, blah, blah and how they couldn't really be themselves. They couldn't really have an authentic female voice.

DePue: This is purely curiosity on my part, Shirley Staton, you said, was Shakespearean in her background?

Kayes: Yes.

DePue: Was this rumor that Shakespeare was really Queen Elizabeth going around at that time?

Kayes: No, not that I ever heard (laughs).

DePue: Is that one a new one to you?

Kayes: Yeah, that's a new one on me. But the first chapter was all about this and establishing the historical context to the fact that women could never really write their true feelings, etcetera, etcetera. Then, looking at three poets, contemporary poets, Sylvia Plath, Adrienne Rich and Erica Jong because poetry, in a way, is probably a way to express your voice, in literary terms, more succinctly than, say, a novel because it's so associated with feeling.

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21 Erica Jong is an American novelist, satirist, and poet, known particularly for her 1973 novel Fear of Flying. The book became famously controversial for its attitudes towards female sexuality and figured prominently in the development of second-wave feminism. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Erica_Jong)

22 , Sylvia Plath was an American poet, novelist, and short-story writer. She is credited with advancing the genre of confessional poetry and is best known for two of her published collections, The Colossus and Other Poems and Ariel, as well as The Bell Jar, a semi-autobiographical novel published shortly before her death. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sylvia_Plath)

23 Adrienne Cecile Rich was an American poet, essayist and feminist. She was called "one of the most widely read and influential poets of the second half of the 20th century", and was credited with bringing "the oppression of women and lesbians to the forefront of poetic discourse." (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adrienne_Rich)

24 Amantine Lucile Aurore Dupin, best known by her pen name George Sand, was a French novelist, memoirist, and Socialist. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Sand)

DePue: And it's oftentimes associated with groups that are repressed, as well.

Kayes: Yes. I focused on the second chapter on those three poets and interpreting their poems and doing analysis about each one having a different stage and kind of a development of an authentic female voice, including being able to show anger, like Sylvia Plath [who] had some really angry poems that basically were about her husband, Ted Hughes, who was a poet. There was a poem that she wrote called "The Jailer," that he had repressed and wouldn't allow anybody to read for a long time because it was an incredible indictment of him and their very—what shall I say?—his abuse of her and his control of her.

DePue: So, he was the jailer of her poem?

Kayes: Yeah. Anyway, so that was my focus. But no one really had a background in women writers at Purdue, the entire university, which is pretty huge. There had to be six people on my committee. Shirley was one of them, then there was another. There was one, a man who was an expert on poetry. He was pretty old; he was in his seventies. They put him on there because I was writing about poetry. But, the experience of talking with these six people… I was constantly educating them because I knew more about this than they did. When I would submit draft on the thesis, he would write in the margin, next to the poetry I was quoting, say, like from Sylvia Plath. I'd quote a piece of her poem and interpret. He'd write, next to the poem, "Shut up, you sniveling bitch." (DePue laughs) He would write… He was like attacking her.

I went to Shirley, and I said, "Look, look what this guy…" I think his name was Lazarus; his last name was Lazarus, A.L. Lazarus., very famous professor of poetry at Purdue. I went and said to Shirley, "Look what he just wrote." She went, "Oh." She was so embarrassed and flustered that this man had basically cracked up (laughs) reading my master's thesis, particularly the poems by Sylvia Plath. I remember Sylvia Plath, he definitely wrote, but his comments were all just horribly misogynist and just horrible. He fell off my committee. I don't know...(laughs) They got rid of him, off the committee.

DePue: Who was your chair of the committee?

Kayes: I think Shirley was the chair of my committee.

DePue: Was he replaced by a woman?

Kayes: I don't remember that part, but there was a total of six. I just remember going down to West Lafayette and meeting with them and just having big fights, just having to fight with them, again, for the legitimacy of studying women's work, you know, to study women's poetry.

DePue: You mentioned Calumet; was this an extension center of the university?

Kayes: Yeah, there was another campus that was up in Hammond; it's still there. But I was working a lot with the main campus, West Lafayette.

DePue: These professors you're talking about were up at Calumet?

Kayes: No. Shirley was at Calumet, but the others… Maybe there was one more from Calumet. Then there were about four from Lafayette.

DePue: Were you still working on philosophy as one of your areas of study?

Kayes: No, no. I was totally focused now on English and getting a masters in English and my area of expertise, women writers.

DePue: Normally by that time though, in normal academic circles, they do expect you to have one area of concentration, another area of concentration.

Kayes: Well no, not at that time. But my focus was women writers. I had to constantly argue. In every class I took, I would try to write about women writers in some way or images of women. If I was taking a course on Shakespeare, I would do some interpretation of the roles of women in Shakespeare. Or…

I remember taking another course; I did work on Elizabeth Barrett Browning. I was constantly continuing what I'd begun as an undergraduate at St. Joe's, fighting for being able to study women writers and that they were credible and legitimate, against mostly male professors who were saying, "No, they're lesser; they're inferior. You should be working on Chaucer, or Milton, or Ernest Hemingway," or whatever. I was still having that struggle. But now, because Shirley was so gung-ho, and there were several other professors at Purdue Calumet who were very much interested in women's studies and getting more legitimate, that they started to create a whole program, a whole series of courses, etcetera. That was very much kind of me and Shirley doing that, starting a whole area of curriculum.

DePue: So, that's the origin of the women's studies program at Purdue?

Kayes: I would say, yeah, definitely. [It] came from Purdue Calumet and down to West Lafayette, and it was… Now, there were some other people at Lafayette, maybe in some other departments, but not in English. This was really Shirley and I pushing it.

They were going to hire a director of women's studies at Purdue. They wanted to hire me, but the chancellor refused to do it because I didn't have a master's yet. I was still working on my master's. It was a big political brouhaha.

DePue: So, what you're saying was happening at that time is populating other disciplines with a core-specifically in women's studies.

Kayes: Right.

DePue: In the history department, political science, and the English, and…

Kayes: Correct.

DePue: …social sciences.

Kayes: Correct. But what started was that meeting of me and Shirley Staton and her getting on board with it and being fascinated. She got involved presenting and... It opened up a whole new world of study for her. It legitimized a lot of things she was already feeling. But she was older than me; she felt like she had to stick to the canon, the so-called literary canon, then working with the folks down in Lafayette. Then we got a number of grants up at Purdue Calumet to do.

We had a Wide World of Women Conference for the community. I was very much involved in organizing all that. I remember Gloria Steinem was one of our keynote speakers there and did a lot of exciting programs, workshops, courses, community courses and also doing some things down in Lafayette. It was a time when women's studies was really taking off because, when I was an undergraduate at St. Joe's—and that was 1971—that was one of the first women's studies courses in the country that I took there, that Women in Literature.

So, it was very kind of fortuitous that I ended up at that small college, taking one of the first women's studies courses in the country, with a Jewish woman from University of Chicago, University of California, who now… I think I've said her name before, Judith Nissman Taylor. She now lives in Venice, California, and she teaches poetry to well-off people. She has her own little, private poetry classes, so she never really became a professor or anything like that.

DePue: Again, this is a question of curiosity, but you haven't mentioned a lot of the prominent women writers of the nineteenth century, both in England and the United States at the time, certainly the Brontës and Harriet Beecher Stowe and some others who were writing, not just novels, but who had a huge impact on political events of the era.

Kayes: Oh, yeah. Well, in the first chapter of my thesis, I covered them; I covered a lot of them. So, that was very much an overview of the history of women writers.

DePue: But your focus sounds like it was on...

Kayes: I've actually got that master's thesis upstairs, if you want to take it and kind of look at it (DePue laughs). I was looking at the other day, thinking, How long am I going to keep that? I wonder if anybody would ever want to read it. But Mark, you may want to, just so you can see...just to look at some excerpts. But to think that was one of the first scholarly works on women writers, particularly with this concept of an authentic female voice, which was, I think, something I came up with, with the idea of...

As a writer, you're supposed to be able to be yourself, your authentic self, especially as a poet. If you're being restricted or constrained in some way

that you can't really convey your true voice, then there's something wrong there. And for a lot of women, that was true for many, many years.

Now, there were some brave ones that definitely, in the whole history, like Aphra Behn the first woman writer to write plays and make money, she got criticism from male critics calling her a "whore in petticoats." The criticism is just absolutely savage when you read that whole chapter. When I first started doing my research, I was just totally immersed, and I was like in shock.

DePue: In shock because of the nature of the criticism?

Kayes: Oh, yeah. But then, I had just experienced it myself, from the professor of poetry in Purdue, calling Sylvia Plath a "sniveling bitch."

DePue: Let me ask you—this might be a question you don't anticipate—who were the male authors that you admired at the time?

Kayes: Hmm, male authors. Well, I was also starting to read African American writers, Ralph Ellison, Richard Wright, Langston Hughes. I was very much interested in those also. I kept getting this idea that I was just always outside the canon, the accepted white male writers. I hated Ernest Hemingway. I couldn't stand his writing.

DePue: What about his writing didn't you like?

Kayes: Oh, just this bravado of the drinking and the hunting, and then his one story, *The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber*, where he ends up shooting his wife, is just… Reading some of these stories of the so-called writers, accepted in the canon, and how they represented women, that was another whole interest of mine.

DePue: How about Steinbeck or Faulkner?

Kayes: Steinbeck I liked. Yeah, I definitely liked Steinbeck. F. Scott Fitzgerald… Shirley really got me into—because her expertise was Shakespeare and Renaissance—the poetry of John Donne. Then I took a wonderful course on the romantic poets, with another professor at Purdue, Connie Mack Ward, who was just so exuberant about romanticism. She just exuded romantic energy. Reading Wordsworth… John Keats, I just fell in love with him. But then, Samuel Taylor Coleridge had some bizarre poems that were kind of lesbian-vampire poetry. "Christabel," that I was very intrigued by. I remember doing a paper on that, those particular female images in his poems.

DePue: I suspect you were no fan of [Rudyard] Kipling either.

Kayes: No, no, no, I'm not a fan of Kipling or [Geoffrey] Chaucer or [John] Milton (DePue laughs). I could name a lot of male writers I'm not a fan of.

DePue: We could go on and on. This is more than I intended. (Kayes laughs) But again, I'm fascinated in the discussion. Did you work during this time, other than your teaching assistantship?

Kayes: No. I was just doing my teaching assistantship, and I was tutoring Japanese women in English, kind of as a side thing. I had a Japanese woman who was the wife of a doctor, and she wanted to learn how to speak English better. So I was working with her.

Then I got some grants—like I said—to work on these conferences, these community women's conferences. But no, I was just basically working on my thesis and getting paid a paltry wage for being [in] an assistantship. But it enabled me to move out of my mother's house, out of my parents' house, and into an apartment.

DePue: Did the assistantship pay all of your bills?

Kayes: Well, I had no tuition to pay; my books were paid for; all that was paid for. Plus I was getting a monthly salary. That was enough to move out of my parents' house, to the great disappointment of my mother.

DePue: So you went there more than just having an assistantship; you got a full-tuition scholarship?

Kayes: Yes.

DePue: I might have missed that point. One of the other things you mentioned when we first talked was that you got married somewhere along the line.

Kayes: Yeah, I did. Let's see, when was that? I got married… Oh yeah, I was working at… I think it was the first year at… No, it was the first year when I was working at Purdue that I knew this friend of mine. He was from Brazil, an exchange student at St. Joe's. Maximo Homero Bonofazio Dasilva was his full name, Maximo Homero Bonofazio Dasilva. He was a theater major. He looked very much like Che Guevara, and…[25]DePue: Is that a good thing, from your perspective?

Kayes: Yeah, yeah, I thought, Yeah. We became very, very close, but in those days I was having many relationships. He was one of them. I just remember fighting constantly with him and about four or five other guys, about women's stuff, all the time.

DePue: That doesn't sound like the reason to get married though.

Kayes: No, no. But the reason I got married to him is they were trying to kick him out of the country. I naively said, "Well, let's just get married. I'll marry you." We ended up going to the courthouse. We were very stoned on marijuana, so

25Ernesto "Che" Guevara was an Argentine Marxist revolutionary, physician, author, guerrilla leader, diplomat, and military theorist, a major figure of the Cuban Revolution. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Che_Guevara)

that helped (laughs). We went to the county courthouse and got married. We didn't live together.

DePue: Right from the beginning, you didn't?

Kayes: No, no, because I was involved with him kind of on and off. But like I said, I was involved with a number of people. It was the free love time; you've got to remember that. You just felt like, Oh, I like that person; let's just have sex.

DePue: What year would this have been, (Kayes laughs) '72, '73 timeframe?

Kayes: Seventy-three, no, '71. I met him probably '72, '73. Then he was in my life very much during that time at Purdue. But then someone from St. Joe's, who had gotten really pissed off about my speech, reported us to the government, that we had a fraudulent marriage. Immigration came after us. I don't know whoever; I can't remember, but some federal government agency came after us, "Why aren't you living together," blah, blah, blah.

We ended up moving in together. But, it was with… Like one house, we lived in Miller Beach, which is part of Gary, Indiana. We had other roommates; we had two roommates. This was a beautiful beach house. It was two female roommates plus me plus him. The people who were interrogating us, they were always trying to find out… They thought we were having some kind of love nest with all these people because, remember, it was the free love time. They were trying to prove that we intended to...what, what is that charge? Intended to…

DePue: Defraud or...?

Kayes: Yeah, something like that, intended to defraud, and they wanted to deport him.

DePue: Wasn't that indeed the case?

Kayes: Yeah, I guess so (laughs). But it wasn't necessarily cut and dried like that. I did have a relationship with him. I did love him; he loved me. In fact, he got more and more wanting to have a marriage. He went from, "Oh, it's a marriage of convenience. Oh no, don't worry; you can have your life, Pauline; I'll have mine." Then he really started getting jealous of some of the other lovers.

I remember, a friend said to me one time, she said, "No, Pauline, I had a conversation with him. I was talking to him about, you know, you being involved with this person and this person. And he said, 'Yes, but she's my wife!' I think Max is taking this more seriously than you think." I, of course, I just ignored her and just said, "La-la-la-la-la, whatever, whatever." And it did turn out that he was much more involved, and he got very vindictive.

DePue: And what you suggested before, he was not necessarily in sync with many of your views and your passion about women and women's studies and that side of your life?

Kayes: Well no, he was very… We argued about it a lot. He was Brazilian, so there was machismo there. I love to quote to my students, my women's studies students, how he would say to me, "Pauline, you must remember; I am a man." I would say, "Can you imagine a woman saying, 'You must remember, I am a woman?'"

He was very much into theater and avaunt-garde stuff, so we had a lot of similar interests in that area and music and just looking at life and talking about it and philosophy. We had a lot in common in that regard.

DePue: Would it be fair to say that you weren't having passionate arguments; it wasn't a turnoff for you?

Kayes: No, passionate arguments have always kind of been a turn-on for me (both laugh).

DePue: That's what I thought. So, how did this whole relationship end?

Kayes: Pretty badly because, when I moved I accepted a job at Parkland College, here in Champaign, which was in 1976. I moved down here, and he stayed up there. I had no intention of moving with him.

When my mother died, in 1980, she left me some money, and I bought this house that we're in right now. He would come and visit. He would come and visit me often in Champaign, but we never really talked about him living with me. Things got more and more strained. Then we were still doing our taxes together, even though he was there, and I was here. We had some big squabble over that whole thing. We slowly got more and more estranged, because I was having interests here. I was going in different directions.

Actually, I don't know what has happened to him. We went to get a divorce—I think I might have told you this—that when I retired from Parkland, about four or five years ago, I had to go to SURS [State Universities Retirement System] to give a certificate of divorce, so that there would be no beneficiary, so that I could get my lump sum refund that I paid in all these years, with the idea of having benefits…

DePue: Like Social Security?

Kayes: No, SURS, State Universities Retirement System. So, I went to look for a divorce certificate. I went, "Oh, god, I don't have one." This was just four years ago, 2009.

DePue: You say you don't have a certificate, or you never got a divorce?

Kayes: I found out I had never gotten divorced. I had been married to him all those years, from 1976 to 2009. So, I had to go to a lawyer. Then I called friends up there, and I said, "Hey, I thought I got a divorce." And they said, "Well, he went to so-and-so for a divorce, but I guess it never happened, or they had a fight" because he was always getting in fights with people over something; he was just a very explosive personality. So, there was nothing. So here I had to

go pay $2,000 in 2009, and we couldn't find him. He'd just disappeared. So most of us think that he's dead, because if he were alive, my friends said that he would be bugging them still.

DePue: So, you've been married for close to thirty-five, thirty-six years, (Kayes laughs) something like that?

Kayes: Yeah, and I didn't know it (laughs), the best marriage ever. Yeah, that was kind of strange. A friend of mine said, "Only you, Pauline, would be married all those years and not know it." But it was typical for our relationship, for Max and I to have kind of this loosey-goosey thing, just that was kind of like… Oh, you know.

DePue: I assume that if he'd ever wanted to remarry, he would have pursued it and gotten a divorce.

Kayes: Yeah. My lawyer, here in Champaign, she looked for him. She tried to find him, but she couldn't find him.

DePue: Both the United States and Brazil?

Kayes: No. She didn't go to Brazil. There's a lot of Da Silvas there. No, she didn't go that far. I wasn't going to spend that much money. So, now, I am officially divorced. I would think that, if he were still alive, he would be trying to get my money or something, or he'd be in touch with some of my friends up there in the Chicago area, and trying to… Because he was that… He became that kind of guy.

DePue: What were your intentions… What did you want to do after graduate school?

Kayes: I knew that I wanted to be in academia. I knew that I wanted to be a teacher because that came very naturally to me. But I knew also that I did not want to be in a university. I wanted to be in a higher-ed environment that had a lot of working class people in it, diverse student population, because I really… Myself, coming from that background of very working class, where my parents had very little education, and knowing how hard it is for working class people to get a higher education degree, I wanted to be in that kind of environment. I opted to be in a community college, instead of an university.

DePue: Is that part of the reason you decided not to pursue a PhD?

Kayes: Correct. I had had it with those people, really. That experience with that master's thesis, which I loved the research, and I loved the writing, and I loved all of that… I kind of had a love-hate relationship with academia. On the one hand, I liked the writing and the critical theory, and the discussion and the argument, and all of that. But on the other hand, it just got to be… There was so much politics and ego and stuff involved in it, that I really... I had heard so many horror stories of people getting a PhD, and Shirley very much wanted me… She was pushing me to go for a PhD. At this point, I hadn't

made any money. You know, I'm still poor. Here I get this job, and I can actually make some money, and I just thought, No, I can't go back.

DePue: Did Parkland come looking for you then?

Kayes: No. I actually applied for the job. I was applying for several jobs. I kind of wanted to stay in the Chicago area, but I interviewed here, and they hired me. They hired me to teach English. They knew I had this background in women's studies, so there were several people on the committee who wanted me to become more a part of that.

DePue: Of the hiring committee?

Kayes: Yes.

DePue: When did you start at Parkland?

Kayes: Nineteen seventy-six.

DePue: Referring to something here, is that your...?

Kayes: That's my little chronology, that I created for a friend of mine.

DePue: So, you've done some homework for us.

Kayes: Yeah, yeah, I was hired in '76, and by '78 I was director of the women's program.

DePue: Describe Parkland for us.

Kayes: It wasn't as diverse as I wanted to. Plus, it was way down here, you know. I'm from the Chicago area, and it's way down here in the cornfields, so I went through a cultural shock. The students were more rural when I first started.

They're not so much now. They're very urban. They're coming from Chicago, St. Louis, all over the place, so it's very much changed and become much more diverse, like the rest of the colleges and universities in the country. But then it was a cultural shock for me, because it was more rural and I'm more from an urban environment.

DePue: I'm assuming it wasn't just that they were from a rural environment, but they had a different perspective on life?

Kayes: Oh, definitely, definitely.

DePue: How so?

Kayes: Oh, they were very conservative, anti-union, mostly Republicans. I remember going to one of the first meetings of the college on unions. Mary Lee and I went, and there was like six people there. I was like, "What?" because I'd come from this background. Where my father was a strong union guy, where you had such pride going on strike. Here, I go to this meeting. There are like six people. So, I was like, "What?"

DePue: Is this a meeting to unionize the…

Kayes: Yes, yes.

DePue: …faculty?

Kayes: Yeah, unionize the faculty in the very beginning.

DePue: Was that successful?

Kayes: Oh, yeah. They do have a union now, but in the beginning, there was such fear. I don't think they call it a union now, [but] Parkland Academic Employees, PAE, something like that. But yeah, it is a negotiating body.

The other thing about… It had a very middle class kind of, "Hi, how are you? Fine," everybody smiling at each other, kind of a nicey-nicey middle class thing. And you know, again, I'm urban and working class. I had some rough edges, so to speak (both laugh). So, I got a reputation, because you don't do that in Chicago. You don't go, "Hey, hi, how are you?" "Fine." You know, you don't do that. It was, you say what you think.

Here, there was very much… You shouldn't say what you think. Or, if you say what you think, you should say it in really nice terms. Don't be so blunt. I got a reputation as being pretty much arrogant and obnoxious, etcetera. Part of it was a communication style difference.

DePue: I know at that time, community colleges were… Many of them were just getting started. There was a few that had been around for a long time, but many of them were getting started. And a lot of them were getting started on the notion that those who didn't necessarily want to go to a four-year college environment wanted to go there because they wanted a trade, and they wanted to do something...

Kayes: Right.

DePue: That normally wouldn't mean that they'd flock to the English and women's studies courses.

Kayes: Right. I'm glad you reminded me of that, because Parkland was very much career, vocational, blah, blah, blah. We were pushing for it to be more. I mean, here we're just a mile from the road from University of Illinois. So, the women's program they had at Parkland at the time was very much geared towards community women, managing your money and self-esteem stuff and all that kind of stuff. Mary Lee was teaching a History of Women course. So, she was the one faculty member who had a women's studies course.

DePue: I don't know that we've talked much about her, at least not today. So, tell me more about who Mary Lee Sargent is, was.

Kayes: Mary Lee Sargent is one of my longest, dearest, bestest friends. I met her at Parkland. She will tell you the exact date, because she's a historian; she

remembers everything. “Yes, I remember, we were heading for a faculty meeting, and Karen Keener introduced you to me.” Okay, so, we just [were] kindred spirits. We’re both into women’s studies. She’s a historian; I’m a literary person. We’re both activists in our own ways. So, that was the beginning of my other...my third major mentoring friendships.

So [those were] Judith Nissman Taylor when I was an undergraduate at St. Joe’s, Shirley Staton when I was a graduate student at Purdue, and then Mary Lee at Parkland; she was teaching History of Women. There was a Women in Literature course that another faculty member, Karen Keener, was teaching. So I started teaching that. Then, they kind of got together and started pushing for me to become director of women’s programs. So, I was teaching and becoming director of women’s programs.

Well, we started to take the women’s programs in another direction, ping (laughs), from where it had been, which is very community, all about self-actualization and self-esteem, managing your money, opening your own business, stuff like that, that was very kind of, I would say, benign. I mean, very practical life skills.

We were taking it more towards women’s studies theory programs, etcetera, things about domestic violence, about rape, sexual harassment, plus doing theater and celebrations. Mary Lee was just obsessed during Women’s History Month, having us all dress up as various characters from history.[26] She’s very much into the pageantry stuff. She loves musicals, theater, and she definitely has that…DePue: Who did she dress up as, and who did you dress up as?

Kayes: I can’t remember all the ones that I’ve dressed up as. I dressed up as Artemisia Gentileschi, [who] was the first woman artist to make money and keep her own name. I dressed up once as Janis Joplin. Rosa, oh, did I dress up as Rosa Bonheur?[27] I was very much picking women writers, but I also…DePue: You mean, people that no one would recognize?

Kayes: Women artists, women artists. I was doing women artists, but I think I did some women writers; Mary Lee would probably know. She’d probably recite all of them. She had her class… I mean, in her history class, regularly, they would have parties. She lived right down the street from me, 600 block here. That’s why I bought this house here, right down the street, “Oh, there’s a house...” My mother died, “Yeah, there’s a house right here.” So, that became also… We were always at each other’s houses. We did a lot of plays and special events and all kinds of stuff.

26 Women's History Month is an annual declared month that highlights the contributions of women to events in history and contemporary society. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women's_History_Month)

27 Rosa Bonheur, born in 1822 as Marie-Rosalie Bonheur, was a French artist, mostly a painter of animals but also a sculptor, in a realist style. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosa_Bonheur)

DePue: This is going to be very much the theme that we pick up as we start moving toward the ERA years.

Kayes: Yeah, we're getting there very soon.

DePue: Yeah, finally. People are saying, "Finally" (Kayes laughs). You've described yourself and Mary Lee Sargent, both as activists.

Kayes: Um-hmm.

DePue: And my question is did you see any issue or problem with being an activist on a college campus with students, and did that affect how you taught classes? Were you teaching to—what's the right word—to activize these students to...

Kayes: Empower them?

DePue: Empower them?

Kayes: Empower them and enlighten them. Oh, that was very much part of my teaching philosophy, yes.

DePue: And that's got to bump into conflict with how many in the academic world would approach it, where you're supposed to take an objective approach.

Kayes: You beat me to the punch, Mark. I got in a lot of trouble, a lot of trouble. I was feeling that my job was to empower, enlighten them, guide them, mentor them, challenge them, critique them, argue with them. Some of them loved it. I have students who just loved it. There was a student of mine, a male student, who just… He was working… He's been here in Champaign–Urbana for a long time. He worked at the Esquire Bar, blah, blah, blah. He's now moving to Oregon. I'm actually going to see him next week, when I go there. He's always telling me, "You just rocked my world." He's like forty-six, forty-seven years old now. No, maybe he's close to fifty, and I run into them, fewer and fewer now, since a lot of them have moved away.

But then there were students who didn't like it, and they would complain. They would go and complain to my department chair. "She's trying to tell us how to think." You know, "You only get an A if you agree with what she says," You could go on Rate My Professor, and you'd find some old stuff that people wrote who were hostile.[28]

And then, of course, I not only had that issue, because I was very much of the belief, along with Mary Lee, that teaching really is… It is about activism. It's getting people… Knowledge is power, you know? When people are ignorant, they don't have power. I came from a background where I saw that a lot; people didn't have knowledge; they didn't' have power.

28 RateMyProfessors.com is a review site, founded in May 1999 by John Swapceinski, a software engineer from Menlo Park, California, which allows college and university students to assign ratings to professors and campuses of American, Canadian, and United Kingdom institutions. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RateMyProfessors.com)

DePue: How about those professors, teachers, who would have a very different viewpoint, who would empower their students in a completely different direction? How would you feel about that? How did you feel about that?

Kayes: Well, the ones who were just more kind of passing on the pablum… I had a lot of colleagues who they just… They weren't creative in their teaching. I mean, they taught the same thing every semester. They were boring, but they weren't exciting. They very much affirmed the status quo: We come here to get a job and make our money and blah, blah, blah.

DePue: And you saw that as a bad thing?

Kayes: I saw that as not enough, not enough. We needed to do more. Mary Lee and I were very much in sync with that. So we both got in trouble regularly, she with her department chair and I with my department chair. I've got to say, we have a lot of students who loved us. I saw one not too long ago who said, "Oh, yes, I had your class, and I had Mary Lee's class too. Where is she?" And, "Oh, she was incredible. You're both incredible." People either loved us, but some of them hated us.

Now, we really ran into trouble because I was director of women's programs in '78. Oh, I should make a side note. As I was director of women's programs in '78, the First National Women's Studies Association Conference was held in San Francisco, the founding convention. It still exists today; it's called NWSA, National Women's Studies Association. I was on the founding committee for that in San Francisco.

So, I went to the very first meeting, so exciting. You know, you're in San Francisco; the college paid for me, Parkland had paid for me to go out there. I got very active in that, working with women all around the country to make women's studies legitimate, programs modeled on the Modern Language Association, the MLA, where you go to these conferences, and you present papers and all that kind of stuff, plus a lot of activism.

I dragged Mary Lee into that with me (laughs). She would drag me into her things, and then I would kind of drag her into my stuff. There actually ended up being a major conference of the NWSA here, at the U of I campus. I can't remember the year. Mary Lee and I were very much involved with the women's studies people from the University of Illinois and presenting a conference here. We were very much active from Parkland with the U of I women's studies people. Berenice Carroll was one of the directors.

DePue: Over at the U of I?

Kayes: Yes. And, she was one of the women who helped plan the chaining in 1982. She was one of the core people. She was in political science at the U of I and director of women's studies. We made that connection with Bernice, and she would always bring us in, if there was anybody coming. I mean [any of] the number of women's studies star scholars, etcetera, who came to the U of I to

present or whatever, Mary Lee and I were always invited. It was a very good relationship.

DePue: How were you selected as the chair, I guess, of the women's studies program at Parkland? Would that be a proper title?

Kayes: I don't remember that. I think the woman had gone, and…

DePue: So they had a…

Kayes: They someone there.

DePue: …had a program or…

Kayes: They had kind of... It was kind of a continuing ed kind of program. That was the focus.

DePue: I'm not sure I understand the distinction.

Kayes: Okay. Continuing ed is like courses that you offer to the community for non-credit, whereas we were very much focusing on creating more credit courses. So, we had History of Women, Women in Literature, then we had Psychology of Women, and then I created a whole new course at Parkland, and that was a big battle.

[It was] a interdisciplinary course called Women in Arts, Cultures and Societies, which was about analyzing all kinds of culture, from music videos, reading literature, looking at women artists. [It] became very, very popular. It's still there. But I had such a battle with the curriculum committee to approve this course, interdisciplinary. A lot of our battles at Parkland were to create these new courses. But that became a very popular course.

I could have taught maybe two or three sections of that a semester because there was such a demand for it. Of course, they wouldn't let me. "You have to… You can't just teach that. You've got to teach writing," you know, blah, blah, blah. Then, since we had four courses, we could now create kind of a minor in women's studies or an emphasis. A lot of the focus of the NWSA was getting these courses to turn into minors, majors.

Now they have graduate degrees. I was just reading the other day, somewhere, that there's a debate going on right now [on] what should the qualifications be for someone teaching a women's studies class? That's still an issue, But right now, there's a lot of minors, majors, graduate degrees. It's amazing to think about how it's just blossomed.

DePue: What ware the demographics of these classes, of the students who actually took the classes you've been describing?

Kayes: Ninety-five percent women, some women of color, yeah, but very few men.

DePue: Was that troubling to you?

Kayes: Not enough men in there?

DePue: Yeah.

Kayes: No, no, it wasn't troubling to me. I wished that more men would take it. I was also happy just to have a class of mostly women because it really felt good to be working with them and mentoring them and watching them succeed.

But I had a few men in there. I remember this one man; he got an A out of it. I ran into him somewhere with his wife, and his wife came up to me and said, "Pauline, Darrel and I thank you so much for teaching him that.. Our relationship has been so good since that course." (both laugh)

DePue: So, she knew him pre-course and post-course, huh?

Kayes: Yeah, his wife.

DePue: I'm sure…

Kayes: But we'd have some men who were just hostile. They'd come in; they'd think it was some easy-peasy course that was going to talk about sex and women—I don't know what they thought—and then they'd be also hostile.

DePue: I'm sure this is a question you can speak passionately to. What was the value for your students in taking those courses?

Kayes: Opening up a whole new world, just like for me, to read women writers and look at work by women artists. It was just like opened up a whole new part of yourself, and it affirmed things in yourself that you knew, that everybody else was saying, "Yeah, you shouldn't be like that," or "You shouldn't have those dreams or those goals," and seeing women students get empowered, get empowered to pursue their dreams and to realize that they were smart; they were good writers; they were good thinkers.

DePue: And the typical university environment wasn't doing that? Couldn't do that?

Kayes: For women? No, no way because, without a women's studies class, women weren't learning anything about themselves. They weren't getting women's history or women's psychology or women's literature in just ordinary classes. They wouldn't.

I had a colleague at Parkland; who I would fight with all the time. We had these colleagues who just believed, if you're going to teach poetry, you teach the canon, c-a-n-o-n. You know, you teach the white male poets. Those are the greats. You don't bring in these sniveling bitches like Sylvia Platt (DePue laughs).

DePue: To quote one of the professors at your…

Kayes: Yeah. This other professor at Parkland, he was Jesuit educated, and he was just very much about the canon. Oh, I just… I couldn't stand it. He

represented everything that was like the opposite of my interests. That was an ongoing battle.

DePue: Did you identify yourself at this time as a feminist?

Kayes: Oh, yeah, um-hmm, definitely. So that, 1978… We're doing this and having these programs and all this. Then slowly kind of moving… Well, I suddenly get surreptitiously, underhandedly removed as director of the women's program. President Staerkel at Parkland, Vice President Don Swank, I can't remember how they did it. I've got all these articles about it, if you want to read, because it made, really, the papers, big time.

DePue: What did, what was the president's name again?

Kayes: Staerkel, S-t-a-e-r-k-e-l. He was the first president of Parkland.

DePue: First name?[i]

Kayes: Oh, I can't remember. [William M.]

DePue: I'm assuming it was a man.

Kayes: Yes, yes, a man,.Staerkel and Swank, sounds like a Vaudeville team.

DePue: What's the background to that removal?

Kayes: I was too feminist. They never said that. They tried to manipulate the whole thing. It became a big controversy. There were protests, women of the National Organization for Women [NOW] got involved.[29] They were writing letters, and the National Women's Studies Association got involved., then the Parkland College Association.[30] We tried to get them to help with it, but they didn't really want to get involved. They were afraid of him, afraid of them.

All these years later, I find out that one of the reasons why they got rid of me was, there was some rumor that I had been at Westside Park with a group of women, and we all had gone skinny dipping in the fountain over there and ran naked down the street. Someone told me, "Well, that's what was said." I said, "What?" (laughs)

DePue: So, obviously, that incident did not occur.

29 Founded in 1966, the National Organization for Women, NOW, was the grassroots arm of the women's movement. The organization's purpose is to promote feminist ideals, lead societal change, eliminate discrimination, and achieve a truly equal partnership with men. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Organization_for_Women)

30 Established in 1977, the National Women's Studies Association has as one of its primary objectives promoting and supporting the production and dissemination of knowledge about women and gender through teaching, learning, research and service in academic and other settings. (https://www.nwsa.org/#:~:text=Established%20in%201977%2C%20the%20National,in%20academic%20and%20other%20settings.)

Kayes: No! Well, I think I was there. A former student of mine, who was a friend of mine, she was in one of my first classes. This was after she was no longer a student of mine; we were friends. I think she went skinny dipping, and she ran down the street. But I didn't (laughs). But somehow… No one could say what it was about.

It's one of those typical kind of things that happens in academia, where you get ousted, but no one will really tell the truth. "We have to protect da-da-da, the innocent, and we can't embarrass da-da-da-da." But I've got articles that I can give you about the whole...because the *News Gazette* covered it quite a bit.[31]DePue: I would like to get those. It would be the kind of thing that would not make our website, but we would include in the collection, so people could come and check it out when they wanted to.

Kayes: Right, right. So, that was 1978.

DePue: That's when you were removed?

Kayes: Yes.

DePue: So, when did you get the assignment?

Kayes: Probably '76, '77.

DePue: You were just…

Kayes: I was only there for about a year as director of the women's program.

DePue: You were moving along pretty quickly before that.

Kayes: Yeah, we were doing a lot of things, and a lot of people were interested in it. But these men, you know…

DePue: Again, the…

Kayes: …they just didn't get it. I remember Mary Lee went in, and she threw a fit with Staerkel and was lecturing him about his wife and what she's been through and how "You don't understand… Maybe your wife was raped, or..." (laughs)

DePue: I'm sure he appreciated all of that.

Kayes: I know.

DePue: Pauline, you said it is because you were a feminist.

Kayes: Um-hmm.

31 The *News-Gazette* is a daily newspaper serving eleven counties in the eastern portion of Central Illinois and specifically the Champaign–Urbana metropolitan area. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_News-Gazette_(Champaign%E2%80%93Urbana)

DePue: My guess is that he would certainly use that word but also perhaps say that you were being too activist in terms of how you were teaching.

Kayes: Oh, oh well, yeah. Probably the teaching had a little bit to do with it. But they did not try to fire me from my faculty position.

DePue: So, you retained your…

Kayes: I retained my faculty position, and I ended up getting tenure.

DePue: When did that occur?

Kayes: I don't know when that would [have] occurred. I think it's four years. So, I was a little worried that I would be released. But I had a department chair who fought for me. They knew that I was a good teacher. I don't think they wanted to pursue something where they might have a lawsuit.

DePue: Tenure at the university level would mean that you were also publishing. Were you at the time?

Kayes: No, no. That wasn't a part of getting tenure at Parkland. It was more your credentials in teaching, etcetera. I was starting to write and do presentations quite a bit at women's studies conferences, like the NWSA. I got removed from that. That was the same year that my father died, so that was really hard. He died in September, '78, and at the same time, by the end of the year, they were dumping me. That was really a hard thing.

DePue: Did those two things together cause you to reflect on the course that your life had been taking up to that point?

Kayes: Oh, yeah. I started… Then my mother died. So, it was like my father died; I got dumped from this, and then my mother died, was dying. She died in 1980. I was twenty-eight years old. My world was kind of falling apart. And I asked, "Now what am I going to do? Am I just going to do...just teach English the rest of my life? What am I going to do with my professional interest and qualifications in women's studies because it was really becoming a burgeoning field. The U of I was really doing a lot, doing a lot in the area of women's studies.

DePue: So, a place where…

Kayes: So, I could go over there and do things and do presentations.

DePue: Is that a place where young ladies who were interested in the field would go, deliberately seek out, say, one of the leading places in the country at that time?

Kayes: No, I wouldn't say that. That would have been probably California, that would be… If you were looking for it you'd go there, San Diego State. But, if you were a woman student at the U of I, you could say, "Oh, hey, I didn't know, I could minor in women's studies. Oh, I could get an undergraduate degree in

women's studies. I could get a bachelor's in psychology and women's studies."

So then my world was kind of falling apart. When my mother died, I got some money. So I very wisely bought this house. Then I started kind of what do I do now? So, I got involved with opening a women's art cooperative, here in Champaign, one of the first in Illinois. The other one was in Chicago; it was called Artemisia, named after Artemisia Gentileschi.[32] I think that's… I don't know if that still exists. Artemisia, the first women's art cooperative.DePue: Artemisia...

Kayes: Artemisia in Chicago. But ours, here in Champaign, was called the New Muse, N-e-w M-u-s-e. You know, I'm going to give you a copy of this.

DePue: Then I can have all the spellings (Kayes laughs).

Kayes: Yeah. The New Muse, we all were working with women art students and women art professors from the U of I. Barbara DeGenevieve was one; she's now at the Art Institution of Chicago, very controversial. [She] did a lot of photography, nude photography, particularly of men, satirizing penis size and all that kind of stuff (laughs). She was kind of... So I kind of started getting involved more with the women artists' world because I've always been drawn to artists, particularly women artists.

DePue: But I'm a bit unclear about what a women's art cooperative. What were the objectives?

Kayes: Oh, okay. It was…

DePue: What was the structure of it?

Kayes: It was to have a gallery where we could show art by women. We rented a little place in downtown Champaign, next to Chester Street, the gay bar. We had a little... We all donated money, so it was a cooperative. My mother had left me... I had some money, so I was one of the founding people, with Barbara DeGenevieve, who's at the Art Institute now, Susan Smith, who runs the Art Coop in… I think it's Urbana, an art store.

DePue: So, we're talking 1981, '82 timeframe?

Kayes: Nineteen eighty, yeah 1980, '81, after my mother has died. She died in January, 1980. It was art students, as art professors. We were not only showing women's art, but we were also doing performances and openings. I very much got involved with that.

32 One of the most famous and skilled painters of the Baroque era, Artemisia Gentileschi was centuries ahead of her time. Among the first women artists to achieve success in the 17th century, she brought to her work an electric sense of narrative drama and a unique perspective that both celebrated and humanized strong women characters.**(**https://www.artic.edu/exhibitions/1673/violence-and-virtue-artemisia-gentileschi-s-judith-slaying-holofernes**)**

DePue: Was this a money-making proposition at all?

Kayes: Oh, no. Oh, no, no. It was all about having exhibit space for women's art, particularly female students. I didn't do art, but I was very much liking to critique art and to analyze art. At the same time, I'm teaching. That was nineteen… Right around 1982 is when I created that new course, Women in Arts, Cultures and Societies. So, I had a new course that I was excited about, and I created a DVD program on representations of the female in work by male artists.

DePue: Probably not a DVD, maybe a VHS tape or something.[33]

Kayes: Oh, yeah, VHS, yes. But now it's on DVD. You can have that, and you can see what I was doing. It was part one. I was supposed to do like three more parts: representations of the female and artists by men, women artists, feminist artists. But I finished one, and it actually was sold; people bought it. Some of the people bought it at the U of I and used it in their classes.

I was very much involved in this whole course, Women in Arts, Cultures and Societies, using a feminist perspective to not only interpret art and culture in the mainstream, but also look at what women were doing. At this time, there was just an explosion of stuff, all kinds of stuff, new journals, new magazines. *Heresies*, for example, was an incredible journal about women artists, all kinds of avaunt-garde, cutting edge stuff. So, there was just a real explosion at that time.

DePue: One of the terms I encountered in getting ready for this was "the second-wave feminists"?[34]

Kayes: Yeah.

DePue: Would you be considered a second-wave feminist?

Kayes: Yeah.

DePue: What is that?

Kayes: That's what my timeline is here, that I created. [It] is a timeline of my second-wave feminism because my colleague, Jennifer Satterlee, at Parkland right now is teaching that in Hum [Humanities]121 class.

DePue: What's the first-wave, then? Is that the…

Kayes: First-wave would be the suffragettes.

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33 VHS is a standard for consumer-level analog video recording on tape cassettes. Developed by Victor Company of Japan in the early 1970s, it was released in Japan on September 9, 1976, and in the United States on August 23, 1977. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/VHS)

34 Second-wave feminism was a period of feminist activity and thought that began in the United States in the early 1960s and lasted roughly two decades. It quickly spread across the Western world, with an aim to increase equality for women by gaining more than just enfranchisement. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second-wave_feminism)

DePue: So, the mid-nineteenth century, all the way up through the passage of the 19th amendment [giving women the right to vote]?

Kayes: Yeah. And then the second wave, Betty Friedan. Now we can talk about what the third-wave is (laughs).[35]DePue: Since we're in the neighborhood, what's the time frame that that would begin?

Kayes: What?

DePue: The third-wave.

Kayes: Third-wave would probably be… I would say the '90s and now.

DePue: I wanted to ask you..

Kayes: Third-wave would be some of the women now who believe that they should look as sexual as they want. That's part of their empowerment. Okay, Alice Walker's daughter, her writings kind of just started off third-wave feminism.[36] Poor Alice Walker, her daughter wrote just kind of scathing critique of her as a mother and everything.

DePue: Of the second-wave feminists?

Kayes: Yeah. And of her mother, Alice Walker, her mother. I think her name is Rebecca Walker, wrote a scathing critique of her mother and her contemporaries and second-wave feminism and how personally she suffered as the daughter and all that kind of stuff.

DePue: I did have a question about the women's art cooperative and, specifically, how it was funded.

Kayes: We all pitched in, and we had dues. So, the three of us, Barbara DeGenevieve, Susan Smith and me, we threw in more money because, obviously, we were professors, and Susan had a business. So we were like kind of, what, the major funders. But everybody kind of kicked in dues and stuff like that.

DePue: Let me turn this in a different direction, the direction that brought me here in the first place. I've got to admit, I'm somewhat surprised that, through this whole discussion, the thing that has not come up is what I would think would be **the** defining issue of feminists of that era. And that's the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment. I'll just kind of lay the background very quickly, and then you can correct whatever I mess up here.

Nineteen seventy-two, the U.S. Congress passes, overwhelmingly passes, the Equal Rights Amendment. But then it gets sent out to the states,

35 Born in the 1960s and 1970s as members of Generation X and grounded in the civil-rights advances of the second wave, third-wave feminists embraced individualism and diversity and sought to redefine what it meant to be a feminist. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Third-wave_feminism)

36 Alice Malsenior Tallulah-Kate Walker is an American novelist, short story writer, poet, and social activist. In 1982, she wrote the novel *The Color Purple*, for which she won the National Book Award for hardcover fiction, and the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alice_Walker)

where it has to have thirty-eight states that ratify it. And very quickly they got up into the neighborhood… Within a year or so, they got up to the neighborhood of thirty or so.

But even in 1972, when it first got to the State of Illinois, it failed. It was something that was discussed every single year in the state legislature beyond that time and always garnered lots of attention and lots of fire, smoke, but never got to the point where it passed. It was an anomaly, the way most people looked at it, that the State of Illinois, the northern industrial State of Illinois, never passed the ERA, when all the surrounding states did. The hold-out seemed to be places like the traditional South and Utah and some of the Western States, who were not immediately passing it. Why weren't you drawn to that fight early on?

Kayes: Well, I think we were doing maybe some things on it, some programs, some workshops, when I became director of women's programs at Parkland. That may be one of the reasons why it was seen as too political and too feminist. I know it was on Mary Lee's radar.

DePue: Too political and too feminist?

Kayes: Yeah, well, feminist, and we were political. I think that we did some programs about it. I know it was very much on Mary Lee's radar. I knew it was in the background, etcetera, but there was just a sense that maybe… You know, it was eventually going to happen.

DePue: So, you didn't need to be engaged in it.

Kayes: Right. And then suddenly, "Oh my god, this is it!"

DePue: Nineteen eight-two is… This is it.

Kayes: Yeah. Uh-oh, that's not happening.

DePue: I think it was 1970… It passed in 1972, and the clock was seven years. It had to be ratified by thirty-eight states by seven years. So, they got to 1977, I think, and said, "Oh my gosh, things aren't looking well," and there was an extension, up through 1982.

Kayes: Right. I think it was the National Organization of Women [that] was very much involved in all of that, and we were working with them. They were very much involved when I got dumped as director of women's programs, so they were coming to my defense. I know that we were doing programs on it, but I personally was thinking...and, of course, I was new to this state. I hadn't been here that long.

So, [there was] the sense that it was going to happen. And then it was like, uh-oh, it's not going to happen. Mary Lee just caught on fire, ping, like that. It became, uh-oh, it's not happening; we're not going to let this… No, we're not going to let this go down this way. This is going to be our final push, blah, blah, blah. That's how this protest started in 1982.

It was also Berenice Carroll, who was in political science. She probably—I don't know this for sure... She might be another person that you interview because she was in the group that planned the whole action, along with Mary Lee and I.

DePue: But had Berenice and Mary Lee and yourself, before 1982, not been actively involved with trying to get its passage?

Kayes: I think Bernice might have been; I think Berenice might have been. Yeah, she was in political science; that was very much a part, Mary Lee being in history and Susan B. Anthony being one of her personal heroines and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. That's when, wow, it's not going to happen. We have to do something.

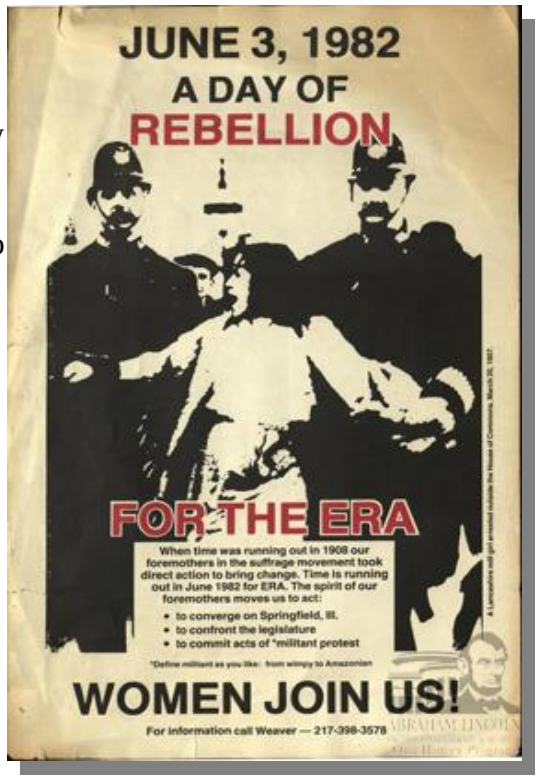
DePue: At the time, were you and Mary Lee members of NOW?

Kayes: I think I might have been a member of NOW kind of on and off. But I had a sense that they were too like nice and too benign, you know; we were beyond that. We weren't nice, benign girls (both laugh); we were bad girls. That definitely was the seeds of the action, of just, oh my god, it's not going to happen. We have to do something. We can't let this go down. We've got to do something drastic, something drastic, because this stuff is not working. Whatever NOW has been doing, and everybody else, it's not working.

DePue: And you think the timeframe was late '81 or early 1982?

Kayes: I think it was probably starting to percolate around 1980, at least for us.

DePue: Let me throw out a couple more pieces of information here, just to describe the nature of the legislative battle. In 1970, Illinois passed a new state constitution. And part of that new state constitution said that you had to have a three-fifths majority to amend the constitution. There has been some question ever since, beyond that point, about, did that apply to amending the state constitution only or to the state and the federal constitutions, both?



But every year, from '72 on, there was always a two-stage fight about the ERA, and the first stage was whether or not you would stay with the language of the constitution. You needed a three-fifths majority, in other words, 60

percent of the legislators, to pass this. It was defeated every year; it always retained that three-fifths. Then the fight became the passage of the ERA amendment itself, and it always went down. In some years it went down in the House, and in some years it went down in the Senate.

Seventy-eight, I think, was a big year in the state legislature, in terms of the fight. It always garnered a lot of attention. Some politicians always kind of resented that because they had lots of other business to do. But they knew that the perennial fight for ERA was going to come up and get a lot of public attention, if nothing else. Then 1982 comes up. So, I'll let you pick it up from there.

Kayes: I can remember hearing that discussion of kind of how best to maybe finesse this so that we can get it to finally pass, or forget it; it's not going to pass. So, what do we do? What's the best thing to do? Mary Lee was very much advocating radical action. She was looking at the history of women fasting, women being arrested, [Emmeline] Pankhurst in England.[37] You could see the poster, of course, for our action is very much that image of a woman, being in England, bobbies, the House of Commons, March 20, 1907, a Lancaster Mill girl arrested.

A flier calls for women to come to Springfield, Illinois on June 3, 1982 to show their support for the ERA amendment, and among other things, to *"commit acts of militant protest."*

DePue: I think Alice Paul, of the U.S. amendment fight, was very much in that mold, as well. Was she not?

Kayes: Right, right. So, Mary Lee was very much in that mode of that history, of being that kind of radical activist. I was an activist too, but I didn't have all the historical context that she did. I was very much wanting to go along and plan this. But then, we were also terrified, because… (laughs)

DePue: Terrified?

Kayes: Terrified because... I think, we spent maybe, probably, three or four months planning this.

DePue: Planning what? What's…

Kayes: The chaining in Springfield, 1982, when we went on June 3 and chained ourselves in front of the House.

DePue: The Senate, sorry.

Kayes: The Senate, yeah, Senate. We were planning that for months, actually at little… I can show you the exact spot where we planned it in downtown Champaign. It's now called the Clark Bar. But that was a women's center, because that's another one of the things that I was doing after I got released from the women's program, is that we started creating these kind of

37 Emmeline Pankhurst founded the Women's Franchise League, which fought to allow married women to vote in local elections in England. (www.bbc.co.uk/historic_figure)

community women's centers, where we were doing some of our own...not only the New Muse, but also just kind of a regular women's center, where people would come, and we'd have discussion groups, etcetera. We had a house in Urbana that we rented for a time and then this place in downtown Champaign, that's now the Clark Bar. There ought to be a little plaque there, THE ACT... da-da-da-da…

DePue: The early women's centers, one of the main functions of them was to provide a place where battered women could go...

Kayes: Um-hmm, yeah.

DePue: …and get protection from their spouses.

Kayes: Right.

DePue: ...or from their mates.

Kayes: Right. I was also being involved, in that time of the '80s, being involved in A Woman's Place, which is our shelter for women and children.

DePue: Are these two things though different, what you're talking about is different?

Kayes: Yeah. Ours was more a place where women would have a space to have discussions, do presentations, socialize, kind of a gathering place. So we, like I said, rented a house in Urbana, that was one time… Then we rented this little place in downtown Champaign because we'd been kind of tossed out of the women's program, so we didn't have Parkland anymore as a place. We did the planning for this act out of that.

DePue: Now that Bernice, Mary Lee and yourself, and I'm sure others… Were you in contact with National Organization for Women? Was there any discussion between these various groups?

Kayes: Yeah, I think that was kind of going on. They didn't support what we were doing. They just thought we were going to ruin everything, so that if there was any hope of getting this to pass, we were going to trash that by doing this act. But I don't think we really let them know what we were planning. We just were advocating, there needs to be some kind of radical act, not just letter writing and calling people and lobbying them, not just all that stuff you've been doing all those years, and it hasn't done anything.

You need to go back to look at our foremothers and what they did, being arrested, hunger strikes. Mary Lee was very much wanting to be arrested. I wasn't so sure I wanted to be arrested. She saw that being arrested for some kind of radical act and getting coverage in the newspaper, etcetera could galvanize and could do something.

DePue: Were you convinced by that side of the argument that this would help the cause?

Kayes: Oh, yeah, I definitely thought… I really came to believe, through this experience, that there's all kinds of ways to accomplish political goals, whether it's civil rights, women's rights, gay and lesbian rights, worker's rights; there's all kinds of ways. There's no one way. I mean, there's writing letters; there's calling; there's lobbying, but there's also protests, you know, walking with posters.

You see protests now, I don't know, like in the Middle East, like in Egypt, all the people out in the square, etcetera. Some people just think protest is impolite. That and, "It doesn't work." Well, it does work. I mean, today we're celebrating Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech. That was the one most incredible protests ever. It was very much a major impetus for the Civil Rights Movement. I have come to believe that you can't have the National Organization of Women telling you, "No, don't go do that because that's not going to work. That's going to reverse everything." No. A lot of times that kind of protest makes things go forward. But I also don't think they should stop writing letters. So, it would take…

DePue: They would easily say, "Well, it didn't work in 1982."

Kayes: Uh-huh.

DePue: We're kind of getting ahead with the story, so I don't want to go too far into that. What was the name of the group that you were involved with?

Kayes: Yeah, we came up with the name, "The Grassroots Group of Second Class Citizens" (laughs).

DePue: Who came up with that? Do you remember?

Kayes: I think Mary Lee came up with that one, or together we came up with the Grassroots Group of Second Class Citizens.

DePue: Now, I think it's rather obvious, but I want you to explain why you adopted that as the name.

Kayes: Well, first of all, we're second class citizens; we don't have an Equal Rights Amendment. And we're a grassroots group; we're a small group of people who were just working grassroots.

DePue: So, what was it about American culture and society at that time, that you could claim that women in the United States were second class citizens?

Kayes: Pay, discrimination on the job. You know, having all these laws on these books, where women can't drive unless their husband okays a driver's license, all these antiquated laws that exist; I don't know, Oklahoma, Montana; I don't know, bank accounts, credit, just legalities, child custody issues, rape. You know, it's only been recently, and still, women are what, are seen as contributing to rape by the way they dress or whatever. So, all these issues...

You can see from this poster, when the time was running out in 1908, our foremothers, in the suffrage movement, took direct action to bring change. So, that was the context for this. It was very much time was running out; direct action is needed to bring about change. Time is running out in June, 1982 for ERA. The spirit our foremothers moves us to act to converge on Springfield, Illinois to confront the legislature, to commit acts of militant protest.

DePue: Was your target the public of Illinois or the legislators?

Kayes: Both. I love the little asterisk, to commit acts of militant protest, with an asterisk. It says, "Define..." We knew people would go, militant, aahhh, militant (both laughs), confront!

DePue: But what made you think that you were going to be able to change the votes? This is ultimately what it's going to be about, that you needed to change the votes of Illinois legislators who already, for ten years before, had been taking a very public position on this and had several elections where that was part of the discussion and argument.

Kayes: Uh-huh. Well, it was worth a try. I mean, it's either going to work, or if it doesn't work, at least we've gone down fighting. I loved this, "Define 'militant' as you like, from wimpy to Amazonian." (DePue laughs) So you could be a wimpy militant, coming here and just singing songs, or you could be Amazonian and chain yourselves, with your arms raised high up. I remember that was a lot of the discussion, back and forth, back and forth. "Oh, my god, are we going to be able to change these people's vote. Maybe this isn't going to work. We shouldn't do it, because" da-da-da.

Oh, that was a big argument, back and forth, about this as a strategy. But you can see those words, militant and confront the legislature. No, no, we're not going to be nice girls. "Could you please vote for the ERA for us, please sir, please?"

DePue: I'm going to ask you quite a few questions here, and it's all in the nature of understanding where you were and where the movement was at the time. Also, a lot of this is the argument on both sides, to give you a chance to respond to some of the things that the Stop ERA movement, led by Phyllis Schlafly, were saying.[38]

Kayes: Okay.

DePue: So, here we go.

Kayes: Okay.

38 Phyllis Stewart Schlafly (1924-2016) was a movement conservative and author. She held conservative social and political views, opposed feminism and abortion, and successfully campaigned against ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phyllis_Schlafly)

DePue: I'm going to start with reading the language of the ERA to begin with, just so we have that particular marker down. (reads)

> "Section 1: Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex. Section 2: The Congress shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article."

That's pretty much standard anytime you have an amendment.

> "Section 3: This amendment shall take effect two years after the date of ratification."

I think part of the legislation, as we mentioned before, was seven years. So, here is one of the things I read in the *Illinois Times*, in terms of what the objective was of the Grassroots Group of Second Class Citizens.[39] It was "a continuation of the '60s feminist movement, calling for a complete transformation in the relations between the sexes, in order to bring about political, social, economic and personal equality."Kayes: Um-hmm.

DePue: Do you think that's an accurate portrayal of what the group was about?

Kayes: Oh yeah, oh yeah, this is totally second-wave feminism, right here. Name those areas again, of equality.

DePue: Political.

Kayes: Political.

DePue: Social.

Kayes: Social.

DePue: Economic.

Kayes: Economic.

DePue: And personal equality.

Kayes: Yeah. One of the main themes of second wave feminism is the personal is political. So, in a marriage, when I clean the toilet and do all the dishes, do all the cooking, that's political. You know, I'm being assigned certain chores because of my sex.

Or sexual relationships, looking at one of the radical pieces that I remember just blowing my min., I mean, a person that is political is… Oh, god, I can't think of the title now, but it was all about female orgasms. Oh, no,

39 Illinois Times is an alternative and free weekly newspaper based in Springfield, Illinois and founded in 1975, (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Illinois_Times)

it was called, "The Myth of the Vaginal Orgasm."[40] It was all about how women...this whole idea of missionary sexual intercourse producing orgasms for women is totally wrong. It doesn't happen. And when it doesn't happen, women go to therapy. And [Dr. Sigmund] Freud says, you know, "You're infantile," da-da-da-da-da-da-da.

So this was like… I remember thinking, Wow, this is something! This is all about orgasms too; it's about...wow! It's not just about chores and domestic violence; it's about that. And that piece, "The Myth of the Vaginal Orgasm," stands as like a piece that just, I think, literally blew the top of my head off because I never even thought about things this way.

DePue: Is it a myth?

Kayes: Well, you could do your own kind of inquiries if you want, Mark, but (both laugh)...

DePue: Well, that's a question I never thought I'd ask in these interviews.

Kayes: But, that's second-wave feminism, personal is political.

And so, all those different areas… Yeah, that sounds very much…

DePue: So, the term "transformation" suggests that you're going to change society, and that's what I want to get to. How did you envision society being changed? Let's start by one of the building blocks of most any culture or society and the family; how did you see the family changing, if at all?

Kayes: Child raising. The fact of whose responsibility is it to care for children? Who's putting in all the work? I mean, still today, you have women and men each having jobs, and women still do a disproportionate amount of the childcare and the domestic stuff, even though they're both working outside the home.

I remember another piece called, "Change the Family; Change the World*."* If you change the relationship of the family, what women and men are doing in the family, you will change society. There's more and more research to show—for example, just recently, in the last month—that men who have...do a lot of childcare and also have daughters are much more what...receptive and understanding of women's issues.

DePue: Would you describe the group as anti-marriage?

Kayes: **I** was definitely anti-marriage.

DePue: That women didn't need to be married?

40 The Myth of the Vaginal Orgasm is a feminist essay on women's sexuality, written by Anne Koedt, an American radical feminist, in 1968 and published in 1970. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Myth_of_the_Vaginal_Orgasm)

Kayes: Well, the anti the institution of marriage. You know, the institutionalization of marriage, not necessarily anti two people having a committed relationship. But the institution of marriage was very much an institution that oppressed women in all kinds of ways.

DePue: Because of tradition, culture, laws, or all of the above?

Kayes: Law, all of the above, you know. Like, if a woman is getting beaten up in the home, and the police come, how that's treated. If you think about originally, that was happening. The police would come and say, "Calm down, Joe. You've had too many beers" and blah, blah, blah, and go away. Now, they have a whole different protocol, as a result of having more enlightenment about that. So, all of the above.

The institution of marriage, just the expectations, the laws, who has the control over the money, all of that, names, the fact that you have to change your name. That's part of tradition, that when a woman gets married she gives up her name. I never changed my name to Da Silva, by the way. I should have, because I would have been Pauline Kayes Da Silva, and then…

DePue: Is there a certain panache to that, you're thinking? (Kayes laughs)

Kayes: Yeah.

DePue: At the time, what was your response to those who argued that these roles, the traditional family roles, are genetically hard-wired, that the women's role as the primary caregiver for the children is part of their genetic code; it's part of who they are as human beings?

Kayes: Crap. I said it was crap. That's what women's studies scholarship is all about, is looking… One of the big things that I would teach in my Women in Arts Cultures and Societies class is the difference between gender and sex. Sex is chromosomes, reproductive organs, hormones. Gender is all that a culturization and socialization that has to do with what society says, when you pop out a certain sex. Okay, oh, you've got to give her pink; you got to give him blue. You've got to give him a truck; you've got to give her… You know, it just continues all the way down the line.

DePue: So, you're saying that there are no genetic differences in personality and emotion and things like that?

Kayes: I think there's some. I think there's tendencies, like testosterone does, for example, might make you, what, more aggressive, may give you more muscles. But it's tendencies, and not necessarily… It depends on how society looks at those things.

If you think about the big argument that Phyllis Schlafly made, you know, "Women are going to be drafted, how horrible," blah, blah, blah. And now, look at the military. How many women are in the military, and they're in combat and everything. We just had it approved that women want to be in

these combat roles. It doesn't necessarily always depend on what, brute force. I mean, a lot of it is, what… The military stuff is very much technological. It's not always getting out there with your fists and then, blah, blah.

So, her whole argument has just fallen by the wayside because it's not a draft. You know, women are volunteering and going into the Army, in the military and the police and the fire, and they're in all these roles of danger.

DePue: Are you okay that the women who want to strive for those things have to adhere to the same standards the men are expected to adhere to?

Kayes: Well…

DePue: Because many of these things are determined on physical strength and agility and things like that.

Kayes: But I also think there's some other skills. I think there's some other skills, for example, like the domestic violence thing. You know, a man may come and deal with it a certain way, but a female might come and deal with it another way. So, there's different skills. I wouldn't say, "Okay, he has to lift 150 pounds; she has to be able to lift 150 pounds." There are some kind of basic things, but sometimes I think those are way too exaggerated, too much focused on. It has to be equal in that sense.

But the fact that we have so many women in the police… I see them constantly in Champaign Urbana. One of our assistant police chiefs in Champaign was a woman, who just retired. You see them in the military; you see them in the television programs. This show, which I saw on the plane, *Chicago Fire*, which is all about paramedics and police. It's like equal numbers of males and females. I wouldn't know equal numbers, but there's quite a few females. It's interesting how they show the female in one segment figures out how to uncover in this car. She has the savvy [to know] where the explosives are. And the guys are standing, going, "Wow." She had the sensibility or whatever to know where that was.

I'm just thinking her argument… We always knew that her argument was absolutely a red herring, total red herring, Phyllis Schlafly and the military. I just wonder what she says now, you know, like, look at all these women; they're coming back also blown up from Iraq and Afghanistan, without limbs and [with] post-traumatic stress syndrome and all of that. What does she say now? It was because of all those feminists from 1980 (laughs).

DePue: Another one of the bedrock institutions of society, religion. We talked a little bit about that already. If you're eager to transform America, what would you want to do with that particular institution? What were you striving for at the time?

Kayes: Well, one of the things that we really looked at—again from the prism of women's studies—was that religion has a historical context that has been ignored, *When God was a Woman*. You know, they had many cultures where

female deities were worshiped and had power, matriarchal kinds of religious traditions. So, in addition to *When God was a Woman*, it's also looking at how these churches oppress women.

Look at Catholicism. The major worshipers in Catholicism are female, especially, [when] you go to South America. You walk into a church; what percentage of those in the pews are females, you know, listening to this guy. Those women can't even be priests. They have no power.

There were feminist nuns coming up in this time period. Now we have some who are lobbying that women should become priests; they should have more… What about that? There's a busload of nuns driving around now, calling attention to poverty. Poverty is a family issue, and the church should get involved, that Christ would be all about solving poverty, blah, blah, blah. I think again, it's the institution of religion, which is so oppressive to women, especially making these rules about women's bodies, so again, the institution...

We kind of look more at spirituality. In the last ten, fifteen years… I was raised Catholic, so I saw all this. I went to a Catholic college and saw it also, as I told you before. I have gotten more into the spirituality, particularly spirituality connected to nature. In the last ten, fifteen years, I've really kind of gravitated towards ecofeminism, which is looking at our treatment of nature and how that parallels how we treat women, people of color, poor people, etcetera.

They're all kind of related and looking at it more from a spirituality point of view and basically wanting to just destroy these institutions of religion that are so oppressive to women, whether it's Islam, Catholicism…

DePue: During this time, would the Grassroots Group of Second Class Citizens be disillusioned with religion or atheists or a little bit of both?

Kayes: Definitely wanting nothing to do with religion.

DePue: Where were you at the time, atheists or agnostic?

Kayes: Well, oh, after that Catholic college experience, I just wanted nothing to do with it anymore. And the more I studied and the more I got into reading… Mary Daly, who was a major theologian who became a feminist theologian and just started going and examining these institutions in depth… The whole Adam and Eve story, the mythology of it, that has women kind of, "Oh Eve, that's why you must have pain in childbirth because Eve gave the snake the apple." (laughs) Examining all this mythology, that legitimizes patriarchy.

DePue: But what I'm hearing is not a rejection of the existence of a higher power, but that we had got it wrong all these years.

Kayes: Yeah, that maybe there is some power, but it's… I don't know what to call it, but it's very much infused in nature. It's in the trees; it's in the ocean; it's in the whales; it's in the dolphins, you know, that it's...

It's kind of this spirituality that you can't have all these stupid little rules that discriminate against this group of people and have no sensibility towards the earth. It's just such a mass of contradiction, hypocrisy, paradox and… Yeah, we were very much disillusioned with institutions' religion and very much gravitating towards more that had spiritual theme to it because we didn't want to reject spirituality. There's a difference.

DePue: But you did want to reject a patriarchal society.

Kayes: A patriarchal society, yes and patriarchal institutions.

DePue: So, did you want to replace it with a matriarchal society?

Kayes: Yeah. That wouldn't be bad for about 500 years (both laugh).

DePue: You're saying that just to say something provocative. What did you really think at the time?

Kayes: No, really. Well, one theologian who came here that really influenced my thinking was Riane Eisler. R-i-a-n-e, E-i-s-l-e-r. *The Chalice and The Blade* is her book, where we have choices in the way we construct our societies, and we have our spirituality. We can either rule by the blade, which is a dominator society, or the chalice, which is, we think about how to nurture and sustain each other in all life. That's a partnership society, okay? The other one's a dominator.

So, looking at all those cultures and political structures and religious institutions that are either dominator...and she's presenting the alternative and gave many historical examples of where there were partnership societies, where lifting everyone... You know, we very much have in this country a dominator. You've got those few people at the top having all the money and all the power, and the rest of us are down here squabbling (makes noises). A lot of us don't have food, don't have clothes, don't have good jobs, no health care, etcetera. And we think,

A pro-ERA rally was held in Springfield, Illinois on June 30, 1982. The group assembled on the steps of the State Capitol.

Oh well, you deserve that down there, something you did.

So, her book of looking at how you… Yeah, that there's a choice in how you can make society. I wouldn't call it matriarchal. She provides the idea of a partnership, which I like. Matriarchal societies were very much kind a partnership society. When we say women were in charge in matriarchies, it's not like in charge here. They weren't lopping people's heads off with blades. It was more of partnership societies.

DePue: You touched on another aspect of how you could transform a society just now, and that's the economic side. What would be the goals, economically, for the group? How would you want to transform society?

Kayes: Well, one, by having more equality of income. This whole idea of… For one, make having women make equal pay for equal work. That would transform big time.

DePue: I'm going to read just a little bit from the Equal Pay Act of 1963. This is close to twenty years before the final death of ERA, at least in 1982. (reads)

> "No employer having employees subject to any provisions of this section of the United States Code shall discriminate within any establishment in which such employees are employed between employees on the basis of sex by paying wages to employees in such, established at a rate less than the rate in which he pays wages to employees of the opposite sex."

It goes on in that vein. So, part of Phyllis Schlafly's argument is, all of these laws that we're talking about already guarantee the equality in pay and equality in a lot of other cases. Actually, a big part of her argument was that, in many cases, women were treated differently in marriage and divorce and child custody, and things in a more preferential way than the men were. But I don't want to confuse too much. Let me just ask you about your response to the law in 1963 because you've said a couple of times that there is a disparity, there was a disparity at the time in pay.

Kayes: Well, I would say, if that's working then why is it that women still make, what, seventy…

DePue: Seventy-seven percent for Illinois

Kayes: ...seventy-seven cents for $1.00 that a man makes or whatever. I don't know what it is nationally. But if so, if that's working, how come there's still such discrepancy?

DePue: How would you explain the difference?

Kayes: Well, I would explain the difference as how people massage things and get away with things and don't abide by those kinds of things, different occupations. Let's see if I can think of a good example.

Okay, let's just take academia, for example. Let's just put me and a male colleague with the same amount of experience, etcetera, and let's be at

the university, okay? So, how they hire... I know this has happened, because Shirley Staton, she battled this kind of discrimination at Purdue, where they would look at the female professors and the male professors and see that the female professors were getting quite a bit less than the male professors, even though they had equal experience, blah, blah, blah. You go in and you say, "Hey, what gives? Why am I making, like, $8,000 less than my colleague, Bruce?" "Well, but Bruce" de-de-de-de, da-da-da-da-da. And it's like how do you fight that?

DePue: Well, you fight it with lawsuits. I mean, that's a provision of the law, and it's been reinforced a couple of times afterwards by making it easier to pursue lawsuits.

Kayes: Yeah, but the thing is, not a lot of women want to go forward and do that. I think Shirley, she died a number of years ago of cancer. Mary Lee and I both, we've talked about this because we knew another friend who was being discriminated against at a bank. She filed a lawsuit. Shirley was active against discrimination at Purdue. They both died of cancer within three years. It was so stressful to go through that. I think that dissuades a lot of women, and so, employers keep getting away with it because it takes a lot of energy, physical, mental, spiritual energy to go ahead and do this, to be a whistle-blower, blah, blah, blah. So employers are still getting away with it.

DePue: Are some of the reasons, some of the explanation, because of the career choices the women are making in the first place, traditionally?

Kayes: Well, that's definitely true. Well, we have more women going in, being physicians now. But still a lot of women are gravitating towards traditionally female careers, like childcare, K through twelve teaching, that pay less.

DePue: Part of the explanations that you hear from conservatives, I believe, is that oftentimes women leave the workforce for a time to do those things, like raise their children, etcetera.

Kayes: Um-hmm, um-hmm.

DePue: Is that a valid reason for women to be paid differently, once they do get back into the workforce?

Kayes: I would use the example of Norway. If we really wanted to see equality among men and women, we should do what Norway does. Norway, first of all, has a government that is almost 50 percent women-men. Women, when they have a baby, they get a paid year off. The husband also gets a paid year off, and they can switch. So, she could be home; he could be home; they're getting paid.

What else? Now, they have a law in Norway that 50 percent of all boards of business must be women. Can you imagine that in this country? IBM, Xerox, all of these companies, that the federal government would pass a law that 50 percent of your board should be women. But, what has happened

in Norway is because they have so many women involved in the business world, governmental world. Norway is so pro-female. A lot of things exist, like free health care. Like, if your aged mother goes in the hospital and she needs to recover, you don't have to take care of her. She can go to this spa and recover, for free. Then look at the wages in Norway. I mean, the minimum wage is like $40.00 an hour.

DePue: Do you think the Norway model could work for the United States?

Kayes: Oh, definitely. And here's one way it could work… Here's the other thing. Norway gets a lot of its resources from its oil, right? Do you realize that every citizen in Norway gets a percentage of that money? That's part of their inheritance. Can you imagine if all the oil that's being harvested in the Gulf, the West Coast, wherever, in America, including the fracking, all the resources they're sucking out of the United States, that each of us got a check?

DePue: Well, that is the case in Alaska.

Kayes: Yeah, yeah, that's true. No wonder, it's that… That would be a radical economic act. If we each got a check, that would be one way of lifting us all up.

DePue: So, going back to the early 1980s and the Grassroots Group of Second Class Citizens… I have to say that with a certain measure because I trip over it otherwise (Kayes laughs).

Kayes: Yeah.

DePue: Would you personally have… Were you pro-capitalist?

Kayes: No. No, no, I' m

DePue: Were you describing yourself as a socialist or a communist at the time?

Kayes: No, no, I don't… I think we all had our different philosophies; we all had our different reasons. But what I would say was our commonality was really critiquing patriarchal institutions, like religion, politics, law, economics.

DePue: Economics gets to the issue of capitalism, though.

Kayes: Oh, yeah. Oh, definitely. We were definitely all critiquing it and looking for progressive alternatives, like Norway, like Iceland.

DePue: Like a socialist model.

Kayes: Well, I don't know if I would use that… I wouldn't use that term, necessarily, "socialist."

DePue: Why not? That's oftentimes a term that's used to describe the economy of a country like Norway.

Kayes: Yeah, I would call it, "economic egalitarianism."

DePue: Why, because the term "socialism" has so much baggage in the United States?

Kayes: Yup, yeah. I mean, if you ask people… Okay, this question, Mark (laughs), "How would you feel if we became a more socialist country and tax the oil companies more?" Nah. "How would you feel if you got a check every year for $30,000 as your share of the profits that oil and gas are taking from our public lands?" Yes.

DePue: So what I'm hearing you say (Kayes laughs) is, "Yes, I generally thought the socialist model is better, but we can't use that term in the United States."

Kayes: Well, I mean, because socialism has politics to it, and crazy people have used that term and just… I'm more focused on just evening out… This disparity of income is going to be the death of us and the death of the planet too.

DePue: Well, in the last couple of election cycles, that's sharing the wealth, and that is a term that the…

Kayes: Oh, yeah. Some people make it seem like that is so… Share the wealth? You should pull yourself up by your bootstraps and make it by yourself. But again, when I talked to my students about Norway, and I tell them about Norway, and I go, "Blah blah blah blah blah," or, "Be-be-be-be—" You know, "This and that." And they go, "What? Let's move there!" (laughs)

DePue: Well, your main opponent on this—and we've talked about her a couple of times—is Phyllis Schlafly, and I've already gotten your views. But I'll give you a chance to talk a little bit more about Phyllis Schlafly and her role in leading the anti-ERA movement.

Let me just throw this in there. One of the reasons that Illinois was the surprising battleground state—and it really was probably the most visible prominent battleground state for ERA—was because Phyllis Schlafly is from Alton, Illinois. I don't think you would disagree with me, that she proved to be an amazing organizer in her own right.

Kayes: Uh-huh.

DePue: So, I'll let you talk more about the view that you and your group had towards her and her movement.

Kayes: Well, I can only speak for myself (laughs). The others can say… I just thought she was like... I just thought she was insane. I thought that she really… I didn't know where she came up with some of these ideas. It's kind of akin to some of these politicians now in the Republican Party, who have been talking. You know, the guy who said, "You can't get pregnant if you get raped. It's just physically impossible. The body shuts itself down." And I go, "What?" There has been more and more coming out and saying insane things, whether it's about…

DePue: I don't think she ever said that.

Kayes: No, no. She never said that. But she said things that were like, wow, where is she getting this? We thought that sometimes maybe she was being set up by someone. Someone was funding her, that they had found this spokesperson. Then we were just wondering about her own personal psychology, as a woman. Why was she so… Well, there have been constantly, throughout history, women who were the cult of true womanhood: Be your feminine self and have all the power you want over a man. There's always been that kind of theme. So, she was kind of in that vein. We kind of suspected that maybe someone was behind her.

DePue: Did you have any theories about who?

Kayes: No, no.

DePue: What group that might be?

Kayes: No, but we thought that and also just… Again, her psychology and her appearance was just so...with this tight bun hair…(laughs) She probably thought the same about us, Look at those witches.

DePue: No one had better posture than her.

Kayes: Yeah. Oh, yes, oh. But her psychology, what a repressed woman she was. There's always been, like in mythology, the good girl and the bad girl, the princess and the witch. We were definitely the bad girls. There was no way we would ever say we were the good girls. But she wasn't exactly the good girl princess. She was just odd, just odd and this sense of just… Some of the things she would say, you would just go, "Uh?" I just really wanted to do an analysis of her psychology. I'm sure there's plenty of dysfunctionality somewhere that would explain her.

DePue: I think you're aware that I had the opportunity to interview her as well.

Kayes: Uh-huh? What did she say about us? (laughs)

DePue: Here's what she said. (Kayes laughs) And see, you're the perfect person that asks these questions about, "Feminism is a belief that we live in a patriarchy, and it has to end." From what I've heard you say, you wouldn't disagree with that.

Kayes: Hmm.

DePue: Harvey Mansfield.—Do you know who Harvey Mansfield is?

Kayes: Is that what she said?

DePue: That's what she said.

Kayes: Yeah.

DePue: Harvey Mansfield, apparently, is a Harvard professor who wrote a book, *Manliness,* and made it clear in his book that feminists are anti-men.

Kayes: Uh-huh?

DePue: "Anti-masculine; they're anti-marriage; they're anti-motherhood, and they're anti-morality." (Kayes laughs)

Kayes: She said that?

DePue: Yeah.

Kayes: (laughs) Okay, let's take them, anti-what?

DePue: Anti-men was the first one.

Kayes: Well, when anyone ever says, "Oh, feminism is about being anti-men," I go, "Well, I'm a feminist. I haven't killed any men. I haven't hurt any men. I have men I love. I don't know; what do you mean, anti-men?" And then, my other answer to that is, "Oh, come on. Let's look at the statistics. Who gets killed more? Do more women get killed by men, or do more men get killed by women? So, 95 percent of women are killed by men," hello.

DePue: Shall we move to the next one?

Kayes: (laughs) Yes.

DePue: Anti-masculine.

Kayes: Anti-masculine. What does she mean by that, anti-masculine?

DePue: How do you differentiate between that and anti-men?

Kayes: Oh, that maybe we're against certain traits of masculinity. Well, the way I'd respond to that is that masculine and feminine traits are traits that all humans have. To be assertive is a masculine trait; to be nurturing is a feminine trait.

Both, all humans, have the capacity to be both assertive and nurturing. But, our socialization, the culture rewards women and trains them to be more nurturing.

Okay. If you think about what girls get as toys, they get the dollies, etcetera, and the boys get the G. I. Joe dolls, etcetera.[41] So, these are all human

41 G.I. Joe is a line of action figures owned and produced by the toy company Hasbro. The initial product offering represented four of the branches of the U.S. armed forces. G.I. Joe's appeal to children has made it an American icon among toys. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/G.I._Joe)

traits that we all have; it just depends... So, how could I be against being assertive or physically strong, which are traditional masculine traits? It's just that I would say I'm in favor of human beings, given the latitude by society from the time they're little, to really be, be who they are. *Free to Be... You and Me* is what Marlo Thomas… Remember that whole series (sings), "Free to be you and me, free to be you and me?"[42, 43]

DePue: Marlo Thomas was one of the people who was making pilgrimages to Chicago and to Springfield to support the passage of the ERA.

Kayes: Oh, yeah. *Free to Be... You and Me*, (coughs) and now there's a wonderful [web] site that I am sharing with—now that I have a new great niece. But I have a lot of friends who have girls in their lives, you know. Another one of my friends has two daughters—it's called, *AMightyGirl.com.* It's all about resources for girls, from books, movies, clothing, etcetera, to really help develop who they are, what the potential is, without kind of forcing them through all those fairy tales and those stories and all the conditioning and socialization, to be a certain way, "feminine." Or for a boy...

DePue: But I'm hearing that…

Kayes: ...going the other direction.

DePue: But I'm hearing that you—this is something I asked you about before—that there are some genetic tendencies that we inherit…

Kayes: Well, there's may be some hormonal things that have some influence on us, like testosterone or estrogen. But again, it's influences. That doesn't necessarily mean...because obviously, I mean, look, there are women who want to go into combat. They're not getting that from their estrogen, you know. They're making choices. And there's now men who are, what? They're on all these cooking shows.

DePue: There's an increasing number of men who are nurses.

Kayes: Yes, right.

DePue: Here's the next one, anti-marriage.

Kayes: Oh, definitely, we're anti-institution of marriage because [the] patriarchal institution of marriage has been nothing but misery for women.

DePue: So, in that case, Phyllis Schlafly was absolutely right.

Kayes: Yeah.

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42 „ *Free to Be... You and Me* is a children's entertainment project. The show won an Emmy and a Peabody. The book became number one on the New York Times best-seller list, and the record went gold. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Free_to_Be..._You_and_Me)

43 Margaret Julia "Marlo" Thomas is an American actress, producer, author, and social activist best known for starring on the TV sitcom *That Girl* and her award-winning children's franchise *Free to Be... You and Me*. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marlo_Thomas)

DePue: And anti-motherhood.

Kayes: Anti-motherhood? No.

DePue: But wouldn't that go hand in hand with anti-marriage?

Kayes: No, you don't have to be married to be a mother.

DePue: And it's neither good nor bad to not be married and have children?

Kayes: Well, anti-motherhood in terms of yes, mothers should be provided resources to raise children.

DePue: By?

Kayes: Society. As Hillary Clinton says, "It takes a village."[44] They need resources. They need childcare. They need healthcare.

DePue: Well, that goes back to the institution of marriage. Traditionally, it's the couple, it's the married couple providing those resources that it takes to raise a child.

Kayes: Yeah, but we know that's a myth because look at how many divorces occur. And when a mother is left alone with her children after a divorce, her income plummets by 60 percent. You know, that's the fastest route for children in poverty, is a divorce. Look at how many marriages end in divorce. So, I mean…

DePue: Or, how many children are born outside of marriage.

Kayes: Right.

DePue: So…

Kayes: So anti-motherhood…

DePue: …is that a healthy trend?

Kayes: Well, the thing about our society is, we glamorize the fetus, but we don't give a shit about the child. Glamorize that fetus. "Oh, the fetus, the unborn, we must protect—" And as soon as the child's born, who cares if he's hungry or if she's hungry? You don't care anymore. Who cares if they're sick? Sorry, you can't come here. That's what I like about the Norway model. I mean, they're committed to the whole child. The whole human being, from the time it's born to the time it dies.

DePue: Well, she didn't list this here, but definitely she would be happy to say that feminists are pro-abortion.

44*It Takes a Village: And Other Lessons Children Teach Us* is a book published in 1996 by First Lady of the United States Hillary Rodham Clinton. In it, Clinton presents her vision for the children of America.(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/It_Takes_a_Village)

Kayes: Yeah. I would say, no, we're pro-contraceptive choice, freedom of not having a child, using contraceptives. If you end up getting pregnant [and] you want to make that choice, it's up to you. It's not up to people in Congress or Phyllis Schlafly. Everybody has to make that personal choice. But see, I wouldn't jump to that. "Oh," you know, "You're pro-abortion." No, I'm pro-contraception, so that any child that is created is a wanted one, who was intentionally created, not an accident.

DePue: But I also heard you say that, if it does occur, that a woman becomes pregnant by accident, then you'd be supportive of the woman when she decides to abort.

Kayes: Yeah. It's her decision, her body.

DePue: And I know Mrs. Schlafly and her supporters would say, "But how about the choice of the unborn child?" Has the unborn child have no rights in that case?

Kayes: Well, I would call her… She would call herself, "pro-life," but I would call them anti-life because they really don't support life all the way through, from the beginning to the end. They just support that little fetus. That's the life part of the human being that they support. They don't support the one-year-old, the two-year-old, the three-year-old, the four-year-old, the five-year-old, six-year-old, seven year old.

DePue: And how are you stating that?

Kayes: Well, they don't support by… Look at how many kids we have hungry in America who are one, two, three, four. Look at all the kids who don't have adequate health care. Look at all of them living in poverty. Look at all of them who have no access to education and to making something of themselves. I hate when they call themselves, "pro-life." I go, "Yeah, you're pro-life for what? nine months. That's how pro-life you are, nine whole months out of an entire lifespan."

Look at how we treat old people. My aunt, ninety-seven years old, in the nursing home. I go there, and I was, like, "Wow, this is what I've got ahead of me (laughs), this kind of life?" It's, like… So they're pro-life for nine months.

DePue: Well, all those things you have been talking about, traditionally have been the role of what the family does, in a traditional family structure. They provide for the child's needs growing up. And on the reverse side, they provide for the elderly.

Kayes: Yeah, but that's been a big myth. Families cannot do this anymore. They never could really get…

DePue: But you just described yourself as anti-family?

Kayes: Well, I'm just saying that that's a myth, families never…

DePue: Or, excuse me, anti-marriage. I mischaracterized it.

Kayes: Yeah, that's a big myth, that that's what the family gives you. I mean, the family gives you connections and a sense of history and all that. But it has never really been able to, what, send people to school? There's a lot of things family can't do. That's why the government has to help. That's why we have grants for students to go to college, Pell Grants.[45] We have Social Security disability for members of our family who are mentally ill, and we can't take care of them.[46] I mean, look at all the things we can't take care of in our families.

We have what, programs to help you pay your heat, if you can't afford to pay your heating bills. We've got programs to, what, everything. My family, they couldn't put me through school. I had to get scholarships. I think that is such a big, big myth. But that is a part of American ideology. Do it by yourself. Or, not by yourself, with your little family group. But more than ever now, everybody's family groups have really shrunk. Maybe when you had fifteen, sixteen people in your family…

DePue: Well, I've been asking very provocative questions. You've been fielding them all. Here, as we go through…

Kayes: What time is it?

DePue: We're at 4:00.

Kayes: Oh, my god.

DePue: Do we need to stop, or can we go a little bit farther here?

Kayes: Well, I am kind of burned out. You've really worn me out, Mark (DePue laughs).

DePue: Let me ask you one other thing. Here's one of the critiques that you oftentimes hear about Phyllis Schlafly. I have not heard you say it, but I'll let you react to it, that she is a hypocrite, that by virtue of the life she has lived herself, she is a hypocrite.

Kayes: Oh, yes. We did talk about that, yeah. She definitely is a hypocrite. A privileged white woman who doesn't know diddly-squat about so many women's lives, the realities of women's lives, you know, just has so little

45 A Pell Grant is a subsidy the U.S. federal government provides for students who need it to pay for college. Federal Pell Grants are limited to students with financial need, who have not earned their first bachelor's degree, or who are enrolled in certain post-baccalaureate programs, through participating institutions. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pell_Grant)

46 The Social Security Administration (SSA) offers disability benefits to people of all ages who are unable to work due to a serious illness. While it can be challenging to qualify with a mental health disorder, a staggering 19% of disability recipients do have a mental illness. (https://www.rtor.org/2018/07/24/social-security-disability-for-mental-health/)

sympathy for victims of rape, sexual abuse, domestic violence. Definitely, I remember that one. Thanks for reminding me. (DePue laughs)

DePue: We still need to talk a little bit more about 1982, which we can save for next time. How would you like to finish off the discussion today?

Kayes: Yeah, because…

DePue: Because I've been asking you some hardball questions today.

Kayes: Yeah, so we didn't… Yeah, we haven't gotten the details of what actually happened that fateful day, and then afterwards…

DePue: And it's my fault.

Kayes: …afterwards, yes. You're… Oh, I've got to go pick up my bags at the airport, so I can unpack them and pack for Friday (laughs). I'm going to need a vacation after this (DePue laughs).

DePue: Sorry about that.

Kayes: How to end it? Hmm, I don't know; you tell me.

DePue: Let's just talk more about 1982, when we get back, the actual events and the planning and the whole situation.

Kayes: And how about if you give me… Yeah, because I want to tell you what happened after that because there's some things that happened after, that I became director of the women's program again at Parkland and all kinds of things, just briefly, to have kind of an end to that. Next time I'll try to find you the clippings of me being fired by Parkland.

DePue: Yeah, that would be good.

Kayes: But when do you think you'd be ready to do Mary Lee? If she came…

DePue: Let me go ahead and end this, and then we can talk offline.

Kayes: Okay, all right.

DePue: Thank you very much.

(end of transcript #2)

Interview with Pauline Kayes
ISE-A-L-2013-025

Interview # 3: September 24, 2013
Interviewer: Mark DePue

A Note to the Reader

The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir nor for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge. This transcript is based on an interview recorded by the ALPL Oral History Program. Readers are reminded that the interview of record is the original video or audio file; they are encouraged to listen to portions of the original recording to get a better sense of the interviewee's personality and state of mind. The interview has been transcribed in near-verbatim format, then edited for clarity and readability, and reviewed by the interviewee. For many interviews, the ALPL Oral History Program retains substantial files with further information about the interviewee and the interview itself. Please contact us for information about accessing these materials.

DePue: Today is Tuesday, September 24, 2013. My name is Mark DePue, Director of Oral History at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. I'm in Champaign today, talking to Pauline Kayes. Good afternoon, Pauline.

Kayes: Good afternoon. It's a beautiful day.

DePue: Yes. You've got the sun streaming down on you, but not in your eyes. Hopefully, that won't be a problem later on.

Kayes: No, it's making me feel nice and warm.

DePue: And you've got a yard that's essentially a garden, not much grass out there.

Kayes: No. Yeah, this is a natural habitat garden.

DePue: Excellent. Last time we finished off with a very interesting conversation about the anti-ERA movement and Phyllis Schlafly's involvement with that. And I asked you a lot of pointed questions, all of which you fielded. I had a couple

more, in kind of a general sense, before we get back to the specific timeline here.

Kayes: Okay.

DePue: One of the things, I'm sure you'll recall—a point of emphasis for Mrs. Schlafly especially—was that the ERA would open the door for homosexuality, for more laws, changes and the laws that dealt with homosexuality. And I wanted to get your reaction to that comment. First of all, do you remember that being part of the dialogue?

Kayes: Yeah, I do remember that, the sense that women were suddenly going to become men (laughs), that they were going to have these opportunities, and they were going to become just like men and how… Of course, whenever you bring that up, women are going to become like men, you raise the specter of, "She'll be a lesbian." That's always kind of hovering around that whole issue and that she'll be losing her femininity. So, yeah, Phyllis Schlafly was very much—and her ilk—just wanting to protect this femininity on a pedestal.

So, if women got into the military, they would lose that. It's so ironic, that all these years later, we have so many women in the military. They're married; ttheir have children; many of them are heterosexual, probably most of them are heterosexual. There are also some lesbian and bisexual women in there. But her trying to create this nightmare scenario, where women would all become these masculine lesbians (laughs) as a result of passing the ERA, was just total propaganda.

DePue: Certainly, at that time in American society, there was a different attitude about homosexuality within the American culture. That has changed quite a bit, I think, in the last twenty years. But a big part of her argument then—and it's a point of emphasis that she made when I interviewed her as well—is that much of the leadership in the ERA movement were lesbians.

Kayes: Well, definitely there were… Yeah, there were definitely lesbians. But there were also heterosexual women; there were women who were asexual. I mean, there were women who were nuns (laughs); there were all kinds of women involved. But her constantly, "Hey, it's lesbians running this," is just to create a kind of a scare tactic by raising all of these different stereotypes. It's possible to be a woman and not be feminine and not be a lesbian. And, by the same token, if you look today… I was talking to an African American friend of mine, and I was saying… We were talking about Queen Latifah, and she said, "Oh, yeah, she's a lesbian," and then she was saying, "Oh, yeah, Oprah also."[47, 48] I don't know about that. But then I was telling her about this black

47 Dana Elaine Owens, better known by her stage name Queen Latifah, is an American rapper, singer, songwriter, actress, and producer. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Queen_Latifah)
48 Oprah Gail Winfrey is an American talk show host, actress, television producer, media executive, and philanthropist. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oprah_Winfrey)

woman actress who just came out. I said, "Oh, yeah, she's just a beautiful woman."

So, you see, today you have all kinds of stereotypes being broken that some… There are lesbians who are absolutely beautiful, feminine women. This idea that it's a big, errrrrr, dyke in leather on a motorcycle (DePue laughs)—that's what she wanted to conjure up—and they would be out, what, seducing your girls into this horrible lifestyle, was just absolute BS [bull shit].

DePue: You'll think that I'm really…

Kayes: And actually, if you looked at Phyllis Schlafly, give her a nice haircut, she could have been a lesbian herself (laughs).

DePue: Well, I suspect you know that one of her sons is gay.

Kayes: No, I didn't know that. I

DePue: Yeah.

Kayes: Wow! Well…

DePue: The reason I've been talking about Phyllis Schlafly as much as I have is for three reasons: one…

Kayes: She's from Illinois.

DePue: …she's from Illinois. That would be the third reason. Two, she led a very successful movement in opposition to the passage of ERA, and three, she was then probably the most prominent lightning rod for the pro-ERA forces.

The people just did not have an opinion about Phyllis Schlafly. I think you would agree with that, would you not?

Kayes: Oh yeah, she was just very incendiary.

DePue: And for those who were her supporters, they adored her. They thought the world of her.

I have one more question. There's a quote from Mrs. Schlafly and an article that she wrote—it ended up in her book, *Feminist Fantasies*—it gets right at the issue of what your life and career have been about.[49] This deals with women's studies programs around the country. [reads from the book's Forward, written by Ann Coulter] "The women's studies program at California State University in Long Beach started in 1970 as something to benefit all women. The female faculty converted it to a program to promote

49Essays included in *Feminist Fantasies* by Phyllis Shafley, were written during the 1980s and 1990s, arguing that most women have no need or desire to work outside the home, and to do so damages the security of both the economy and family life. (https://www.abebooks.com/signed-first-edition/Feminist-Fantasies-Schlafly-Phyllis-Spence-Publishing/7646461766/bd)

radical feminist lesbian goals and values to the exclusion of traditional women's goals and values."

Kayes: (laughs) Yeah. Oh, yeah, that doesn't surprise me. That was very much people who were critics of women's studies, seeing it as not really academic but as being very politicized, so it wasn't a legitimate study that belonged in a college or a university, that it was about consciousness-raising, which it was. But it also was genuine uncovering of knowledge and theory, creating new theories, and discovering women writers, like Kate Chopin, for example, is a good example of a writer who was neglected and totally ignored. And then, we discover this work by her, you know? "Story of an Hour," *The Awakening*, which is a major novel, which was scandalous in its time, about a married woman who feels sexual attraction towards another man.[50] It's all in her consciousness, all in her consciousness. It was a radical one.

Charlotte Perkins Gilman is another one. "The Yellow Wallpaper," about a woman who basically has post-partum depression, but in those days, they prescribed bed rest, you know, no stimulation whatsoever.[51] And she ends up going totally crazy because they lock her in her room and just feed her and no stimulation and she basically suffers a nervous breakdown.

So, that was what was so exciting to me about it was—since I was in literature—to discover all these new women writers that had been neglected; but also to have new theories about ones who had made it into the canon, like Emily Dickinson or Jane Austen, to reinterpret their works, from a feminist, from a women's s□tudies point of view. That's what I mean. It's not only discovering new work, but interpreting other work, and also interpreting work by men, like, Ernest Hemingway, the incredible misogyny that runs through all his work.

"The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber," which is a story that I would share with my class and have them interpret.[52] He basically shoots his wife because she's a ball-breaking bitch (laughs). So, he combines hunting with shooting his wife and a lot of drinking. It was just valorizing men murdering women. So yeah, and there definitely was that because it becomes political when an area like literature or psychology or history has left out the stories of a whole group of people, which is almost half the population.DePue:

So, you're essentially agreeing with what Schlafly is saying here?

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50 *The Awakening*, Kate Chopin's second novel, was published January 21, 1898. It takes the reader to a time were divorce was quite rare, were men automatically had the right to both the children and property, and were women looked for a voice and a cause. *The Awakening*, for many of reasons, was not one of her best works in that time. (https://www.uk.essays.com/essays/english-literatire/exploring-the-awwakening-and-the-story-of-an-hour-english-literature-essay.php)

51"The Yellow Wallpaper" is a short story by American writer Charlotte Perkins Gilman, first published in January 1892 in *The New England Magazine.* (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Yellow_Wallpaper)

52"The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber" is a short story by Ernest Hemingway. Set in Africa, it was published in the September 1936 issue of *Cosmopolitan* magazine concurrently with "The Snows of Kilimanjaro". The story was eventually adapted to the screen as the Zoltan Korda film *The Macomber Affair* (1947). (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Short_Happy_Life_of_Francis_Macomber)

Kayes: I think it's political, but I don't think it's… Yeah, it's definitely feminist, but there were women's studies scholars who were not necessarily advocates of feminism. They were advocates of rediscovering work by women in philosophy or psychology or… So they were more like...producers of new knowledge.

DePue: Were you one of those?

Kayes: I was definitely one of those. I was definitely...because my mentor in graduate school, Shirley Staton—who I talked about before— was very much an academic and very much a scholar, and she really gave me those values. [She] wanted me to go on for a PhD, which I didn't do.

DePue: Who did give you those values?

Kayes: But she totally got into the excitement, as a scholar with a PhD in English, about what was going on in terms of the whole area of women in literature. I mean, it was exciting times. You can just imagine.

DePue: But everything that we've talked about, especially the last time we met and even today, I'm hearing there's not much opportunity; there's not much exposure; the students in women's studies programs would get to the more traditional role of women in society, the family-centered role.

Kayes: Oh, yeah. You would definitely look at that and analyze the "cult of true womanhood."[53]

DePue: Well, the cult of true womanhood would suggest a bias right there.

Kayes: Um-hmm, yeah, yeah. Well, I mean, historically, looking at... Like you have that piece, *"*I Want a Wife*."*[54] That is a great satiric new writing. So, Judy Syfers was a new writer who started producing a piece that satirized the whole ideology of being a good wife and what that meant.DePue: Well, I was going to wait until later, but maybe we should have you read a passage or two from that now.

Kayes: Okay.

DePue: Just as the sun goes under a cloud here.

53 The lives of nineteenth-century women were deeply shaped by the so-called "cult of true womanhood," a collection of attitudes that associated "true" womanhood with the home and family. (https://www.pbs.org/kenburns/not-for-ourselves-alone/cult-of-true-womanhood)

54 Judy Syfers' short essay, "I Want a Wife," was based on a speech Syfers (now Brady) delivered on August 26 1970 at a rally in San Francisco to mark the 50th anniversary of American women's suffrage. Syfers was a housewife, mother of two and recent recruit to the Californian women's movement. (https://theconversation.com/i-want-a-wife-the-wife-drought-1970s-feminism-still-rings-true-34246#:~:text=Judy%20Syfers'%20short%20essay%2C%20I,to%20the%20Californian%20women's%20movement.)

Kayes: Okay, let's start with this. Judy Syfers is… The context is a friend of hers, male friend, is just fresh from a divorce. He has a child, and he's desperately looking for another wife. And she says, (reads from the article)

> "Hey, I think I want a wife too. Why do I want a wife? I would like to go back to school so that I can become economically independent, support myself, and if need be, support those dependent upon me. I want a wife who will work and send me to school. And while I'm going to school, I want a wife to take care of my children. I want to wife to keep track of the children's doctor and dentist appointments, and to keep track of mine, too.
>
> "I want a wife to make sure my children eat properly and are kept clean. I want a wife who will wash the children's clothes and keep them mended. I want a wife who is a good nurturer, attendant to my children, who arranges for their schooling; makes sure that they have an adequate social life with their peers, takes them to the park, the zoo, etc.. I want a wife who takes care of the children when they are sick, a wife who arranges to be around when the children need special care because, of course, I cannot miss classes at school. My wife must arrange to lose time at work and not lose their job. It may mean a small cut in my wife's income from time to time, but I guess I can tolerate that. Needless to say, my wife will arrange and pay for the care of the children while my wife is working.
>
> "I want a wife who will take care of my physical needs. I want a wife who will keep my house clean, who will pick up after my children, who will pick up after me. I want a wife who will keep my clothes clean, ironed, mend, and replace when need be, and who will see to it that my personal things are kept in their proper place, so that I can find what I need the minute I need it." (DePue laughs)

I think, actually, that set off a whole kind of investigation of what is the value of a wife. What is her labor value? I mean, if she were actually paid for her work as a mother and as a wife, how much money should she get? And that was like yeah, that's a radical notion. Phyllis Schlafly's right because wives are unpaid labor, doing everything from being a nurse, childcare, cook, sexual partner… (laughs)

DePue: Who would pay her?

Kayes: Yeah, that's the whole thing is that, how do we figure, in an economy, all of this unpaid labor that women do for free because they're wives? And then, looking at the repercussions, when the wife gets dumped—like so many wive□□s. You could hear stories; they put their husbands through medical school, had the kids. Then, of course, he runs off with a younger nurse. She's [the wife] divorced, and women's income plummets, almost by half when they're divorced.

DePue: And we live in a society that's… Over the last forty or fifty years, basically since the mid-1960s, there's a much higher percentage of children who were born out of wedlock in the first place.

Kayes: Right.

DePue: To single-parent families.

Kayes: Right.

DePue: And overwhelmingly, it's the women who raise them.

Kayes: Right. And now we're in a situation where you almost inevitably have to have two people working in a home.

DePue: So, is it a good thing to have all these single mothers?

Kayes: Well, I don't know if that's the right question to ask, Mark. Is it a good… You know, you ask why. Why are there single mothers? And some of them were actually married and ended up divorced.

DePue: Well, I'm asking…

Kayes: And that's the fastest way for women and children to get into poverty.

DePue: Let me ask you this question then. Is that a function of the increasing power —you might disagree with this term—but, liberation of women, that's been an outgrowth of the Women's Rights Movement?

Kayes: Sure, refusal to marry, and it's spreading all across the world. You have women in Italy who are refusing to get married, and it's complicated cultural stuff there. They don't want the mother-in-law telling them what to do. They don't want to take care of the husband the way his mother has, ironing his shirts, fixing his pasta a certain way.

You have it in Japan, where women are refusing to get married. They just want to hang out with their girlfriends and go to work and have a good time, and they don't want… So, I think the refusal to marry is definitely a repercussion… I mean, that's one of the most radical acts you could do, is refuse to marry, as a woman, because there's…

DePue: Everything I've heard from you beforehand says that you're okay with that trend.

Kayes: Sure. I'm not starry-eyed or romantic about marriage; let's put it that way. I'm a realist. I was married once. I know about all the financial entanglements, etc., the petty jealousies. I was just reading today that this man shot his girlfriend in the face because she decided she wanted to go back to school and get a GED. This is 2013. I remember this happening when I was teaching. I would occasionally have women, their husbands or their boyfriends just harassing them about getting an education and being so threatened. When I

read that today, I was like, Oh. You'd think that this would have changed by now, with so many women in the workforce, etc..

But, I think what we're seeing, as another repercussion of all this, is a number of men are very lost. They're very lost. They don't know how to relate to these new women. They're threatened in themselves about what does it mean to be a man? So, I think a lot of men are on shaky ground. I've seen a lot of them, as a professor, who were just lost basically.

DePue: You've been very patient as I talk about some much larger-scale issues instead of talking about the specifics of events that happened in 1982.

Now you will be rewarded (Kayes laughs) because we're going to talk about 1982.

Kayes: Yeah. Well, we've already talked some about it, about the planning...

DePue: Right. And what I want to do now is just ask you… I'm going to go through some more timeline items, and just kind of let you—as much as you can—flesh out the whole discussion with the memories that you have. Let's start with February 4—I suspect some of these, you won't remember much at all—General Andrew Gatsis gives a talk in Springfield entitled, "ERA Would Mean Women in Combat."[55]Kayes: Uh-huh. I don't remember that. I remember that argument being out there, which Phyllis Schlafly definitely popularized as a major reason. That was her big reason.

DePue: I'm going to show you a couple of pictures as we go through here. I'm looking at one of Phyllis Schlafly and—I thought I had something in here. Yes, here's a sign; Phyllis Schlafly is holding a sign. I guess Mrs. Carter was coming to town, Rosalynn Carter.[56] Somebody makes the comment, "If my daughter is ever drafted, it will be your fault." That was somebody else's comment. I'll show you a couple of these pictures and get your response to these things.Kayes: "Women's Libbers, ERA Lesbians (laughs), Repent; Read the Bible While Your Able," misspelled, misspelled "you're," y-o-u-r instead of y-o-u-r-e.

DePue: Do you remember seeing any rallies or things like that when you were in Springfield that year?

Kayes: Yeah, I do remember this. I do remember this. Oh yeah, we couldn't… We just wanted to really know why she was such, in a way, a hater of women. We

55Brigadier General Andrew J. Gatsis, one of the most decorated officers ever to serve in our armed forces, was also an intense student of military strategy and tactics. He completed courses and taught at many our nation's military schools. From personal infantry combat experience in several of our nation's wars and from his studies he was a vocal opponent of placing women in combat roles. He testified before Congress in opposition, and he spoke and wrote on the topic. (https://www.freedomfirstsociety.org/women-in-combat/)

56 Eleanor Rosalynn Carter is an American who served as First Lady of the United States from 1977 to 1981 as the wife of President Jimmy Carter. For decades, she has been a leading advocate for numerous causes. Carter was politically active during her White House years, sitting in on Cabinet meetings. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosalynn_Carter)

were all interested in her psychology. What made her the way she was because at this time we were very much interested in studying new theories about psychology of women. That was a major course in women's studies, was Psychology of Women. We had all these different theorists, so we were very interested in Phyllis Schlafly, if we could put her on a psychiatric couch (laughs).

DePue: Does that mean there's a difference between the psychology of women and the psychology of men?

Kayes: Oh, sure. If you look at, for example, Freud's whole theory about penis envy, that one of the reasons why women are so messed up is because they covet the penis. Then Karen Horney, who was also a Freudian psychologist…

DePue: What was the name?

Kayes: Karen Horney, H-o-r-n-e-y. She's a Freudian psychologist. We unearthed women psychologists who were confronting all these theories about women's psychology by men. They [women psychologists] started coming up and saying, "Women don't literally envy men's penises; they envy the power and the privilege that gets accrued, just by virtue of that little organ," that he's the head of the family, and you have to take his name, and he gets to have a wife, a servant, all this power and privilege. It's not about… But Freud was totally into… And later on, we started putting out the theory that it's men who have penis envy of each other, more than women having penis envy of men.

DePue: I take it you're not a Freudian though.

Kayes: (laughs) No. But that is a major stream of psychological thought. We started thinking about her [Phyllis Shafley] and what was going on with her. It would be interesting because I haven't done a lot of study... I think that a number of the women who followed her, etc. were probably very terrified that they probably got rewards. They felt security in being wives and mothers. I would imagine that they made those… They saw this as a critique of their whole life. The fact that this sign, Women's Libbers and Lesbians...

And a lot of them (women following Shafley) were very religious, so they believed in this whole idea of Adam and Eve; God made woman, blah, blah, blah. So they were very fundamentalist about that. I think that was a big theme here. Like here, "Mrs. Carter, please obey Article 5. ERA does not mean equal pay for equal work." Well, yeah, it actually has created more of an equalization in what women get paid, even though we're not there. Women are still making, what…?

DePue: Seventy-seven percent is the figure I've seen.

Kayes: Uh-huh.

DePue: But also, the fact remains that it's been the law of the land since 1963, that women receive equal pay for equal work.

Kayes: Um-hmm, um-hmm.

DePue: So, it's a matter of how you interpret that sign.

Kayes: Right, right.

DePue: Let's move on to the next thing I've got on the calendar here, March 5. You might remember this. Springfield NOW members go to the home of Speaker of the House George Ryan, go to his residence on his birthday. Do you remember that?

Kayes: No, don't remember that. What year again?

DePue: This is all 1982.

Kayes: Uh-huh, I bet you Mary Lee will remember a lot of this. She will remember a lot of this.

DePue: Now, if you were to focus on an individual in the legislature, as we have been talking about Phyllis Schlafly, it might be George Ryan. Do you have any visceral reaction to hearing that name?

Kayes: No, no, but the other guy… What was his name? Jim Edgar.

DePue: That was the governor. No, he was secretary of state at that time.

Kayes: Yeah, but he was kind of a nemesis. He was real… As I recall, he was getting us arrested. He became kind of the nemesis for us, the official who was most antagonistic towards us.

DePue: Do you remember him saying things or just his actions?

Kayes: No, just the actions, the actions. But I'm sure he was being pushed by other people, etc.

DePue: Well, his…

Kayes: But, see, I wasn't there when they got arrested.

DePue: His function as the secretary of state is… He was in charge of the security and the maintenance of the Capitol building.

Kayes: Right, right.

DePue: So, he would see that as an extension of his job, and…

Kayes: Right, right. So there was definitely clashes with him, all during the entire time. I remember hearing a lot about Jim Edgar, Jim Edgar, Jim Edgar. But George Ryan, not so much.

DePue: But I thought the focus would be on those legislators and what was going on in the discussions and trying to get the passage of the ERA, not so much on reactions to the different tactics that…

Kayes: Well, yeah, that was why we decided to chain ourselves at the legislature, outside, because we definitely wanted to get to them. I recall that there was one African-American legislator who came out and was interviewed after we had chained ourselves. He said, "I totally empathize with these women. I understand what it's like not to have a vote, not to have a voice." I can't remember his name. He was very well-known, from Chicago. God, what was his name?

DePue: It wouldn't have been Emil Jones?

Kayes: I think it was him, Emil Jones.

DePue: How about…

Kayes: He was one of the few who was very sympathetic.

DePue: How about James Pate Philip? The Democrats were in the majority in the senate, and Phil Rock was the majority leader, Senator Phil Rock. Does that name bring any memories to you? How about James Pate Philip?

Kayes: No.

DePue: That's interesting, because no one was more colorful in the inappropriate things he could say than James Pate Philip.

Kayes: Well, the name does ring… What kinds of things did he say?

DePue: I'm going to characterize the kind of things he said. He always had… He was from DuPage County, which is the Republican stronghold for the state.

Kayes: Oh, this is ringing a bell.

DePue: And he would say things like, giving money to Chicago schools is like throwing money down a rat hole.

Kayes: Oh, yeah (laughs).

DePue: He was certainly accused of being a sexist homophobe—you know, go right to racist—just because of the colorful things he could say. But he also had pretty good discipline among the Republicans in the senate.

Kayes: Uh-huh. Like I said, I'm sure Mary Lee would know more about all of these characters because, as a historian, she was probably paying much more attention to all this.

DePue: What I'm gathering so far is that you weren't really paying all that much attention to the politics that was going on within the legislature.

Kayes: **I** wasn't. But I think **she** was and Bernice Carroll was and probably others in our group. So I went along with the whole strategy in the project, based on belief in what we were doing. But in terms of the details, they knew a lot more about the politics of it.

DePue: Do you remember when Laurence Tribe, who was a Harvard professor on constitutional law, came to town? That would have been May 20, right at the height, when the real discussion was about to begin.

Kayes: Yeah.

DePue: And one of the things that he was pushing was that this three-fifths rule—which I think we talked about before, where they had to have 60 percent of the legislators vote for the passage of ERA—was unconstitutional. Do you remember anything about that?

Kayes: Yeah, I remember that. I mean, that we were hopeful that that might be a way to solve things. And that name definitely rings a bell.

DePue: For your group, for the people that you were involved with, who would you say was the target for your efforts?

Kayes: The target for our efforts was not only the legislature, to try to push them into taking action, but also it was the public, to get publicity, to let people know how...make a connection between the suffragettes and what was happening now, and to show...to make connections with the Civil Rights Movement, that non-violent, direct action is a legitimate strategy to make change. So, in a way, it was also the National Organization of Women, who believed in writing letters and being nice and lobbying and all of that.

But we said, "No, there needs to be more than this. This is not working; those strategies aren't working. You need to look at the history of your foremothers, who went on hunger strikes and threw themselves in front of carriages and all these kinds of things, were arrested in order to get the vote." I would say three audiences: the legislature itself, the general public, and also other women who were organizing to get the ERA passed.

DePue: Do you think your efforts were successful in swaying public opinion?

Kayes: I know that we had people who were really angry at us, including the leadership at Parkland College, since Mary Lee and I were both professors there, and it got a lot of publicity. You know, the president of the college heard a lot of complaints about us, and how could these professors, blah, blah, blah. I don't know whether Bernice Carroll, who was at the U of I, whether there was a lot of complaints about her over there. But I know we definitely got them at Parkland, about how inappropriate it was for these two professors to be doing this kind of action.

But then on the other hand, we would get notes from people saying, "We admire your guts to stand up." I think I showed you one note from a former student of mine, who said, "I caught you on TV. I don't necessarily agree with what you're standing up for, but I'm very proud that you did stand up." So, you know.

I think there were some people who just didn't know what to make of it because you don't see, that often, women taking that kind of action. If you think about it, well, we had Gloria Steinem and the Ms. Foundation having marches in New York, and etc., etc..[57] But marches and demonstrations are very different than chaining yourself in the state legislature.

DePue: I assume what you were hearing from some of NOW's leadership is that they would prefer that you not do those kinds of things.

Kayes: Right. They did not. That was a big argument. I think Mary Lee was in constant argument with whoever was the president at that time.

DePue: I have seen poll numbers. I should have had that here… Maybe we can get that into the transcript, the various dates and Illinois' public's view about this. There was a definite drop, right at the tail end of the discussions about ERA, which would reflect that it didn't go over too well with some in the public.

Kayes: Uh-hmm, uh-hmm.

DePue: Would that cause you to rethink the strategy?

Kayes: No. Because, yes, if you think; during the Civil Rights Movement, a lot of people disapproved of Martin Luther King's strategies, but you see them really… For example, the 1963 March on Washington, a lot of people disagreed with that whole strategy. A lot disagreed with the strikes that he led, the garbage men and the buses and all of that. But it ended up having an effect, but not right then.

DePue: And it wasn't just a couple of months ago that we celebrated the anniversary of it, because it's such a milestone in American history.

Kayes: Yeah, it's become almost a traditional thing. But at the time period, there were a lot of people… I mean, this is why he was killed (laughs), because so many people were threatened by all of this. Well, when Rosa Parks didn't give up her seat on the bus, she didn't immediately garner support.[58] It's an incremental thing. I do believe it's a number of things; it's a number of strategies. You know, it is lobbying; it is writing letters; it is twisting arms, politically, but it's also being in the street and having a presence.

57The Ms. Foundation for Women is a nonprofit foundation building women's collective power for social, economic and reproductive justice. (https://forwomen.org/)

58 On Dec. 1, 1955, Rose Parks, the mother of the Civil Rights Movement, made the decision to remain in her seat on a Montgomery, Alabama, bus because she didn't believe she should have to move because of her race, even though that was the law (https://theundefeated.com/features/on-this-day-rosa-parks-refused-to-give-up-her-bus-seat-igniting-the-civil-rights-movement/.)

DePue: How about this particular approach, this tactic: Sonia Johnson, on May 18, began a hunger strike.[59] Eventually it would last thirty-seven days, and there were other women involved in that as well.

Kayes: Right, yeah, the fasters.

DePue: Do you think that was an effective approach?

Kayes: Well, we were kind of complimentary to them, because Sonia Johnson is a friend of Mary Lee's. So, we had a number of discussions with her. She wanted to do it that way, and we wanted to do it this way. But we didn't say to her, "Stop fasting," and she didn't say, "Don't do that." But we heard more from the NOW women, "Don't do that."

DePue: Don't fast?

Kayes: Well, I don't know what they said about the fasting, but they said to us, "Don't go, and don't do these actions that you're doing in Springfield," the non-violent direct action.

DePue: How would you…

Kayes: But the fasting definitely also had a historical context because the hunger strikes that women went on… There was force-feeding of them during the suffragette movement, a lot in England. You see those horrible pictures of them taking those tubes and sticking them down women's throats with a funnel at the top and force-feeding them.

DePue: Plus the iconic figure of Mahatma Gandhi.[60]

Kayes: Right, um-hmm.

DePue: I'm sure most people would remember Gandhi's fasting more than they would the suffragettes of, you know, sixty, seventy years before.

Kayes: Oh, yeah. Well, I mean, we just had a hunger strike at Guantanamo Bay.[61] You know, the prisoners there have been on a hunger strike for...what? They say that it's now ended. But that's always been one of the tactics of a non-

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59 Sonia Ann Johnson is an American feminist activist and writer who, In the summer of 1982, she led seven other women from around the country in a dramatic public hunger strike in Springfield, Illinois. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sonia_Johnson)

60Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, popularly known as Mahatma Gandhi or the Father of the Nation in India, undertook 17 fasts during India's freedom movement. His longest fast lasted 21 days. Fasting was a weapon used by Gandhi as part of his philosophy of Ahimsa (non-violence) as well as satyagraha (passive political resistance).
(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_fasts_undertaken_by_Mahatma_Gandhi#:~:text=Mohandas%20Karamchand%20Gandhi%2C%20popularly%20known,violence)%20as%20well%20as%20satyagraha.)

61The first well-known Guantanamo Bay hunger strikes began in the middle of 2005, when detainees held by the United States at the Guantanamo Bay detention camp, initiated two hunger strikes. The detainees organized several widespread hunger strikes to protest their innocence and the conditions of their confinement. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guantanamo_Bay_hunger_strikes)

violent direct action. Now, in the Civil Rights Movement… Yes, who was it who… Dick Gregory.[62]

DePue: Right.

Kayes: He was a major faster.

DePue: Was he doing it, I think, during this time, wasn't he?

Kayes: Yeah.

DePue: Or was it more civil rights issues?

Kayes: It was civil rights issues, but it was right around this time, he really… That was one of his tactics.

DePue: Another person on the… Well, this is a curious example, Governor Jim Thompson. He'd been governor since January of 1977. So, for much of this fight, he was governor, certainly at the culmination of all of it. He was publicly pro-ERA. What was your view and your group's view of Governor Thompson?

Kayes: That he didn't do enough. He didn't do enough. That he was all lip-service, and that he could have made things happen if he wanted to, especially given that he was Republican. I was personally kind of disappointed, because I remember when he was running, a colleague of mine that I knew somewhere—I can't remember whether it was Purdue or whatever—she left to work on his campaign, and she really sang his praises about how progressive he was, etc., and he was a Republican. He didn't do enough.

DePue: What would you expect him to do?

Kayes: Oh, you know, politically... I expect him to do what Abraham Lincoln did, the arms he twisted, etc.

DePue: In the legislature?

Kayes: Yeah.

DePue: To change votes in the legislature?

Kayes: Right.

DePue: I think it's June 3, the Grassroots Group… What's the entire title of the group, again?

Kayes: The Grassroots Group of Second Class Citizens.

62 Richard Claxton Gregory (1932 – 2017) was an American comedian, civil rights advocate and activist, and conspiracy theorist. He spent the last decade of his life speaking regularly about numerous conspiracy theories. Gregory became a vegetarian and fasting activist in 1965 "based on the philosophy of nonviolence practiced during the Civil Rights Movement." (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dick_Gregory)

DePue: ...holds a sit-in and chains themselves to the railing outside the [Illinois] Senate Chamber. Provide me as much background as you possibly can on how that came about.

Kayes: Well, I told you that we rehearsed the whole thing here, right in my kitchen, because we had to choreograph the whole chaining, because, you can imagine, we had to sneak in there and then quickly uncover our chains and chain to one another and to the railings. We used my refrigerator as one of the railings and practiced, right here, amidst great laughter (laughs), that whole thing. I've shown you this picture, here. This is us at the absolute… This is...

DePue: I'll give you these pictures. Whose idea was this?

Kayes: To chain ourselves?

Members of the Grassroots Group of Second Class Citizens, Kari Alice Lynn, Barbara Douglas, Ann Casey-Elder, Loretta Manning, and Alice Webber, fighting for the ERA, flash the symbol of the womb while protesting in the Capitol Building where they chained themselves together in protest.

DePue: Yes.

Kayes: I think… Oh, yeah, here I am in the back. You can see me over here, in the back. I don't remember whose idea that particular strategy was. I don't know if that was Mary Lee or it was a group strategy. Some of these women who are in this photo were not originally on the planning; some of them ended up coming to the protest because we were having a big protest along with this. They saw us chained, and they came and kind of got involved because, once we chained ourselves, we expected to be arrested immediately, and we weren't.

They didn't know what to do. They were totally, what are they going to do? And the media was everywhere, the television, Chicago, Springfield, the newspapers. Oh, it was incredible. As it got out, women started coming and joining, who weren't on the original planning.

DePue: How did they join and be chained with you? Or did that not happen; they just there, showing their support?

Kayes: Well, because we ended up having to spend the night there. They didn't know what to do with us. We couldn't leave, but we'd unchain ourselves and go to the bathroom, and food was brought in after the Capitol was closed. And then, women would appear, like this woman right here. I can't remember her name.

DePue: On the right.

Kayes: She was from out of town. She just came, and obviously, she... This one too. These two right here were not on the original planning thing. And so, yeah, here's a couple other women. They would just come, and they would take our place. So, we'd unchain and give them the chains.

DePue: Well, how was it that you were chaining yourselves?

Kayes: To each other, and then…

DePue: But did you have something around your belt that you were chaining to, or...?

Kayes: Yeah. It was through the belt. You can see that there were locks on each, so that we were attached to each other by locks. That was the difficulty of it, was not only...because we were all walking in individually, with chains around our waist and a lock. And then, as part of the protest—there was a protest there—so we made our way there. And then we had to quickly chain to each other and someone chaining to the railing on both sides.

DePue: W□□□ere there police there when it actually happened, when you actually chained yourselves, security?

Kayes: No. Maybe they were around, but they weren't there because they didn't get us.

DePue: What time of day, initially, did go in?

Kayes: I think I remember the night before I was in Springfield. I didn't get any sleep because I was thinking I was going to end up in jail. What's going to happen to my job and all that kind of stuff? I had my dog here, my house...

What was significant for me was also this date, June 3, was my mother's birthday, and she had just died the year before. No, January, she died in January 1980. I was partly… That was kind of on my mind also. It's like the first year of my mother's death. Here I'm this orphan, and I'm chaining myself, and I'm going to be arrested, and who's going to be there to help me, because both my parents are dead? (laughs)

DePue: You were an orphan.

Kayes: Yeah. So, I didn't get much sleep. But I think we went there in the morning for the protest. I can't remember who decided when we all made our way in front of the chamber and who gave the signal. Mary Lee would know much more of that. That's her in the middle there.

DePue: Are you in that picture?

Kayes: Yeah, I'm back here, on the end, see?

DePue: So, you're kind of obscured, aren't you, a little bit?

Kayes: Yeah, I'm obscured, I know. And that's been kind...

DePue: On the left side?

Kayes: Yeah. That's been kind of the joke between her and I. But here I am in this one. You see me right here, sitting there as the… Ken Busbee from Carbondale is stepping over us, outside the senate.

DePue: Was he pro or…

Kayes: And I think that might be… Is this Emil Jones, here?

DePue: Let me go take a look at this.

Kayes: I think that is Emil Jones.

DePue: No, that's not Emil.

Kayes: No?

DePue: Was Busbee a supporter?

Kayes: I don't remember that.

DePue: We'll have to figure that out too.

Kayes: But that's me, sitting right here on the ground.

DePue: Was there a statement that was issued in part of this protest?

Kayes: Yes. We had a statement that we were passing out to the press, so they understood why we were doing that. I think there were chants; we were chanting things and singing. And, like I said, I expected to either be...to have it be over right away, that we'd get arrested and be taken out.

Members of the Grassroots Group of Second Class Citizens chained themselves together outside the Senate chambers, forcing Senator Ken Buzbee to step over group members Marlena Williams and Pauline Kayes. (The photo appeared in the Nov 25-Dec 1, 1982 issue of the Illinois

I don't know who decided just to let us stay there. I mean, think about it; we spent the night in the Capitol on those floors. That was it for me. I said, "Okay, I did it. I'm not getting arrested. I've slept on a marble floor all night; it's been very uncomfortable; you know, I need to go home." (laughs) So Mary Lee was not too happy about that, but then there were others taking people's places.

So, as more and more publicity got out, the more we had interest and people coming. I remember us eating. We had two male supporters,

Belden Fields, who was a professor of political science and was involved with Jane Mohraz, one of the chainers who I was chained with. She was my chaining partner, right next to me. And Clint Fink, who was the partner of Bernice Carroll, the professor from the U of I… They were our help men, and they went out and got burgers and fries and coke.

We were all sitting on the Capitol marble floor, having a picnic, with ourselves all chained up. But once the Capitol closed, we had to go to the bathroom. So we unchained ourselves, and… I just remembered, do you know what it's like to sleep on a marble floor? Aaugh, very cold, very hard. I kept thinking, My wonderful bed.

Mary Lee, of course, wanted to continue going on. And so, you see, you have images here of actions after that, where they really wanted to get arrested. Here you see they started moving their protests from in front of the legislature to in front of the Governor's Office, in order to really get arrested.

A photo from the June 14, 1982 issue of Time magazine, taken by Annie Leibovitz, shows the self-described ERA "Chain Gang." The group was protesting the state legislature's inability to approve ERA by chaining themselves to the senate chamber railing

DePue: Is that the picture with "The Chain Gang Evicted," as the headline?

Kayes: Yes. "Chain Gang Revisited," and here is [reads], "Kari Alice Lynn is ejected from the front of Governor Thompson's office by the Secretary of State's police, Jim Edgar."

DePue: You have strong memories about Jim Edgar, but you were making this very provocative act, where you expected him to respond in some way.

Kayes: Yeah. But I think there were some other things he did—Mary Lee could tell you more about that—that were really troublesome. I can't remember what it was.

DePue: You mentioned the chanting and the singing. Do you remember any of the chants?

Kayes: Probably, "ERA today, we're not going away. ERA today, we're not going away." Mary Lee was always a big advocate of singing and chanting. So, we had probably… That might be in my stuff somewhere, the chants that were handed out to people. And remember, there were also other protests around on the grounds, down in the rotunda, so it wasn't just us.

There were supportive protests. There were the fasters. It was kind of like three-ring circus, the fasters, who were being carried out on cots because they were so weak and then just regular protests of singing and chanting and then the Grassroots Group of Second Class Citizens, constantly provoking arrest.

Taken from the cover of the November 25-December 1, 1982 issue of Illinois Times, this photo shows Kari Alice Lynn being carried away from the front of Governor James Thompson's office during the ERA Capitol sit-in.

DePue: Where were the fasters?

Kayes: Here's Jane Mohraz. Here was my partner who I chained next to.

DePue: That's in the picture. She's being carried out there?

Kayes: Yeah, she was carried out. She was one of them. She and I were even smoking cigarettes together in the Capitol (laughs).

DePue: I assume it was okay to smoke in the Capitol back in those days.

Kayes: Yeah, but what was so weird about it is, to be in this place of great history and be eating burgers and smoking cigarettes. We were kind of inventing it as we were going along, because when they didn't arrest us. We didn't have a Plan B.


Last Ditch Pitch for ERA

HOME SWEET HOME

Photo from the June 14, 1982 issue of Time magazine taken by Annie Leibowitz shows the self-described ERA "Chain Gang". The group was protesting the state legislature's inability to approve the ERA, by chaining themselves to the Senate Chambers railing.

We thought sure that was going to happen. So, when it didn't happen, it was like, what do we do now? And that one woman who I showed you—I can't think of her name, Mary Lee will know her name, the one I said came in from—we had suspicions that she had come in to aggravate things, that she was working for… I don't know, that she was not what she appeared because she really wanted us to go into the chamber and burst in there and chain

ourselves to the chairs. I mean, she wanted to escalate it big time. So, there was all this argument. I was like totally exhausted, having to sleep on a marble floor. I know it sounds like I'm kind of a—what shall I say?—didn't have much gumption for this kind of… (laughs)

DePue: You're an English teacher.

Kayes: Yeah, yeah. But it just… It's like when you've gone through such, you know, such an event, and you've got all this adrenaline, and no sleep. Then you don't know what's going to happen to you, in addition. And then you have to make decisions about what we're going to do next and the strategies next. I decided to leave.

I felt really bad about it. I felt like I was deserting my friend, and I was a loser and a wimp and all that kind of stuff. It caused tension between Mary Lee and I. You know, we had a lot of tension in our friendship because of that, because some of the later things that she did, like when they went and got pig's blood and wrote. They were writing messages with pig's blood, with squirty things. I didn't agree with that. So, because they would go back and forth and keep doing these protests… So, that was the first one, and then there were more.

DePue: Why didn't you agree with the squirting of the pig's blood? They were writing people's names in pig's blood.

Kayes: Yeah, I don't know. It just really creeped me out. It was just a little too creepy for me, and I remember we had a big argument about that.

DePue: What time did you leave?

Kayes: I think I waited until the next morning because I do remember donuts (both laugh).

DePue: So, it's one thing to fast, but this group wasn't fasting.

Kayes: No, no…

DePue: There were burgers and donuts...

Kayes: …we weren't fasting. No, we weren't. We weren't fasting. No, I think...Of course… And I missed… I missed Annie Leibovitz coming, the famous photographer, who took the photo that was a full page spread in *Life* magazine. [That] pissed me off! You know, I did so much planning and the groundwork, et□c., and I just
decide to go, and she decides
to show up!

Because Annie Leibovitz showed up, that showed that the word had spread all around the country. I mean, it was in *The New York Times*, et□c. because she's a New Yorker. For her to make a trip to Springfield, Illinois, to

take a picture of the "chainers," that's pretty significant. Do you have that picture?

DePue: I think we probably do.

Kayes: Uh-huh.

DePue: We can certainly get it, in *Life* Magazine.[63]

Kayes: Yeah. Full page spread, in color, in color!

DePue: I will have to go looking for it.

Kayes: In color!

DePue: Uh-oh!

Kayes: And what I get is this lousy picture in *Time,* over here. Oh, well, I also… In the World Book [Encyclopedia]...So, I'm over here.[64] But in the World Book, my breasts are showing. I would make this joke about how Mary Lee got all the attention—she was in the middle—and only my breasts got shown. (laughs)

DePue: But certainly you had a shirt on or something, right?

Kayes: Yeah, I know, but it's like right here. But it was like the camera would somehow focus in on my chest. But here she would be in the front and center. Why didn't I insist I should have been in the center? Oh, well (both laugh).

DePue: Because it wasn't about you, Pauline.

Kayes: Yeah, right. Yeah, no, this was definitely her thing.

DePue: Do you remember any of the songs that were sung?

Kayes: No, I don't. I know…

DePue: Some of the civil rights songs of the day?

Kayes: Yeah, "We Shall Overcome," I'm sure.[65] But like I said, I think I could find a lyric sheet of some of the songs.

DePue: When you left, where did you go?

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63 *Life* was an American magazine, published weekly from 1883 to 1972, as an intermittent "special" until 1978, and as a monthly from 1978 until 2000. During its golden age, from 1936 to 1972, *Life* was a wide-ranging weekly general interest magazine known for the quality of its photography.

64The World Book encyclopedia was designed to cover major areas of knowledge uniformly, but it shows particular strength in scientific, technical, and medical subjects. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Book_Encyclopedia)

65"We Shall Overcome" is a gospel song which became a protest song and a key anthem of the civil rights movement. The song is most commonly attributed as being lyrically descended from "I'll Overcome Some Day", a hymn by Charles Albert Tindley that was first published in 1900. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/We_Shall_Overcome)

Kayes: Me, personally?

DePue: Yeah.

Kayes: Well, I got in the car and came home.

DePue: So you weren't even in town when they were arrested?

Kayes: No, I wasn't there when they were arrested. They weren't arrested right then. It took… I don't think they were carried away from the legislature; I don't think they were arrested then. It was when they did these other—they moved to the Governor's Office or...—that they were arrested. But my memory could be wrong because I left, and I couldn't keep up with… We didn't have cell phones to keep up with what was going on. I was back in Champaign.

Then that phase ended. They came back here, and they started planning new things. So, they **really** got into just, "Okay, what are we going to do next? What are we going to do next?"

DePue: What were the other things that they were now planning?

Kayes: Well, one was the… They would pick various offices to target, like I said, the Governor's Office. You could see that we were upset with Thompson because of the fact that he didn't do enough. I wonder what his memories are of this. Have you asked him?

DePue: I haven't gotten that far yet. I certainly will (Kayes laughs). It will be a few months before we get there. [addressing the reader] I'm in the process of interviewing the governor now; that's why she was asking the question.

When you say, targeting other offices, what does that mean, chaining yourselves to other places in the Capitol?

Kayes: Well, I don't know if they were chaining, but they were going and chanting and creating a nuisance, I'm sure, from the point of view of Jim Edgar. I think part of the problem with him and his security forces [was] that they accused some of those officers of roughing them up. And of course, you saw that. What was it, a newsletter, where they were accusing the… They were making fun of the chain gang and the douche powder. I don't remember who produced it. Remember that newsletter, the male Springfield businessmen association, or something, making fun of the chain gang girls and the douche that they used, and…?

DePue: I think we had that.

Kayes: …it's one part chicken fat; it's finger lickin' good and all that kind of stuff?

DePue: But "they" was not Governor Edgar or secretary of state police; it's an outside organization?

Kayes: Yeah, an outside organization, right. But I think there was some concern about, that the officers were roughing them up a little.

DePue: You're saying members of the chain gang were making complaints about that?

Kayes: Uh-hmm.

DePue: What did they expect?

Kayes: Well, I think we had done some training, that if we get arrested, what we should do, go limp and all that, which you can see them doing in those pictures.

DePue: That would have been very much part of the training that was very active in the Civil Rights Movement.

Kayes: Right.

DePue: And the SNCC organization, early in the civil rights days. SNCC stands for Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. What's the "S"? Students for Nonviolent Coordinating Committee.

Kayes: Right.

DePue: And they were making those kinds of training sessions themselves, teaching people how to do that kind of stuff...

Kayes: Uh-hmm, uh-hmm.

DePue: …as were CORE [Congress of Racial Equality] and other organizations. June 6 through 8, NOW holds a nationwide capitol march for ERA and lobbies in the unratified states. Do you remember that event? Or, were you back in Champaign by that time?

Kayes: Yeah, I was. I was back in Champaign then.

DePue: Now, everything we've been talking about, the urgency, the sense of urgency, I'm sure that your group felt that, in 1982, this thing is done, that the time limit is over. You'd have to start over again. At least that would be the assumption that most would say.

June 24, then, the Equal Rights Amendment in Illinois dies in Senate Committee, when Senator Phil Rock, who was chairing the committee, realized he didn't even have the votes to take it to the floor of the senate. And so, it dies with a whimper, basically. Do you remember hearing that news?

Kayes: Yeah, and I think we had another protest; we went back. We had several other protests in Springfield, outside the Capitol, with banners, etc.. I showed you some of those pictures. I think that was one of the times we went back.

DePue: And the 25th is the date that members of this same group, many of the same people that you had been involved with in the chaining, went back to the senate and squirted the names of people in pig's blood right outside the Senate

Chamber. We've got a picture of that as well. Do you remember the names that were being squirted on the floor?

Kayes: No. Probably Thompson was one of them, and I don't know. Mary Lee would know that because I wasn't there.

DePue: Edgar, perhaps?

Kayes: Edgar, perhaps.

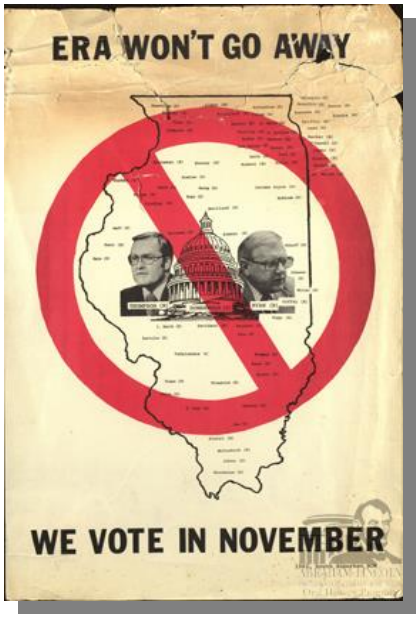
DePue: Ryan, maybe?

Kayes: Yeah, probably.

DePue: Two of those, three probably, publicly were in support of the passage of ERA. Were you aware that Edgar had publicly stated his support? Or, maybe he hadn't at that time?

Kayes: No, I didn't. I don't think we knew that. I don't think he said that at that time.

DePue: I could be wrong, but I'm pretty sure that he essentially was supportive of ERA. I know Thompson publicly was in support of it. What was your gut feeling when it had failed in Illinois?



ERA Won't Go Away' was the message on this fall 1982 flier, targeting Illinois legislators who had opposed the passage of ERA. The flier came out after the final defeat of ERA.

Kayes: Just the sense that it was done and just amazement that it couldn't happen. Well, and there's still talk today about, what, reintroducing it and trying to get it done again. You probably know a little bit more about that than I do.

DePue: What's your view about that subject?

Kayes: Well, was it someone saying that it was going to be easier somehow this time or… I can't remember; I can't remember. I think maybe Mary Lee and I had a discussion about this, just recently, in July, on our vacation, about it coming back. And yeah, I think it should; it should because there's still a lot of laws on the books in a lot of these states that are

antiquated. They're just going to stay there, unless there is a national amendment.

DePue: Laws dealing with what specific issues?

Kayes: I don't know. I don't know which ones are still on the books, but there were laws like a woman cannot… Maybe in Wyoming, maybe a woman can't get a driver's license unless her husband approves or something, a lot of stupid old laws that are still there.

DePue: But I suspect, in the case you just stated, a law like that would be ignored by everybody.

Kayes: Yeah, yeah. But still, they're there. Someone could pull out those laws at any time.

DePue: Let's talk about the years beyond ERA. To a certain extent, would you agree that the steam went out of the movement for a little while, or you moved on to different things?

Kayes: I think we… Well, the Grassroots Group… I don't know if you know this, but from 1982 to 1985, we were still doing a lot of protest performance art. We were doing it on the campus of the U of I. We had a big protest in New York City at the Statue of Liberty. The Woman Take Liberty protest was sponsored by the Grassroots Group, when the statue was…

DePue: Rededicated?

Kayes: …rededicated.

DePue: That would have been July of 1986?

The Grassroots Group of Second Class Citizens, dressed as witches, in this October 30, 1982 protest in Champaign, Illinois. The message that day was "hexing" Republicans for opposition to ratification of ERA in Illinois.

Kayes: Uh-huh. So, we were doing all those kinds of things. But I personally was being more involved in women's studies in the National Women's Studies Association. We had a big conference at the University of Illinois, so I was a major organizer there. I was creating a new course at Parkland, Women in Arts, Cultures and Societies. I did a video analysis of representations of female in visual art by men. I was much more into teaching,

writing and presenting on women's studies. But, Mary Lee would once again... (both laugh)

DePue: I need to talk the historian on these things.

Kayes: She would drag me into these various little things, like we had a witch in downtown Champaign at John Hirshfeld's office; he was involved. He was a lawyer for the *News Gazette*.[66] I can't remember what that was, but we were all dressed as witches, and we were hexing his office, putting a curse on his office. That was one protest. We did one on the quad, where we all had Reagan masks, and we were all the Dancing Reagans. We all had similar Reagan masks. So, we got involved with other groups in town, doing mostly performance art. Not so much nonviolent direct action, but more performance art, political performance.

DePue: All things designed to get public attention?

Kayes: Yes.

DePue: Was it effective?

Kayes: Oh, yeah. I mean, we got publicity. We kept bringing up various issues that had to do with women. It wasn't always about the ERA. It was… In terms of Reagan, it was pacifism. It was against… What was the war that he started that he started?

Memers of the Grassroots Group of Second Class Citizens, all wearing Ronald Reagan masks, represent business, the military the rich and the clergy in this skit, performed at the University of Illinois campus on October 31, 1984.

DePue: I knew that I was supposed to ask you this. Reagan's bombing of Libya in April, 1986….

Kayes: Oh, yeah, and…

DePue: …in response to Muammar Gaddafi's support of terrorists' bombing in Rome and Vienna, places like that.[67] That's when Reagan launched attacks.

66The News-Gazette is a daily newspaper serving eleven counties in the eastern portion of Central Illinois and specifically the Champaign–Urbana metropolitan area. Since November 2019 it is published daily Tuesday through Sunday. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_News-Gazette_(Champaign%E2%80%93Urbana)

67 Muammar Mohammed Abu Minyar al-Gaddafi, commonly known as Colonel Gaddafi, was a Libyan revolutionary, politician and political theorist. He governed Libya from 1969 to 2011. He was initially

Kayes: Yes, that was one of them. And I did my own personal protest. You'll love this one. I was teaching at Chanute Air Force Base in Rantoul, as part of my assignment. And…

DePue: You're teaching women's studies at an Air Force base?

Kayes: No, no, I was teaching writing or composition or something, maybe one course a week or whatever. So, after that bombing, I drove to… I had put a sign in the back of my car, "Stop the Bombing of Libya" or something like that. I was very upset about it. And so, I drove onto the Air Force base and went to teach my class. When I came out, there were like four...What do you call them, MPs [Military Police] or…?

DePue: Security police?

Kayes: Yeah, security police in uniforms waiting for me. They said, "Ms. Kayes, is this your vehicle?" So, they walked me to my car. "Is this yours?" "Yes." And "Is this your sign?" I said, "Yes." Supposedly the security had gone from I don't know what to red because of me driving on with that sign. They discovered it and traced me, my license plate, escorted me from my class. I don't remember if they interrupted the class. They might have; they might have interrupted my class. I was escorted to my car.

I got in a big argument with them about freedom of speech and blah, blah, blah. Well, needless to say, they didn't arrest me. But afterwards, I thought, "Why did I... you know. I shouldn't have been arguing with these four guys with guns. But then, of course, that got publicity, and it went back to the college. So, once again, Pauline was in trouble for doing protests. But that was my own individual, personal part of that story. But we also did like the dancing Reagans and a lot of other political performance art.

DePue: Were the dancing Reagans in response to any specific event?

Kayes: I think it was us trying to show about Reaganomics and the whole...you know, how the whole government is basically owned by the corporate world.[68] That's who… You know, we don't have a democracy. That was our whole thing. And it's…

DePue: What specifically did you have objections to, in reference to Reaganomics?

Kayes: Oh, that trickle-down theory—hello (laughs)—trickle-down-theory and just the military industrial complex and Nicaragua and just name it.[69, 70, 71] It was

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ideologically committed toArab nationalism and Arab socialism but later ruled according to his own Third International Theory. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muammar_Gaddafi)

68 Reagonomics relates to the economic policies of former US President Ronald Reagan, associated especially with the reduction of taxes and the promotion of unrestricted free-market activity. (dictionary.com)

69The trickle-down theory states that tax breaks and benefits for corporations and the wealthy will make their way down to everyone. (https://www.investopedia.com/terms/t/trickledowntheory.asp)

70The military–industrial complex (MIC) is an informal alliance between a nation's military and the defense industry that supplies it, seen together as a vested interest which influences public policy.

one, one problem after another. Of course, things haven't changed much since, have they?

Now remember, I was no longer director of women's programs at Parkland at that time. I was definitely just on my own and working mostly with women's studies folks at U of I. Yeah, that was kind of an exciting time because I got to really combine my academic interests with my feminist and political interests.

DePue: In ways that you might not have, if you'd still been the director of the women's studies programs?

Kayes: Well, no. No, I'm not saying that. I'm just saying that, instead of protest being my main thing, I was more interested in creating a new course, interdisciplinary course, on women in arts, cultures and societies, analyzing popular culture, media, music, art and very much involved with this whole national organization on women's studies, having a conference, one of the big conferences here at the U of I. And I was a main organizer. We created a cabaret; we created a soap opera as part of it; we organized all the… Just like any academic conference, people presenting papers and discussions, etc.

DePue: What's a capital ray?

Kayes: Hmm?

DePue: You said, "Created a capital ray."

Kayes: Cabaret. We had a feminist…

DePue: Cabaret?

Kayes: Feminist cabaret.

DePue: Oh, cabaret.

Kayes: Cabaret. And we had a soap opera that a friend of mine… We were into soap operas, so we created a soap opera, *As the Conference Turns*. I was just doing all this kind of experimental, creative stuff. It was very exciting.

DePue: I'm going to pause here for just a minute.

(pause in recording)

DePue: We took a little bit of a break to have chocolate. I didn't expect that, but that's what we did. (Kayes laughs).

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Military%E2%80%93industrial_complex#:~:text=The%20military%E2%80%93industrial%20complex%20(MIC,interest%20which%20influences%20public%20policy.)
711985 President Reagan announced that his administration perceived Nicaragua to be "an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States" and declared a "national emergency" and a trade embargo against Nicaragua to "deal with that threat". (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Contras)

Let's talk about 1993 then. You got re-appointed as the director. How did that happen?

Kayes: Well, that happened because Parkland got a new president, an African-American woman named Zelma Harris, first woman [president], first African American [president]. And we thought, Wow, here's our chance to get the women's program back. So we figured out ways to do that. We had a committee on the status of women, and we introduced her to women in the community. And somehow, we convinced her to bring it back.

Now, that meant she had… The board knew of our history, Mary Lee's history, my history, of all of our activities, etc. I'm sure they… In fact, I think she was told, when she first came, "Don't be bringing that women's program back." (laughs) But she figured out… She managed to get it done, and got me reappointed as…

There was a search committee and everything. I applied. I thought for sure there was no way I was going to get it. But the search committee unanimously recommended me. It was only a half-time position, so I think it was like an internal search. But she went along with it, which was shocking.

We had a new office, a resource center. We're doing all kinds of programmings. We even won a national award for best women's program in the country from the American Association of Community Colleges. I couldn't go, but Mary Lee went to California to accept the award (laughs). You notice, there's a theme here, with her and I.

DePue: Oh, yeah, yeah. You were getting along better by 1993.

Kayes: Yes, we definitely were (laughs).

DePue: But I thought I picked up on something. Did they terminate the women's studies program back in the late '70s or early '80s?

Kayes: Yeah, after… Well, after I got fired, they had appointed a woman named Lee Nettnim to take over. She was older. They were wanting to combine programming for women and programming for old people. So, we said, "Oh, yeah, that's why they hired an old woman (laughs), so they could do that." She was very benign, a counselor, a nice lady, but she… She kind of reminded me of Phyllis Schlafly in some ways, not as anti-… She was more into women's courses, financial planning, assertiveness training, things like that, you know, very benign stuff.

But eventually that fell apart, and there was nothing. When Zelema Harris got appointed president, we started, in a sense, from scratch and brought back the program in a way that we weren't worrying about someone breathing down our neck all the time.

DePue: Was it so extensive that you could get a major or a minor in women's studies?

Kayes: You could get a minor. We had four women's studies courses being offered at the time: History, Psychology, Literature, and my humanities course, Women in Arts, Cultures and Societies.

DePue: What would a person do with a minor in women's studies?

Kayes: Well, you can still get minors now. You can get a major in psychology and minor in women's studies, and maybe you would be working with, somehow, women in a domestic violence shelter or working with women students and counseling them. It would kind of complement what your major was, with a focus on women.

DePue: Does Parkland still have a women's program?

Kayes: No. No, because the woman who created it, Zelema Harris, also destroyed it in 2005, 2006.

DePue: She destroyed it?

Kayes: Yeah.

DePue: That's a pretty strong, active kind of verb you're using there.

Kayes: Well, she got really upset with me, and she eliminated the… Well, here's another part of the story. [It] is that I became very active in diversity stuff around this time, and I was chair of a committee on access, equity and cultural diversity, which she appointed. We created a Center for Multicultural Education and started doing diversity workshops in town and also on campus. [We] got a grant from the Illinois Board of Higher Education to do diversity education with K -12 teachers and also college, as professional development.

But she and I had a parting of ways. And so, she just… How do I...autocratically eliminated the Center for Multicultural Education. Then she... The women's program, which I had taken a kind of a leave from, to do this diversity stuff, which she wanted me to do, Mary Lee had kind of stepped in to take… See, here's another of that theme. She had stepped in to be the temporary director.

DePue: But I thought she was at the university, instead of at Parkland.

Kayes: No, Mary Lee's always been at Parkland, teaching history. So, she came in, and so Harris eliminated the Multicultural Educational program. Mary Lee was in charge, but she [Harris] slowly started taking away all the money and totally did away with it, mostly was because she was being vindictive about the fact that I was saying in the community that we weren't hiring minority faculty, that that was a big sham, that she was talking about it, but it wasn't happening. And the ones who were hired left. There was a revolving door. So, this is what got me so interested in developing a workshop in diverse hiring.

That interest I had a long time ago, in that valedictory speech at St. Joes, where I said that there weren't diverse faculty is like, all these years

later, also got me in trouble at Parkland with a black woman as president, because she's African American with an all-white board, a lot of them very conservative and Republican and...

DePue: Is that a bad thing?

Kayes: Well, for some issues it is, yeah. They're not going to be very supportive of...Well, they told her…

DePue: Don't you need to have political diversity as well?

Kayes: Yeah. Well, they didn't have that on that board. They didn't have any diversity. I mean, yeah, they had one woman at this time on that board, and she was very hostile to women's programs. Like I said, they told Harris when she got hired, "Don't you bring that women's program back." Somehow she got them because she was very much an advocate at that time. She was very much an advocate and supportive of me and sent me to special leadership institute. She was really grooming me, blah, blah, blah.

But then, when I started pushing some issues like, you know, this diversity committee. If it's not to be just a window dressing, we need to really address some things, like lack of diverse hiring, like the fact that supportive professional women hardly get any raises or anything, while administrators are cleaning up. And so, as soon as I started addressing those issues, she got really ticked off.

And, of course, I had… You know, some of my colleagues… This is true at any institution of higher education; there's jealousy, professional jealousy, competition. They were going to her; they were jealous; they were saying things. One of her fatal flaws is she believes whatever she's told. She doesn't really find out the truth of things. So, she just autocratically called me in one day, the end of the multicultural education. "I'm handing the grant off to someone else." And then the women's program slowly just…(makes downward diving sound)

DePue: Imploded, it sounds like.

Kayes: Yeah.

DePue: What was the nature of the jealousies, that you were getting paid well because you were in charge of the program or…?

Kayes: No, I think it was because she would give me a lot of attention. She was very supportive and proud. She once told a colleague of mine that… She said that Pauline Kayes is the most brilliant faculty member at Parkland College.

Okay, now, if she… This is a colleague of mine who I still work with today in my business. And she [the colleague] says she was like, wow, that's pretty… And I thought, Well, if she's telling this to some of my colleagues, you could imagine they're not too happy about it. So, that's the kind of jealousy I mean, where they saw that I was getting a lot of attention and

support and perks from her. [She] sent to leadership this having a grant, so I'm not teaching. Like I said, there was a lot of (makes a chipping sound) gossip, rumors, and all that kind of stuff.

DePue: Which only illustrates that college professors are just like everybody else to a certain extent.

Kayes: Yeah, sometimes even worse because of the egos involved. Anyway, that was quite devastating for me. That was one of the most devastating experiences of my professional and personal life, because I believed in her; I trusted her; I thought she was wonderful; she went out on a limb to bring the women's program back; she appointed me, even in spite of all this history.

We did incredible programming; we got a Ford Foundation grant to do women's studies curriculum, integration in the humanities and social sciences, so teaching faculty, who teach sociology or psychology or English or literature, how to integrate women's studies theory, etc… We were one of like fifteen colleges in the country that got this grant. I brought a lot of prestige from this time period of 1993 to 2005 to the college. I mean, they got very well known for women's programs and diversity stuff. And today, they have neither of that really, at all.

DePue: Did you get blindsided by all of this? Or did you have some inklings that you were losing favor or losing the support that you needed?

Kayes: Well, I always knew that I didn't really have the support of that board. And I knew that there were colleagues who were jealous; I knew that. I mean, that's a part of academia. But what I didn't know is that Zalema Harris would be so vindictive. No, I shouldn't say…yeah, that she would believe whatever she was told and not really try to find out and that she would be so vindictive as soon as she thought that I was no longer, what, of any use to her. So, that was quite devastating.

I really thought about leaving the college, but I only had so many years left before retirement. So, it was very hard for me, personally. The worst part was my colleagues all treated me like a leper because they knew I had fallen out of favor, that she had basically cut my head off. They didn't want to be seen with me. I had a number of colleagues who I worked with that suddenly would avoid me in the halls and everything. That was really a hard part.

DePue: People with tenure?

Kayes: Oh yeah.

DePue: Who, theoretically, have nothing to fear?

Kayes: Right, yeah. But they became aware that that was kind of her modus operandi. If you ticked her off... And her public persona is very… Just, she's so sociable and wonderful and people just [think], Oh, you know? There became more and more instances of these things happening.

So, after she left, I'd have more and more colleagues coming to me and saying, "You were right, Pauline. This is really a sick, dysfunctional culture here, and Dr. Zalema Harris is...well, in a sense, created this kind of culture."

DePue: You mentioned the college's board; you mentioned a couple... Was the college's board reflective of the larger community that the college supports?

Kayes: What do you mean in terms of their diversity?

DePue: Yeah.

Kayes: No, no. There was not an African American on that board; there was one woman; three or four of them were white male farmers from rural areas.

DePue: Isn't that what the Parkland College serves, all those communities?

Kayes: Yeah, but there's also Champaign–Urbana [the U of I]. There was really… There was one maybe, Democratic guy; that was it.

DePue: Who appoints the board?

Kayes: Well, they're elected. But it's very much political, who runs and who gets elected. Like some of these board members have been on this board now for twenty-five years. Bonnie Kelley, she's one of them. She was the only woman, and she was very much opposed to women's programs because **she had made it herself**.

DePue: Which was Phyllis Schlafly's argument, as well.

Kayes: Right. Oh yeah, it was like… Talk about history repeating itself. But, you know, in retrospect, it's now 2013; it's seven years since that's happened or maybe eight years. I ended up starting my own business as a result, Diversity Works.

DePue: Let's start with when you retired, or maybe… Which one came first, starting your own business or retirement?

Kayes: I started my own business before I retired.

DePue: So, tell us about that.

Kayes: I started my own business because I had created all these workshops, the Cultural Diversity in Education program, which won a Promising Practice award from President Clintonin.[72]. That was 1998. So there was another award

72The Promising Practices are awarded to schools across the country that have successfully implemented a unique character practice that falls into one or more of the 11 Principles of Effective Character Education., in hopes of sharing a specific program or aspect of character education with other schools to foster collaboration and character development. (https://www.imagineschools.org/2018/05/imagine-schools-receives-41-promising-practices-awards-from-character-org/#:~:text=The%20Promising%20Practices%20are%20awarded,Principles%20of%20Effective%20Character%20Education.)

I brought to the college through my work. The grant from the Board of Higher Ed, Ford Foundation Grant, the American Association of Community College award... Parkland was really seen as a leader, like I said, in women's programs and diversity.

So, I had all these workshops I created, plus I had another series, Cultural Diversity at Work. I was working with Busey Bank in Urbana and starting to...working with the Champaign schools, the Urbana schools, the Rantoul schools, then started traveling around. You know, [I] worked in Kankakee, traveled around the state, presenting at conferences, etc. So, I had all these workshops, but now there was no one to sponsor them. I just… A friend of mine said, "Why don't you get an office in the Lincoln Building, downtown, and just start a business out of there?" I thought, Yeah, okay. So, after incredible trauma, Diversity Works is now like ten years, been in existence ten years.

DePue: Is that two words, Diversity Works?

Kayes: Diversity Works, um-hmm, Diversity Works, Inc. I started getting business and… But, of course, there was some business I didn't get because Harris was still out there badmouthing me and saying everything I did was passé and all that. There were places that wouldn't hire me because they didn't want to tick her off. That was even after she left Parkland. She was no longer there, but still that reputation, that history, was still affecting things.

But I ended up getting like a contract with Miami University in Middletown, working with them for a couple of years. Then I got a contract with the Middletown K-12 schools for two years. That was like my biggest one. It was $80,000. I was like, wow! And that's how I got to buy my house in Bonaire, because, out of the blue, came this request.

So then, working with Elgin Community College and Kishwaukee [community college in Malta, Illinois] and then being hired. I got known for not only the Culture of Diversity in Education program, but then created this whole workshop on diverse faculty hiring in both K-12 and higher ed. And that's what I've been doing, mostly.

I've worked at the University of Rhode Island [a public research university in Kingston, Rhode Island], Lewis University [a Roman Catholic and Lasallian university in Romeoville, Illinois]. I could give you a whole list of them. That was kind of an amazing thing for me, because here I am, the child of these working class parents, creating this business, where I get paid to talk, where I go do a workshop for three hours and get paid 4,000 bucks.

DePue: Essentially, making lemonade out of lemons.

Kayes: Yeah, yeah. And my father, who long ago, when I gave that valedictory speech, and he said, "Well, Pauline ought to know what she's talking about."

(DePue laughs) He'd be so happy to know that I get paid big bucks to stand up and talk.

Then [I] created a DVD on diverse hiring and was selling that and so definitely got a reputation, a national reputation, for Diversity Works, and I was still working at Parkland and...

DePue: Retired, when you could?

Kayes: ...but she was still out there, kind of influencing… I sometimes want to estimate how many contracts did I lose because she said, "Oh, don't hire Pauline; she doesn't know what she's talking about"? (makes grousing sounds) She had so much power there, for a while, in [the] State of Illinois, with the Board of Higher Ed, etc.. I think sometimes, it might have been at least maybe $200,000 worth of work that I lost because of her badmouthing.

DePue: When did you retire?

Kayes: I retired in 2000. Let's see, this is thirteen… I actually became professor emeritus for four years. I was teaching...let's see, half-time for four years, then I… So I technically kind of retired. I was getting my pension, as well as Professor Emeritus status. And then I just quit totally, January, let's see, last year, 2012.

DePue: Are you enjoying retired life? It sounds like you still keep busy.

Kayes: I am; I am enjoying it. I moved out of the Lincoln Building because I didn't want another thing to take care of, like an office or a house or anything. So I moved out of the Lincoln Building and just kind of picking and choosing what to work on, very much...

Yvonne and I, who is my colleague, who lives in Springfield, Yvonne Singley, we've known each other for about twenty years. She used to work at the Illinois Community College Board. She's African American. We're now very much trying to get a connection with the Department of Ed through [Senator Dick] Durbin's office so that they know there's this diverse hiring workshop out there that really could make a difference, in terms of...because they're touting in the Department of Ed, "We need more minority faculty." And we're saying, "Hey, here is a workshop that would help make this happen."

DePue: If you could sum up in just a couple of minutes, what's the basic message of the diversity workshop, and how you can increase diversity hiring in these colleges?

Kayes: Well, that the major obstacle to diverse hiring—and I saw that firsthand at Parkland—is that you can have the president, like Harris, say diverse hiring is good, gets the board to pass a resolution; let's do it. But then, the actual decision-making process is occurring in search committees. There's a lot of cultural biases in search committees and personal biases that prevent that from

happening. Our workshop focuses on… It's called, "New Paradigms for Diverse Faculty and Staff Hiring in Higher Education, Uncovering the Cultural Biases in the Search and Hiring Process."

DePue: The search committees consist of people on the faculty?

Kayes: Yes. In departments, who... They advertise, the job is advertised, then they interview them; they look at resumes, and then they make decisions. That is where the process is getting bogged down. Well, that's one of the major ones. Our workshop focuses on all the various biases that creep into the process. You find out that, if you get people who serve on search committees to become aware of these biases, that's the first step in the process.

DePue: What are the biases that you're discovering?

Kayes: Okay, well, one of them might be just when you look at a resume. You notice that, for example, here in this town, at Parkland, if someone had a U of I degree, they immediately...there was a bias towards them, like they were favorable, okay, compared to someone maybe who came from, let's say, a historically black college, like Xavier [a private, historically black Roman Catholic university]. That's in New Orleans.

So, [it's] just how degrees and institutions are weighed, because most of the faculty at Parkland, a lot of them, have U of I degrees. So, in order to hire someone diverse, you have to look at the possibility that you need to hire people who have degrees from different places. You'd be amazed at how often that happens. It might be at Lincoln Land [Community] College in Springfield; it might be a whole different… I don't know what their bias is towards certain degrees from certain places.

Okay, another bias would be, when I'm interviewing someone, the questions that I ask and how I evaluate the answers. That has to do with communication styles. There are various communication styles people have when they communicate. Let's say you're a linear communicator who's very point to point to point to point, and someone comes in who's very circular, you know, tells stories, loop to loop. I've got some of that; I've got both circular and linear. But someone comes in, and you make judgments based on people's communication styles.

Let's say someone comes in who is a candidate for an English position who is an African American male. He's talking about this and that, and he has a very circular, loop to loop style, telling stories, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. Some of the people on the committee might think, I don't know; I don't know if he's the right fit for this place. And that's how biases kind of work. You know, they don't come out anymore and say, "Oh, you know, we don't want to hire an African American." The new thing is, will this person fit?

DePue: We're at the point where we can kind of conclude on things. (Kayes laughs) This won't surprise you. I've got quite a few more questions to ask in that respect.

Kayes: Okay, okay. So that kind of… Well, yeah, we're at the end of my career.

DePue: You don't have anything else on your list? Good, here's the first question, kind of a philosophical approach, a corny approach, you might think. A lot has changed since the ERA fight in the 70s and culminating 1982; a lot has changed in American culture and society. And I would think you would agree that a lot of the things that you were arguing about have come to pass today.

Kayes: Um-hmm.

DePue: So, is the glass half empty or half full, in terms of where we're at with women's position in society today?

Kayes: Well, I don't know if I can answer, using that metaphor. But there are definitely advances that have been made. I mean, the number of women, for example, in medical school, women on police forces, as paramedics, chief executive officers… But still, we have a lot of women and children in poverty, especially of color. We have devaluing of certain jobs that are associated with women, like K-12 teachers, childcare workers, social workers, who get paid very little. And we still have a lot of hatred of women in this culture. It's kind of a shocking how much hatred there is of women.

DePue: What can you point to that says, this is proof that our culture hates women?

Kayes: Well, the way Hilary Clinton was treated, was regarded, when she ran for president against Barack Obama, the kinds of things that were said about her; you know, she has thick ankles. The kind of…

DePue: This would be fellow Democrats who were saying these things?

Kayes: No, it was media, media stuff. I mean the things that were said by talking heads in the media. You didn't hear things about Obama and his jug ears. Nothing was said about his ears, you know? But there was a lot said about her appearance. And just such… Well, it's even starting now, with the idea that she might run for president in the next three years. They're already starting… They've got a game out, where you can—I can't think what you do—you can kind of move this thing, and you slap her in the face, slap her in the face, slap her in the face for things that she says.[73] So, it's already starting. Okay, so that's what…DePue: But isn't that the same kind of thing that would happen for any politician? The slapping of the face kind of thing?

73 In 2000, an anti-Hillary super PAC posted "Slap Hillary" on their website, allowing individuals to virtually hit the former secretary of state with a click. (https://www.cbsnews.com/news/anti-hillary-clinton-super-pac-re-launches-slap-hillary-online-game/)

Kayes: Yeah, but the nature of it's a little bit different, like I pointed out. How they focus very much on her appearance, but for Barack Obama, they didn't talk much about his appearance at all.

And, okay, here's more proof. Just look at the number of images of women in music videos and television programming, etc., especially young women, where they basically have to dress as sex objects, still. I mean, breasts like this, short little outfits, gyrating in hip hop. I mean, it's just horrible. And plus we still have horrific incidents of rape, you know? Wasn't it some community in Ohio, [Editor's Note: This incident actually occurred in Chandigarh, Pakistan. See footnote 31] where nine guys raped a young woman who was retarded or something like that, and the whole community came out in support of them and not her? We still have… Then you look at Congress, you know. What percentage of Congress is female?

DePue: Certainly much higher than it was in 1982.

Kayes: Well, definitely. But much lower than Norway, where it's over 50 percent. So...or other Scandinavian countries.

DePue: Would you agree that many people in the women's movement are much too silent about things like the nature of rap lyrics and those rap videos that you've been talking about and the way that the media objectifies women?

Kayes: I don't think there's enough discussion of it, no. There's not enough discussion of it. And also, we're still raising girls… Girls are still being raised with fairy tales and princesses and beauty queens and all this. Now, there are resources… There's a resource called, *A Mighty Girl*, which I love, that has all kinds of clothing and books and games and everything to really give. If you have a daughter or a granddaughter that you want to give other options, *A Mighty Girl* is an incredible website. That's something that's come out of the women's movement. That kind of women's studies; that's kind of a popularized version of women's studies knowledge because it features all the time, women who are making history, young women who are heroes, like the woman in… I think in Afghanistan—where was it, Pakistan or Afghanistan [it was Pakistan]—that she…

DePue: She was shot by the Taliban.[74]

Kayes: Yeah.

DePue: I think, shot in the head.

Kayes: Yeah. And then she went back to school.

DePue: And she spoke in front of the United Nations, I believe.

74 The Taliban, who refer to themselves as the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, are a Sunni Islamic fundamentalist political movement and military organization in Afghanistan currently waging war within that country. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taliban)

Kayes: Right, right. I'm kind of having a sense of dread about Hilary Clinton running, for her to go through all this again, but she's a tough woman. But, you know, there's going to be still some of that same hatred. Not only that, she's an older woman. What did Mitch McConnell just say, maybe about six months ago? "Well, if Hillary Clinton runs, it'll be like a rerun of *The Golden Girls*.[75] And I want to say, "Go look in the mirror, Mitch. You're an old fart, and you're talking about her being like one of *The Golden Girls*?"

DePue: So, are there things that we can't say because she's a woman, that are out of the political discourse because she's a woman?

Kayes: Well, to insult her by saying she's one of *The Golden Girls*, meaning that she's an old woman, being said by an old man… (DePue laughs) We don't say, "Hey Mitch, you're running; it's going to be like the return of"… What was that movie with Walter Matthau and Jack Lemmon, *The Grumpy Old Men*?[76]

DePue: Yeah.

Kayes: (laughs) But to me the worst is how the girls are still… I mean, they're expected to do everything. They're expected to get a degree, get a career, be a gourmet cook, be a whore, be a sex object, be a great model mom. There is so much stress on them to be perfect. And a lot of girls are still… We're losing a lot of girls.

DePue: Losing?

Kayes: Well, losing them in terms of... They reach a certain age; they can be really high achievers, and they reach puberty, and they just totally start being interested in, I've got to be like a sex object; I've got to look good; it's all about my appearance. They starve themselves or become bulimic. We still have a lot of issues with eating disorders, sexual harassment, rape. And what's amazing is that there's still…

Yeah, things have changed in terms of laws, but there's still this kind of ignorance in some places, if nine guys rape a retarded fifteen-year-old, and we're going to blame her?[77] It's like, hello, where have you people been for the last thirty years?

DePue: You say there are not nearly as many women involved in politics who were elected to office as there should be.

75*The Golden Girls* was an American sitcom television series about four mature women who live together in Miami and experience the joys and angst of their golden years.(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Golden_Girls)

76 *Grumpy Old Men* is a 1993 American romantic comedy film about two curmudgeonly neighbors who have been at each other's throats for years. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grumpy_Old_Men_(film)

77Four years after a mentally retarded girl was gangraped at Nari Niketan, Sector 26, Chandigarh [Pakistan] , a local court in 2012, awarded 10 years' imprisonment to all the nine accused in the case, terming them "monsters" and refusing to show any "leniency". (http://archive.indianexpress.com/news/9-monsters-get-10yr-ri-for-mentally-retarded-nari-niketan-girls-gangrape/934693)

Kayes: Right.

DePue: But certainly there are a lot more. I wonder what your response is to the recent development, where there's a distinct group of women on the conservative side of the ledger who are getting elected to office.

Kayes: Hey, I'm all for it, yeah. But if you look around the world… I used to have an article that ranked countries in terms of representation of women in politics, and it's amazing how far down the U.S. is.

DePue: What did you think about the 2012 campaign, where very much of the Democratic dialogue was that the Republicans were waging a war on women?

Kayes: Well, I think that's… I mean, some of the incredible ignorance that's come out of some of these… Who was it, from… Was it from Missouri, the guy [Representative Todd Akin] who said that a woman can't get pregnant if she's raped, you know, that there's something in her body that will just shut down? It's, like, hello (laughs).

DePue: And most Republicans excoriated the guy who said that and tried to distance themselves as much as possible from those comments.

Kayes: Yeah. But then there's still Mitch McConnell [who] says that kind of thing. There's still kind of this theme, plus cutting food stamps. Who does that hurt mostly? Women and children. Why not cut, what, corporate perks, tax breaks for the oil industry? But no, we cut food stamps for women and children? That's who uses them mostly, single moms with children. And yeah, there's so much of their… It seems like whenever there's a women's issue, they are pretty much, right now, on the wrong side of it. I don't know if that's…

DePue: They, the Republicans?

Kayes: Yeah, that they just consciously… But there is a backlash. There's a fundamentalist backlash that really… And I think it's a lot to do with changing demographics, the fact that a black man is president, and white males are what? Their population [is] decreasing, that... It's a no-win situation. Everybody has written about this.

If the Republican Party keeps aiming at those white males living in rural areas or blue collar or whatever, forget it. Their pool is shrinking (laughs). You're aiming at the wrong groups.

DePue: I'm going to read from a commentary from an editorial that appeared in the newspaper on Friday, September 20. This is by Esther Cepeda; I don't know if you're familiar with her.[78]

Kayes: No. What newspaper?

78 Esther J. Cepeda is a nationally syndicated columnist with The Washington Post Writers Group. She was previously a a reporter and columnist for the Chicago Sun-Times. (https://www.washingtonpost.com/syndication/columnists/esther-j-cepeda/)

DePue: She writes for the *Washington Post*, the *Washington Post* writer's group. I saw this in the *Springfield Journal-Register*, but certainly it's been widely published. The name of the article, "It's a Tough World for Boys in Education.*"* I wanted to get your response to some of these figures and just read a couple of the paragraphs she's got. (reads)

> "Women in the United States now earn 62 percent of associate's degrees, 57 percent of bachelor's degrees, 60 percent of master's degrees and 52 percent of doctorates."
>
> Next one, "Boys in all ethnic groups and social classes are far less likely than their sisters to feel connected to school, to earn good grades, and to have high academic aspirations." Next one, "College Board delivered the disturbing message in 2011, reports that Hispanic and African-American boys and young adults, nearly half of young men of color, age fifteen to twenty-four, who graduate from high school, will end up unemployed, incarcerated or dead.[79] Working class white boys are faring only slightly better."

I guess the reason I'm bringing this up is to ask, is this also an outgrowth of the women's movement?

Kayes: Well, I think it's… I am very concerned about that because I have two nephews who are in their forties, and I have… Why, one nephew just had a son, who's three. In all my years of teaching, seeing males who have achievement issues, including African American, white, Latino males, it's definitely an issue. But I don't think it's the result of, you know, the women's movement, per se.

I think it's because a lot of these males, they especially say… Well, I would say all of them—the working class white males, the African-American males, the Latino males—the kinds of images that they have fed to them about what they can be and what they cannot be are so limited, working class white males too, you know?

It's like there's been no… There should have been a corollary men's studies movement. I remember one of the male faculty members at Parkland saying to us, after the women's program came back again in '93... He came up and said, "You know, there's really an issue with men. You should be doing a program on men." And we said, "We're women. You do a program on men. If you think there's a problem with our male students, you develop a program. Why should we do it?" He didn't know what to say.

I think there should be programming. Some of the programming for male students should… Some of that is going to come out of women's studies theory, about what's going on in terms of masculinity and all of that. A lot of

79College Board is a mission-driven organization representing over 6000 of the world's leading colleges, schools, and other educational organizations. (https://www.collegeboard.org/)

that theory that came about as a result of women's studies could really help males. But you need men to do it.

DePue: I think that's what many sociologists would say, that too many of these young men, especially those who are growing up in minority communities, have really no positive male example to look to.

Kayes: Right, right. And there's a book called *The End of Men* that has just come out. I can't think of the author [Hanna Rosin].[80] But she's giving all these statistics also about how women are getting the degrees and all of that. She gives all this, that women… This is a time period… You can access *End of Men*. She wrote it originally as an article—I think in the *Atlantic Magazine*—how more and more women are not wanting to get involved with a man who can't get a job or can't find himself. They have no patience anymore.

So, that's one thing that has changed as a result of women's movement, is that women used to take whatever, take whatever, take whatever... But there are more and more women saying, not only they're not going to take abuse, but they're not going to take you not pulling your weight, and you sitting around saying, "Oh, the world's changing…Oh, me, me. me. me." They just said, "Forget it, I already have two kids. I don't need another kid. I need a partner. Are you a partner adult or not?"

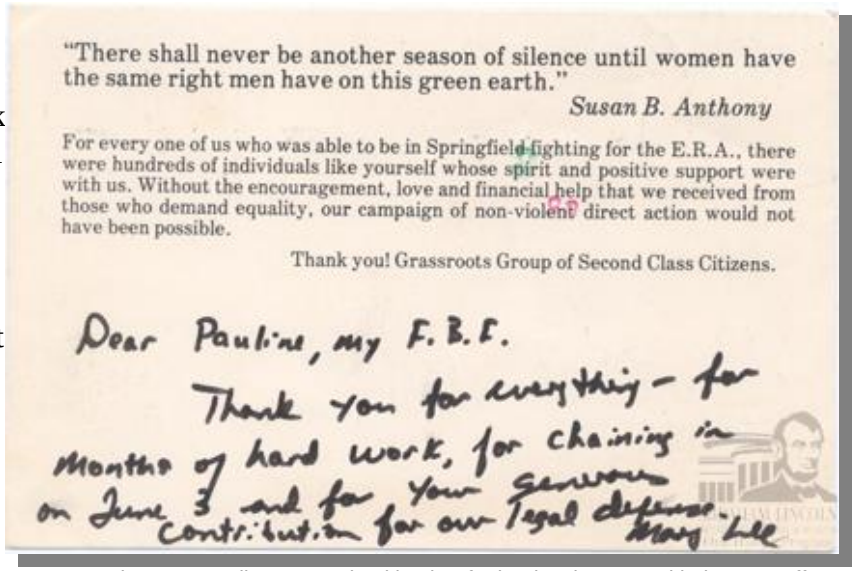
So, there are more and more women just walking out on these men. And not only that, the women are more… You know, they want to get an education achieved, and a lot of the men are just… It's a psychology, and it's complicated, but it's a real issue. It's a real issue, and I am concerned about it, because I do care about some men in my life, (DePue laughs) and I've seen it in my own family.

It really is something that women's studies theory could help address, if there were men willing to… And as a result of... I mean, when women's studies came about, there were men who were involved in creating a men's movement, like Warren Farrell was one of them who were looking at the cost of masculinity on men, you know, greater stress, heart attacks.[81] They don't know their children until they retire, and then they go, "Oh, my god, my child." They've lost time, personal connection. There was a whole aspect of that women's studies movement that was focused on men. But it just didn't take off as much as it could.

80*The End of Men: And the Rise of Women* is a book by journalist and magazine editor Hanna Rosin, based on her cover story of the same name that appeared in *The Atlantic* in 2010. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_End_of_Men)

81 Warren Thomas Farrell (born June 26, 1943) is an American political scientist, activist and author of seven books on men's and women's issues. Farrell initially came to prominence in the 1970s as a supporter of second wave feminism; he served on the New York City Board of the National Organization for Women. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Warren_Farrell)

DePue: As you take it right down to the personal level now, looking back at your life and all of the experiences you've had, what's the thing that you would be most proud of that you've accomplished or experienced?


"There shall never be another season of silence until women have the same right men have on this green earth."

Susan B. Anthony

For every one of us who was able to be in Springfield fighting for the E.R.A., there were hundreds of individuals like yourself whose spirit and positive support were with us. Without the encouragement, love and financial help that we received from those who demand equality, our campaign of non-violent direct action would not have been possible.

Thank you! Grassroots Group of Second Class Citizens.

Dear Pauline, my F.B.F.
Thank you for everything - for months of hard work, for chairing in on June 3 and for your generous contribution for our legal defense.
Mary Lee

A postcard sent to Pauline Kayes thanking her for her involvement with the ERA effort.

Kayes: I think the thing that I'm most proud of… Well, a couple of things, that one, I really stayed true to the ethos of my father—the working class ethos—and my mother, having appreciation for people who are on the margins and are disadvantaged. That has been a key philosophy of my entire life. And now, it extends to, of course, the earth and other species. So I've kind of moved from the human realm into thinking about rhinos, who are being decimated for their horns and the elephants and the ivory and the dolphins that are being killed. I mean, being captured and being put into swim with the dolphins, zoo things. So, I mean, that ethos has really stayed very much with me.

[Second is] the fact that, as a woman, I've been able to support myself all these years without a man. I'm totally on my own. I've got two homes. I've got a business; sometimes it's a little touch and go. But I thank my mother very much. She wanted me to be able to support myself because she knew that, to rely on a man, especially some men, who are abusive or whatever…

But the thing I'm most proud of is all the students that I've worked with all of these years, many of whom I'm still in touch with, who's… I really had an influence on their lives, especially female students—but some male students who—the female students in particular, who got a drive to achieve and succeed and believed in themselves, and [I] got them to think about being a woman in a whole different way.

DePue: Are there any particularly exhilarating moments you look back to?

Kayes: Exhilarating moments? Hmm Well, lots of times in the classroom, things that have happened in the classroom. In fact, I was telling a friend of mine, since I retired, I regularly—In fact, I had a dream last night—I regularly dream that I'm back in the classroom, but it's always the same thing. Like last night, I was dreaming I was in a classroom teaching, and they were all ignoring me.

And I'm saying, "Hey, hey, come on." (claps) "Come on; we've got to pay attention now. I want to talk to you about a paragraph." And in this dream, which comes over and over, it's like I'm having some kind of, what, you know, psychological withdrawal from my career of all these years, of standing up and talking.

In my job now, that I'm working with, for example, with Missouri State, I'm not doing a lot of standing up and talking. We went and presented at the President's Council, and I said a few things. But I'm not… You know, the exhilarating moments came to me just presenting and giving talks. My colleague, Yvonne, says, "God, Pauline, it's amazing. You get up there, and you're just mesmerizing. You're just mesmerizing. How do you come up with all of these things?"

And I go, "Yvonne, I've been teaching for forty years, so I try to weave in personal stories and jokes and all that kind of stuff." I think the most exhilarating moments have come from that, where I see people just totally engaged. And that's why I'm having withdrawal, having these dreams. (DePue laughs) I'm like wanting to talk, and nobody wants to listen anymore.

DePue: Well, you've been talking for quite a bit here today.

Kayes: (laughs) Except you, you're listening.

DePue: Any regrets?

Kayes: Any regrets. Well, let's see, any regrets? I could say, "Well, I didn't get my PhD." No, no, that's not really a regret. I really consciously just decided I didn't want to deal with the crap of that. But maybe regrets would be sometimes I really have pushed the envelope and irritated and really been a horrible squeaky wheel, when probably something else would have worked a little bit better. But it's that headstrong thing…

DePue: But you have no regrets about participating in the chain gang or questioning whether that was a good thing to do?

Kayes: No, no. I have no regrets about that whatsoever. But sometimes tactically… In tactically working with colleagues or whatever, maybe trying to (makes jabbing sound) stick it to them, rather than having another strategy. So, that's something I need to work on. But maybe now, since I'm sixty-two, it'll be a little easier to do.

DePue: Any closing comments for us?

Kayes: Closing comments. I just think that we are at a major crossroads in a lot of ways, in the entire planet. And what's going on with men is really an issue, and boys. To see either a young boy or a young girl with so much potential, getting stuck in these teenage years, or even before that, pre-teenage years, with losing hope in themselves and belief in themselves, then going off these paths, is just…

We just had an incident here in Champaign, where a seventeen-year-old killed himself by throwing himself from a ditch onto I-57, in front of a truck and just more and more of males kind of going bonkers with guns and shooting up people, to see us losing them.

Also, on the other side, although girls are getting more degrees, etc., but there are a number of girls who are also victims of sexual abuse and harassment and rape and just seeing horrific things in India .It's like women's studies and feminism need a major resurgence. Mary Lee and I, we're getting too old. Young people are not going to really listen to us anymore. I mean, at a certain point, you're not listened to. But there needs to be a major resurgence.

A colleague of mine, who has taken over my Hum class at Parkland, she's just always [says], "Oh, I can't believe this, Pauline; what do I say, when da-da-da.?" You know, it's like 2013, and she's still dealing with things that twenty-five years ago we were responding to.

DePue: Is that because the human condition really doesn't change (Kayes laughs) that much over time?

Kayes: It's definitely... The conditions for women are changing for the better, but in a lot of places they're not. A lot of places in the world, they're horrific. And that's why I admire Hillary Clinton and what she did as secretary of state to really put so much emphasis on investing in women, that when you invest in women, you bring the whole family along. And that's how you get… I mean, we need more of that emphasis.

We definitely aren't having that in the Congress right now. It's like we're not investing in women and women and children. It's like let them go hungry; who cares? Or let them not have healthcare. But I just feel like sometimes, just watching the news, such sadness. I just want to stand and just like, bring me on this show (DePue laughs). I think I really could have a career as someone on… And I love Rachel Maddow.[82] She's definitely a woman who definitely says a lot of things that I could definitely say, "Yeah, go, go." But then I think, Come on, bring some of us on. (DePue laughs)

You know, we have a lot of knowledge and experience and... It's just the way masculinity has totally gone bonkers and become very… I don't know what the word is for it. It's perverse. Being a man is being able to have a gun to conceal and walk in… I mean, it's just… And I think that's what is really disturbing, that whole mentality is really affecting boys in a lot of ways.

82 Rachel Anne Maddow (born April 1, 1973) is an American television news program host and liberal political commentator. Maddow hosts *The Rachel Maddow Show*, a nightly television show on MSNBC. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rachel_Maddow)

DePue: It's interesting, we've been talking about women's studies through all three of these sessions, and we end on a note where we're talking about what's going on with the boys in the United States.

Kayes: Yeah (laughs).

DePue: But you've allowed me to ask lots of provocative questions. It's been a fascinating discussion with you. I think it…

Kayes: Well, I just want to say one thing, Mark, before…we leave this. You know, women's studies has been very much about the study of women and the construction of femininity and all of that, but it also is focused a lot [on men] because it has to, because women are involved with men—they give birth to men; they have men as brothers, etc.—that it has to also look at that. It has to be a re-evaluation of masculinity and patriarchy and all of that. So, that is a part of it.

DePue: Thank you very much for (Kayes laughs) a very lively discussion.

Kayes: With that final note, my final little lecture...(DePue laughs)

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