

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Janis Droegkamp

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Family memories Oral History project

Interview # FM-A-L-2016-025

Janis (Jan) Droegkamp, who spent much of her life working for the Peace Corps in a variety of countries, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Family Memories* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Dates: May 3, May 17 & June 17, 2016

Location: Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Mark R. DePue, Director of Oral History, ALPL

Transcription by: _____

Edited by: _____

Transcript
being processed

Total Pages: _____ Total Time: 1:42 + 2:20 + 2:11 / 1.7 + 2.33 + 2.18 = 6.21 hrs.

Session 1: Early history and school years

Session 2: Peace Corps career in Jamaica and Lesotho, in southern Africa

Session 3: Graduate school, Sangamon State U., Single Mothers by Choice and Peace Corps experience in Albania, Uganda and elsewhere

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on February 7, 2017.

The interviews are archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in
Springfield, Illinois.

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Abstract

Janice Droegkamp, *Family Memories*, FM-A-L-2016-025

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Janis (Jan) Droegkamp was born in March, 1946 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. After graduating from high school in 1964 she attended Carroll College in Waukesha, Wisconsin, and after teaching and earning her MA in school counseling from Marquette University. Jan joined the Peace Corps in 1972. She did her training and had her first posting in Jamaica until 1974, then was transferred to Lesotho, a tiny country that was completely surrounded by South Africa. She was there until 1977, during the height of the apartheid era in South Africa.

Droegkamp returned to the United States in 1977 to obtain her EdD at the University of Massachusetts, majoring in international education. For the next few years she did consulting work for the Peace Corps and other international agencies around the world, most notably in Kenya, Thailand and Zimbabwe. While working in Fiji, Jan fulfilled a long-time goal of starting a family. A local Fijian man agreed to father her child, and Jan returned to the United States and gave birth to her son John in 1985. She also started to look for more stable, long-term employment, and was hired by Sangamon State University in Springfield, Illinois. She headed the Credit for Prior Learning Program and also taught at the University. Because of her involvement in *Single Mothers by Choice*, Jan appeared on the Oprah Winfrey Show in 1991. She continued to work at Sangamon State (later changing its name to the University of Illinois in Springfield), until 2006, occasionally doing overseas sabbaticals researching women's issues. After retiring from her full-time as a full professor emeritus, Droegkamp returned to the Peace Corps, accepting management positions in Albania and Uganda. She retired in 2012 and returned to Springfield where she does a variety of volunteer work.

Subject Headings/Key Words: Peace Corps training; Peace Corps work in Lesotho, Africa; Peace Corps work in Jamaica; *Single Mothers by Choice*; Peace Corps work in Albania; Peace Corps work in Uganda; Oprah Winfrey Show; peace Corps work in Fiji Islands; Sangamon State University; St. John's Military Academy, Delafield, Wisconsin

Note to the Reader: Readers of the oral history memoir should bear in mind that this is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, interviewee and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. 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.

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