

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Joyce Webb

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Illinois Statecraft - ERA Oral History project

Interview # ISE-A-L-2011-036

Joyce Webb, one of the founders of the Carbondale, Illinois Women's Center and a supporter passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Illinois Statecraft – ERA Fight in Illinois* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: August 25, 2011 Location: Webb residence in Carbondale, Illinois

Date: August 26, 2011 Location: Webb residence in Carbondale, Illinois

Interview Format: Digital audio

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

Transcription by: Audio Transcription Center, Boston, MA

Edited by: Betty Workman & Jan Culp, ALPL volunteers

Total Pages: 109 Total Time: 2:14 + 2:35 / 2.23 + 2.58 = 4.81 hours

Session 1: Joyce Webb's early life & experiences in Carbondale through 1970

Session 2: Creation of the Carbondale Women's Center and support for ERA

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on April 11th, 2012.

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

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Abstract

Joyce Webb, *Illinois Statecraft*, ISE-A-L-2011-036

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Joyce (Cooper) Webb was born on April 18, 1927 in Seattle Washington, the daughter of E.F. and Martha Cooper. Her father lost his job early in the Great Depression, and the family home was lost in 1932. They spent several years in a nearby logging town before moving back to Seattle in 1937. Joyce talks about coming of age during World War II and about attending college at the University of Washington. While there, she met sailor Howard Webb, when his ship was in port for decommissioning in 1946. The two married in 1947. The couple spent several years in Iowa City, where Howard earned his PhD at the University of Iowa. They spent three years at Central Missouri State University before they moved to Carbondale, IL in 1956, where Howard taught American Literature courses at Southern Illinois University.

Throughout her life, Joyce has volunteered for several organizations, especially with the League of Women Voters early in her life. In 1971 she began her relationship with a hospital in Carbondale, but especially with the creation of the Women's Center in Carbondale, one of the very first in the country and the first in a smaller community. Joyce was involved with the initial discussions on the possibility of creating a Women's Center, with only a general concept of what that would be, and translating that idea into opening the center in November 1972. Over the next several decades the center became a vibrant institution, providing shelter for battered women and a rape crisis center, while providing many other services to local women. She also was an early supporter for the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, a battle that centered in the Illinois legislature throughout the 1970s, ending with its defeat in 1982. She attended the National Women's Conference held in Houston, Texas in 1977, one of the movement's flash points between supporters of ERA and opponents led by Phyllis Schlafly.

Subject Headings/Key Words: The Women's Center in Carbondale, Illinois; the National Women's Conference in Houston in 1977; Equal Rights Amendment fight in Illinois; growing up in Seattle Washington during WW II; Southern Illinois University; life in Carbondale, IL; Howard Webb, American Literature professor at SIU; burning of Old Main on SIU's campus in 1969; University of Iowa; League of Women Voters; Phyllis Schlafly

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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