

Interview with Mary Soper  
Location: Marquette, Michigan  
Date Unknown

Subject: Women's Center in Marquette

#### START OF INTERVIEW

Jane Ryan (JR): Hello, this is Jane Ryan and I would like to introduce Mary Soper as a contributor to our discussion of the history of the Women's Center in Marquette, Michigan. Mary has been involved almost from the \_\_\_ or from the \_\_\_ and she will talk a little bit about her own background and then what brought her to the Women's Center and her contributions to it. Welcome, Mary.

Mary Soper (MS): Thank you. So my name is Mary \_\_\_ Soper, I grew up downstate and moved to Marquette to actually go to Northern Michigan University in 1971. I chose this campus because I had two small children, their father had died two years previous and we were all ready to \_\_\_ ski hill here and I needed to finish my degree, I had two years. I ended up with a degree in social work in which I personally have used in a macro sense, I never done. I have done some AGC social work, but I've done most of public policy in a number of \_\_\_ in the public as well as the non-profit world within in the state and sometime we spent at plain \_\_\_ Milwaukee is director public policy for the state. I am currently retired, I'm 70 years old... what else would you like to know? That's probably enough. In part of what does make in impact here, I have the oldest family of nine, we all still live in Michigan. I have four brothers and four sisters. My mother was a feminist and activist and my father just sort of looked at a solid just can \_\_\_ giving the car keys. I grew up on apple farms in the state of Michigan, six generation grower. That's a long story that we don't need to get into but as a result of that, my mother certainly attended the national conference for women as a woman entrepreneur representing the farm community in Michigan. Holly was there, I was there, there were a number of us, and I was actually staff to that national conference.

JR: So you had a role model right there in front of you, your mother?

MS: Oh, I should have. Yes, I did, absolutely.

JR: Alright. What brought you to the Women's Center then?

MS: Well, actually, my husband died in 1979. I had two children who at that time were two or three. My mother during that period of living, and I was 24 years old, so I was quite young. She had heard an interview by a staff at the Continuous Center which is the longest going... ongoing women's center in the country and that was at Oakland University and there was funded by Kellogg Foundation. And she had heard about this program that they were doing was that 12 week program called Investigation and to Identity. And she told me about it one day what she did as a young widow and she said she thought it really helpful for me to go through that program and don't get a handle on...what next? And I did. As a result of that, I ended up coming up to Northern to go to school to finish my degree in social work that was in 1971 in the winter. Marquette was just alive as a feminist community. There were, I think at that time, 13 consciousness raising groups going on, I eventually joined the consciousness raising group and

little by little, part of what did happen is the president call the group of women into his office and felt that there was something rumbling across the peninsula and about women, for women, by women, to women, whatever, he didn't know what was going on. But I think he thought he was going to call this group together and they would come and give him some ideas, that was it. Well, that group of women went to the president and said, there are women that are in need across this peninsula and we think it's appropriate for Northern to begin to put some program and they answer those needs. \_\_\_ had written her book, her first book, The Feminine mistake. So that was alive. As I said, before we had consciousness raising groups going on here in Marquette. The first chapter, I think, I believe it was first U.P. to have been formed in Houghton, and I can't remember exactly what was going on \_\_\_, but things, I mean, it was some flexion what was going on in the country. But of course, being a peninsula, it found even bigger and more here because we were such a small, everybody knew what everybody was doing. So that's how I began it was at the first, I think it's actually attending this gathering.

JR: \_\_\_ was a former conference.

MS: It was a conference, it was held at the Holiday Inn, there were women from all over the U.P. but the strongest delegation came from Copper Country and from Marquette. And as a result of that, they together it was really... I don't know if mandate is too strong word, I don't think so. It was mandate to back to Northern to do something.

JR: And they picked up on it. There was the point...

MS: I don't think they were happy about it because a number of women actually had, when they presented this \_\_\_ result of the conference to the president, there were a number of women that actually resigned, very powerful women resign that task force because they were not being paid attention to that really got attention and that's one thing to start to happen on campus.

JR: Excellent. And what was your personal follow-up, were you still in taking classes?

MS: Oh yeah, I was always taking classes. I hadn't graduated yet. But because I had been through a Women's Center downstate and had been trained by that Women's Center to do group leadership. I had a really strong sense of what to do and how to make that happened. And I have actually at that point, feels Dr. Griffith, Philis Griffith was, they've been appointed part-time as a first director of the Women's Center.

JR: Gail. Gail Griffith.

MS: Gail! Yes. Thank you. Gail. And it became you know, there were... Holly was teaching some classes, there were a number of other women teaching classes. Jane Elder was teaching, she was role strong feminist and there were lots of people. But Gail was heading up this effort and I think she and I talked and I finally walked over to Dr. Jackson's office. I remember it was a third floor of one of those old buildings and you know, I'm just a student. I'm trying to get through school and \_\_\_ children I'm raising; one of my priorities was at that skills often as I could be and I also had two sisters moving in town too. But so I walked into Dr. Jackson's office, I had an appointment.

JR: And he was continued education, yeah.

MS: He was that continued education at that time. I worked into his office and I thought, you know, what is this going to be all about? But he listened very strongly to what I talked about in terms of how the training who Dr. \_\_\_ was a head of the women of the Continuous Center. And her number too was Dr... I can't remember her name. She was finishing her Ph. D was specifically for the topic of older women.

JR: And this was the Oakland.

MS: This was the Oakland University that through the Continuous Center. Dr. Geri \_\_\_ was a counseling center psychologist and he was one of the big consultants and those three masterminded this program of working with community women and beginning programs of the Investigation and To Identity. So Dr. ...

JR: Griffith here?

MS: No, Jackson.

JR: Oh, Dr. Jackson.

MS: We talked about how Continuous Center was set up and how it was structured. He took notes and ultimately we started he, we, Gail, small group of people started working with some of the counselors at Northern to form a training program and those days the training lab concept was still very vibrant, Dr. Walker was there at...Dr. Gennie Walker, they were both there. There was a strong group of trained counselors over the intermediate school district. They volunteered to help with us so we pull this \_\_\_ trained psychologists together and figured out how we could adapt some other material that was going on all across the country to train women through this at that time, part time Women's Center at Northern to them go out into the community and work with women however that would happen.

JR: You filled in a blank in the other interviews and knowing how that connection for training and that there were guidelines, there were formats going around. So you don't have to invent a wheel. But you had...

MS: We had a...no. I mean, we had some incredibly talented people Dr. ...both are the Walkers, both had their Ph.D., and they were doing trainings all over this country. That was in the days of CETA. I don't remember. CETA that was a work training program I can remember how all worked. But they were training people on campuses and communities all over the country. It's like, well, we think we might want to some of that here in Marquette. Dr. Victoria \_\_\_ who just finished her Ph.D. in spiritual psychology in the East Coast and she brought that element into it. And she's just a force to be reckoned with then but currently you know, now, many years later, she's put her practice together. That's an international consulting practice. And there were others like that Gary \_\_\_ who still is in Marquette, he was very involved in that and there elder was couple other people from the intermediate school, John \_\_\_ was very supportive, \_\_\_ was very supportive, So you took what was going on at the intermediate school district in land of that would, what was going on at Northern, and then we looked at what about program that have been very successful at Oakland and we just put it together. It worked.

JR: Excellent. And I see your role is quite key and this is what astounds me about this whole thing. In locally, the right people were there at the right time, like Gary Walker who was just interviewed, he was

open to suggestions in the prosecutor's office about abuse that all over the country people, we were not open to that.

MS: Right. But you know we didn't start with the abuse...

JR: No, No.

MS: Those eventually came. But about the whole community, that's a good example using Gary Walker, the community was so prime and so right and so many women from all aspects of the community were as I set involved in consciousness raising groups. So the consciousness in this community was raised. I mean, when you had Sally May run for county commission, and you had Geraldine \_\_\_ all the reaches that she had, and Holly and other people that were running for office. I mean, women were just sort of doing it. They were doing it publically, they were being elected, they were being out there, they were on the page of front pages of papers every day, and they were on channel 6 every night and 13 and then they were called on to be regional and statewide speakers of variety of topics and then we would also brain, powerful women in this community to talk about their issues and what they have been doing. So Marquette was a trendsetter, it was very, very exciting. It was...

JR: Cool.

MS: It was \_\_\_ setting and that was in the '69, '70, '71, '72, '73 in that period of time. It was something special. First of all, little town...

JR: Well, these have been referred to in other interviews but pre \_\_\_ the first female to set up a practice here came from this course.

MS: That's right.

JR: And she thought she was coming to the \_\_\_ when she said they were doing things here.

MS: For \_\_\_ who was at the counseling center, he came to be there. John Russell was there as well. Yes. \_\_\_ was really quite astounded. But lots of people were astounded that was going on here.

JR: Right. That's really exciting. Okay, so you were certainly involved in the bringing of training, do you want to elaborate on some of your particular interest and somewhat programming that went on and what role you play there?

MS: Well, I have to think about that. It was very long time ago in my mind, I think the thing that was, I think about... what I think about those years is, we were... we did training to take people out to work in the community. Well, lot of that worked. Carolyn McDonald and I think we talked to every continued education... community education program and we had four to six week programs. We said at high schools in Ishpeming and Negaunee and Marquette, Munising, Newberry, Houghton, Hancock...we were working was adult women who were just trying to figure it out. That we were back in that you know, we read about that now and that was very real. It was like Ok, you graduate from high school or college and you maybe work a bit, then you get married, you have children and you set up household and then it was the question of what next? What is this order? No, this wasn't an order, but what do they really mean? So Carolyn and I'm used to turn those chairs around in those classrooms and seven o' clock at night form those circles and women of all ages from 22 to 75 or 80, would sit there and talked back and

forth about their life experience and what they were doing, probably not doing. Whether they were frustrated or not frustrated, whether they thought about going into business, whether they thought about going to school and whether they thought about whatever? All those secret thoughts finally had found a place in that circle to be discussed.

JR: Good chair.

MS: I'm just, did that...?

JR: Did you do it then purely as volunteers?

MS: Yes.

JR: That's the other thing that comes through, I know. The people there cared enough, they put out like that.

MS: The whole thing was about through...There was full time, when Holly came as the second director, first time director, she was already edge on faculty I think. I think she was edge on...She was paid on the first counsel was Judy Russell, I think she was paid half-time or three-quarter time. There was a secretary, spokesperson and I'm not sure they were full time either. And then there was...I mean the whole thing was run. I'm volunteers. There was staff that was volunteering some sort of secretarial support staff in the office; we had all these people of there going out men and women going out into work with the classrooms, high school classrooms. They were all volunteers. We had to get released time for those people from their employees, so yes. You have expertise people going up there but each one of those employees, their employees were also giving of that time because people were still be in pain and just had released time we were called it now. So again, it was, the effort was amazing. It was just across the community and it was deep within the community. It was very, very interesting.

JR: And you mentioned that some men were actually involved in it?

MS: Oh, sure. There was a guy in the hospital I can't think of his name. He was nurse, he was a male nurse; there were a couple male nurses. And that was the obvious when you talk about non-traditional careers. There were women who were car-sales people, who were mechanics, various dealerships, who were working in the various trades, there were more women that were non-traditional careers, but there were some that. And we took them into the classrooms and they were just ... these kids paid so much respect but they really paid attention to what these adults were saying that they currently were doing and that you too as a student sitting there, you too can think about different things for your life. If you choose the data in those days were showing that women particularly, this came out of the office of women at work at the national level department labor. And then at the department of labor in state of Michigan, Pat\_\_ was the director at that time, Pat, she was just amazing person. She rent this office of women at work. So we were collect, there were data out there, so we were walking and just started talking off the top of our heads, we had hard, core data, part of that was insane at that time, this was 1972, '73, '74. That the typical worker at that time would be changing their careers at least three times. Changing, not sort of reshaping but changing their career three or four or five times. So when we went to talk to parents, grandparents, like great grandparents stories, when we went to talk to them, we're going, this is what's happening now. So when your daughter, your son, your grandchildren are out in the world work, they have to be adaptable because that's what our future is telling us. That was the future we were talking about in 1973. Look at where we are right now in 2050.

JR: Incredible.

MS: We can't even talk about the jobs coming up in the future. It's what they are going to be. So we were going back to, we have to be adaptably, you have to be flexibly how to know how to be work in a team, yes, you have to know all the specific things of it. You got this whole thing that so we were talking about that, from our little Women's Center in little Marquette, Michigan.

JR: In the '70s.

MS: In the '70s, yes. It's only proven out and my granddaughter what are my granddaughter who now is 20, I think she's 20. She went through Marquette schools; she hated schools; really, really hated schools. Just really hated it and didn't want to go to college, but guess what she's doing. She's a journeyman electrician. She had no idea what I was; her grandmother was talking about in those years. But that's what she's doing.

JR: That's a wonderful example.

MS: It's just genetic, maybe. I don't know. Those days' works I do.

JR: Yes. Okay, so you were going out into the community?

MS: So, yeah. We had this team and we've actually got funded for that. That for Great Lakes regional planning commission which I'm very fond of because alternatively I went to work at the state work of very close with all of them that it was a consortium of Northern, Northern part of the country, Northern Wisconsin, the Upper Peninsula, and Northern Minnesota, they were government, they mostly came from the governor's offices but they were charged with academic development in this Northern region of the country.

JR: Was it a federal program?

MS: That was really State. It was State, three states coming together but they had access to put federal moneys into place for a variety of economic development issues, electric issues, and infrastructure stuff. Well, they knew about the Women's Center and I never actually really asked why they funded us, we were writing proposals like crazy all the time. And so we submitted our proposal to them to put this center for non-traditional careers for high school men and women together. And they funded it. They funded it actually quite nicely for a year. And I ran back program so that allowed me through the Women's Center, so I had staff position of the Women's Center and that allowed us to really spend full time putting these teams of people together with all the stuff we had to do getting work release, etc., coordinated each of the school deals to the classroom teachers to bring this teams into the classroom which we did, usually teams three or four. While they were working with the students and teacher in a classroom, I would do it in service with a board of education members talking about the data I mentioned it little while ago. This is what the data showing. This is what where these students are going to be, they are going to, have to be flexible because their jobs are not going to be static. You are not going to go work for one company and then there always be a job for that student's lifetime. No, no, no, no...

JR: And what was your motive in working with a board? That they would then agree?

MS: They were on the sale that their curriculum had to reflect the coming changes so they were getting these high school students ready, many of them to go to a college but many of them go right into the work world that they had to have an understanding that things were going to be changing as they, students were growing older and moving in one job or another. They would have to be ready to adapt to the changing job market.

JR: And as you said a little earlier it... so now, very same thing, different \_\_ but...

MS: Right. It's exact, well... we were talking about the future and that was, that is, and what continued to be the future in those country and it's way before the economy failed, etc., etc., but we were still talking about reminding community and they've always talked about the resource, the natural resources were going to be mined out, well, we still hear that conversation today but they are still going. But you have to have almost... you have to have a college degree to get to that mind. Back then, you can get in with the high school degree or knowing somebody because your uncle and your grandpa, etc., etc., doesn't work like that anymore. You have to make decisions right at you at the \_\_, as making decisions right at the moment when they needed it; you don't go to foreman or somebody to make some of those decisions they have to make it right now. So you have to have grounding in the confidence to do that which is a lot about what we talked about back then.

JR: So...

MS: So we have that grant for a year. Along with that at the Women's Center, let's see. The women in labor project was going on through a \_\_ between \_ and his office and the Women's Center as we had somebody who's working full time in the labor movement issues \_\_ and she was actually putting curriculum together. They were writing curriculum and then going out into various classrooms across the country... across the U.P. We were writing curriculum for the non-traditional careers people, our program... I think there was one other so we did a lot of curriculum development for the high schools in those days. In fact, we got, we received a lot of awards, non-traditional career program, I remember going to say, \_\_ is to accept the national award for that program and then came back and was real committed to continue curriculum writing so that Northern through the Women's Center \_\_ curriculum into the high schools working with the classroom teacher to them to deliver that curriculum. But the powers at be at the university didn't quite get it that we could have been the leaders of non-traditional careers in teaching. We were there, we were the leader. But there was... I can't remember which school, which university it was...Kansas State, maybe. They really wanted to disseminate their work they had done. We were further ahead than they were. But they were more assertive and aggressive and they had a support, entire support of the university structures.

JR: So that would have been the bump in the road that could have gone, blossomed a little more.

MS: It could have gone; it should have gone another way. And the same thing with the women and labor movement, women at work, those I think a lot of the curriculum that was written at the Women's Center actually went out to the national labor movement and that was implemented. We were just all doing our work. We had very little money, we didn't have an office at the university, we didn't have the support of the university from the print, you know, we could have things printed, and we had access to cars to travel, which is really issue up here. So we have this support, those support service the university was main \_\_ much, much easier. But we had to fight. Holly was fighting all the time for a recognition for

support, for just you know... just little bit more work, just one more program, one more staff person. Fight, fight, fight.

JR: Perfect person in there we do it.

MS: Well, exactly. Exactly. But it was not easy. It was just tough, although we were doing it. And we probably could have blown our horn more than we did. We did something \_\_\_ to that or within the community.

JR: And as one person not involved, my area was the legal women borders, kind of parallel stuff...

MS: You know, we all working together.

JR: Yes, yes. But I was aware of the good things but again, this is an inside memory but I do think we didn't know at that time how cutting edge and now ahead of the game, Marquette was.

MS: Because we didn't talk about it. We're just doing our work. We didn't, I mean, I don't think there was anyone I could think of a couple of awards ceremonies we would have that most of the community would come to and we would praise ourselves and pat each other around the back in whatever but then the next morning, we're back at the grind doing things. So I don't think we... I think interaction we understood how important it was, some of us, because I was not from here originally, I thought they were doing other parts of the country so did other people. Some of us compare what we were doing here, what we knew they were doing there, but you know, so what? We're back home and let's \_\_\_ try to get through beach before go to bed.

JR: So, now, did you transition when they moved then from Northern to the \_\_\_ church, were you still on board?

MS: I was on the board.

JR: Ah, during that transition?

MS: Yes, by that time I had that position with the non-traditional careers for a year. They were ready to fund, they were ready to give us money for the next year but for something else, and I was not going to do that. I already done all this work tilling the soil so we were ready to just continue and grow the program and they didn't want to fund that. They wanted to fund something else. Well, that's fine. I don't know what they did. I don't remember because I, by that time, moved on. And I moved on for \_\_\_ I was still living in the community and I was director of \_\_\_'s office for the Upper Peninsula. And I moved to his office in Iron Mountain \_\_\_ to Marquette, I was not real popular down there. So when I was on the board and...

JR: Because that was the difficult time in terms of the acquiring funds and...

MS: It was a very difficult time. But decision, I like the meeting at Guild Hall. When the final decision was made that we were leaving Northern. And I was the chair of the board who had walked in with the executive team to Dr. Jamrich and indicate that he wanted us, I can't remember what he wanted us to do, but basically shut up. Basically be quiet. And I was one who said, well, actually we're not going to basically be quiet. We are actually leaving the university, thank you for everything you've given and



support. And we were moving into the community, we were going to become a community-based organization. Well, it was very scary because moving into the community, we didn't even own our desks or chairs or waste basket. So we didn't have anything be carried but our files. You know, throw those and box, we can walk into the street but St. Paul Cathedral was very gracious and they gave us the lower level of Guild hall. And so that's we started setting up organization that had no money, had \_\_\_ staff was at the same time Holly Greer were leaving to community to move to New York, where \_\_\_ called to a church in New York. So we had in fact, I remember this was literally, one of the scariest things that happened to my career. We were interviewing for new director and we had a number of applications. We were the executive personal committee and the executive committee of the Women's Center. And some, there was person I don't remember who this woman was but there was a person that came through town, literally visiting. I mean, she just like on a way to some places else, but had red papers or whatever and thought they were hired and looking for a new Women's Center director. So she applied. She had fabulous resume. I mean, that was written in gold. Everything we needed was on that resume. She had done it from, I think she's downstate Michigan but she may have had some other states that she worked as well. So we interviewed her, excellent interview. This woman was really very impressive. So we were almost ready to retire right there. her interview was fabulous and it's one of the big lessons I learned over the years, you always check resumes but you go way beyond but they give you, so I knew a feminist lawyer in Detroit who had her fingers in everything and I do a quite well wait in the kitchen in this house where we all were that doing this interviewing and I called her and she basically said, do not even think about it. And she gave me this whole background thing. I came into the rule where everybody was assembled, people in Women's Center. And I was shaking. I was visibly shaking because we were at hairs \_\_\_ away from hiring this woman. Only goes to show you'd better check and check and check. And we did, thank god. Cause we would not be sitting here talking about the Women's Center if that action had gone through. So that's how Sally May was hired.

JR: And Sally had been involved so she knew what was happening.

MS: Sally had been involved in this about years, Sally was... she's been involved in beginning, and Sally was one of those women from the community who rent for office. And one, as she was \_\_\_ commissioner and continued doing both of those examine for a while. Quite a while, I think. So Sally was down the basement trying to piece together, a volunteer community based organization and people were grinded out applications and request from proposals, responding the those and eventually started to piece and part things together. It was very scary time, I was director of the governor's office for 15 colleges and I had huge responsibility in \_\_\_ this words here.

JR: Did that help?

MS: No... yes. I mean it did in one sense, but it didn't help in terms of making anything happen here, but at least I had good contacts. But I'm trying to do my job, which was much more than a full time job and then we were trying to move this Women's Center from the university to community-based center which was another full time job. So no matter where it was, I was not doing what I really wanted to be doing, I mean, it was very touching goal because if \_\_\_ ever knew, how much time, I guess all know now, how much time of I was spending at the Women's Center although the governor \_\_\_ saying, he was a feminist and Ms. \_\_\_ who was a noted feminist but that wouldn't have saved my job. I was still working for the State of Michigan. So it was a tough time, everybody was under a lot of pressure. But I think every... the board was a powerful board... powerful women, all committed to the same direction and same goals...

JR: Did some other programming have to shrink at that time? Or we were able to sustain as far as you know what was...?

MS: You know, Sally could answer that, but then I can't. I \_\_ sure, I mean, we won't do in the classroom stuff anymore. The labor movement, the labor issue, the women in labor movement that has all pretty much disappeared. We didn't have access to do, well, we were at the university. We did some, we would bring major speakers in, but we didn't have to pay room rent, we didn't have to pay either print our material, well, they pay some but our materials we get printed. Posters would be distributed. I mean, stuff got done in much, much, much cheaper way that you have to pay if you were not part of university. So we were having major conferences on rape issues, women in violence issues, career issues, I mean, all sorts of things. And we can do it at the university. They get those big rooms and we filled them up with people. We could get speakers because when you pick up the phone, you say from \_\_ University, that's a lot easier than saying I'm from \_\_ community center...

JR: In the basement at the church?

MS: Basement at the church, yeah. Could you fly in from New York, please? And speak to our group? That the \_\_ was very different. But we, so that thing changed. But we knew they would. I mean, I was totally supportive of keep being community-based. I mean, I know it missed a lot but what we really did was representing across the community. It wasn't representing I mean, our goal was never too increased tuition. Our goal was to increase women's understanding of choice in all aspects of their lives.

JR: And one of the several of the others have mentioned then you are alluding to that, it also had people... women who might never see themselves in university setting and not even wanted to go into the administration building or willing come to church you drew in a whole different cohort of women which was probably a plus.

MS: We really did. And I mean, there were like \_ speak about here and talk about for international women's year but in this part of the country, women who had to stay in a relationship that wasn't working because of financial situation finally understood that there was a supportive group out there or in their community. That would help them move into another area of their life, another aspect of their life. But maybe they were going to have to go back to school. Maybe they were going to...that could have been just going to finish high school that could have been going to continued education classes at the local schools. I could have been working into campus at Northern which served in the Upper Peninsula as a junior college as well as four year institution that could have going to bay, could have going any place but they knew they have the supports of this huge network people that might never ever know but psychologically, in spiritually, in socially, there was this place that was going to help them do that.

JR: And we have interviewed a couple of those women.

MS: That's right. I'm sure you have. That made so much difference in women's lives and their children's. Women and children, I mean, released what was all...

JR: Everybody benefits.

MS: Everybody benefits, the community benefits from some of those skills.

JR: So now, I'm moving on kind of logically, when they finally bought the South Front Street place, were you still in board? I know you've had a lot of different career moves, were you still involved?

MS: No.

JR: No? Okay.

MS: I had moved on to other things professionally. And I wasn't living here at that time. I always heard what was going on because I had property here and family here. But I was not involved in that.

JR: So now you were living back in Marquette, now?

MS: Yes. I retired back here. And there were other periods of time when I came back. I came back and I have to work and figure out what years that were but I was recruited back to the community to do some marketing for the convention visitor bureau, the city of Marquette in the university. When the dorm, during the then the this bring more marketing experiences in the community to make it click at the outside world and I was vice president of Northern \_\_\_ for number of years and variety of other thing. So I was in the community but not really involved in Women's Center.

JR: Okay. Have you resumed any level of activity at this point or are you...? I know you were watching...

MS: When I came back, there was effort going on to try a...I don't know exactly what they were trying to do. They were trying to figure out... they were trying to celebrate major celebration of the development of the Women's Center. It must be the 25 or 30, something anniversary. They are trying to do some fundraising, the person they had hired to do some of that work couldn't find out, find what she needed. So I put together a group of founding women and we did some brainstorming with their consultant you know, there's about year, you have stuff in.

JR: So you were still bringing your organizational skills to the bureau and what I have noticed as I learned and interviewed people, you know, with a down turn on the economy nationwide, the programming, the grants that could have been gotten. They just started there. So the struggle continues to just basic funding.

MS: There are not there, there are not there for anybody. It's not just the Women's Center. It's just not there. I personally when the Women's Center made decisions to put all their efforts way from the other community basic kinds of things in focus of abuse, women and children that was not my priority was. It's not that, I didn't think it was important, it's just...I was much more concerned about but the community-based, cross the board, women who needed support to make some decisions to move forward in their lives and I thought we had established incredible track record for that. So that race I just didn't support what the Women's Center was doing at that day through on the baby out of the bath water, there was money there when they could have been found. There should have been money. Well, I'm not going to speculate. There was money available. But you had go after there was probably \_\_\_ go after. But I had moved on, I mean, I had moved totally in the public policy just well as the majority of my career.

JR: Well, again, this is come through than as funding decreases than you make choices than depends whose program, you know?

MS: Well, you know what? Let's be honest about this. I had two children to raise. The Women's Center was never going to pay me enough money to raise my kids and put them through college.

JR: That's been a chronic issue. Again the volunteers and...

MS: That's chronic issue with non-profits, everywhere. They have finally in this state, and I worked for Council Michigan Foundations as well as Michigan Non-profit Association. For number of years and eventually they had the non-profit world, clearly had to deal with you could not continue doing this because it was immoral. You could not bring this talent in, and then watch them, walked streets when they retired because they couldn't set up and that has changed; much, much better than the state, \_ states. Really both of foundation world and non-profit world is way ahead of almost every other city.

JR: Really, that's encouraging.

MS: Oh, yeah. Absolutely, we are... Michigan. People understood what trendsetter the state was. There it is. But in the non-profit world, clearly, we were way up head. We have some marvelous leaders in the non-profit world and the foundation world. The foundation world in Michigan is far about what's going on almost in any other state. It's very actually very excited. So I got involved in other places but there was...yes, so that's where I just moved to other remains.

JR: Yes. And they've had their significant bumps in the road but I think again what comes through, I'm sure you would agree is those Founding Mothers, Holly in whatever had to be brought back to rescue at a certain stage of the Women's Center and they've done it. So your passion comes true everybody. It just incredible...

MS: The issue always when you were in any organization or in any family. The issue is always succession. And if you were not grabbling with, if you are not thinking about succession, who's going to be the next leader? How, where they come and come from? How are we going to continually train our staff and update the staff skills and expertise, give them the experience they need to be able to move to the next level. Succession is always, always critical. Typically women haven't thought about that, really.

JR: And I can speak to an organization I mean, same thing too. Actually that's why the legal women \_\_ folded we kept recycling women and then when we were gone, people said why didn't... We had worked for several years to recruit younger women and they were busy doing the careers and... you know, their trends again.

MS: That's the thing and one of the big trends in the non-profit world is volunteering. The whole volunteer movement, the whole volunteer world, across the board has changed because the economy has changed. Because for lots and lots of reasons, so to get a volunteer call, you don't get them and keep them for years and years and years you get them from projects. If you were lucky, maybe two but it's got to be short-term and you had that if you well-trained and they have, I mean, everybody works today. Very few people have the \_\_of that.

JR: You know, this is my, and I support one hundred percent of everything, well, not a hundred percent, but the \_\_ but to me, that does come back to hunters that we've gotten women into the work force, our economy has developed to depend on the women as well as the men in a couple situation. So these women are exhausted from their days and raising their kids, they don't want to go to meetings, where in

my age, we loved going to meetings and talking adult talk, because we were basically at home with our kids, which we enjoy. But we needed some of this brain stuff.

MS: That's right. That's one reason of whole moving came together but then the other part of that, there was inner period time when you looked at all the data and in a traditional home, mom, dad, children, children's school, dad working, whatever. Mom going to work... worked second job suddenly you have to have another car, you have to have daycare, you have to have a world \_\_, you have to keep that world \_\_ up, usually. Up here is not quite as bad, this is in the bigger cities. But suddenly when you look at the data, at the numbers, it's costing more for that second job to happen and to maintain the household. So really, the household's not making any more money if mom had been staying home. That was a small period of time than the whole economy tanked. Women were able to get often times get jobs when the men had been laid off or fired. So the point was I think at the very beginning was, there's whole financial picture that's constantly changing and one of the reasons I mean the job market's changing. The needs in the job market, the technology, we had no idea. We were using a typewriter back there and the hand cranking write, and suddenly, I just got in the piece of equipment for my kids, my birthday, no idea how to use of that. I got to go hire somebody to teach me. We were just moving so rapidly and women high school girls, junior high school girls, boys, get ready because you're going to be right in this way. That's what we were really at that consulting service, get ready. Because this is what's going to happen to you and they were getting that same message at home. That's part of problem.

JR: Now, I'm going to bring us toward the close, what would you like to see happen with the Women's Center? Do you think we still need the modeling and getting into the schools? What would you...?

MS: Oh, you know, I don't know.

JR: I know from interviews that they do still feel the focus on protecting women in abuse situations and rape situations \_\_, they helped but it doesn't go away.

MS: I think that's the wrong model, totally.

JR: Do you?

MS: I think we need to be talking to every football coach, every basketball coach, every coach of any male team and those people need to be \_\_not quite the right word, \_\_to work with their students and like this behavior is not okay. It's not going to the women. It's going to the men who were beating them up. It's going to the men who were out holding money for the household to run. It's going to the men who whatever think that they can get away with this stuff. We have television shows that support that; every single night. We have movies at that theater, every theater cross this word, this supporting male strength to put women in their place\_\_, it's not going back to the women. The women already know this is happening. It's like making consequences high school kids, high school men who are doing inappropriate behavior, college kids that are inappropriate... well, arrest them! Put them in jail! Make part of the consequences there and then we had every night on the news we hear how it were, smooth it all over for these educated guys who were doing inappropriate things.

JR: That's how the prosecutor felt.

MS: That's why I get really angry, really as you can tell. It's what you do it in wrong, I think.

JR: Well, I think based, again, I'm \_\_ and pulling together based on what the attorney said at a point in the '70s where they didn't even have law enforcement willing to bring the consequences to bear in the court then our abusing women. So that needed to happen. And but that like you were pointing out, that's just one segment and we are not hitting the younger people, the young...

MS: No, the best society is still...

JR: So you would like to see a focus on that...

MS: I just think that we're, I think we need to be going to Hollywood. We need to be striking and protesting movies \_\_ showing that. We need to have, we used to have women down at city hall and this is going on, we need to be not going to football games. We need to be walking in the halls with banners going, you know, this behavior is not okay. And they need to be financial, that's the problem. And they need financial consequences to the stuff and societal consequences. We are not very good about that because we don't really... as a society, you know what? We don't care about our kids very much, unfortunately.

JR: Tell me, are you aware, is there anywhere that is tackling this problem either a women's program or...

MS: I don't know.

JR: I haven't heard either. I mean you hear little isolated...

MS: I don't know. I think when the vice president got our \_\_ goal got involved back and the language of the records particularly. I think that was some model to take and look and see what really happened. But one person or one small group...it needs to be a bigger, bigger, bigger effort. But what we see on the screen, what these kids are, I mean it's out there. We shouldn't... it's not acceptable. It's not okay.

JR: I share your passion in that but I know the response is always freedom, the right of freedom of expression.

MS: Well, you know what? We have the right to have our children be healthy and be safe. That's as much as a right as a right free speech.

JR: And the economic issue could be they boycott these things.

MS: I think it could be and I also think there's a lot of people in Hollywood, if you could figure out how to get them mobilized that would, I'm talking about stars, I'm talking about who people have money, people who direct, people who produce. I mean, I think there's way you can do that. And I'm not thought about this as a model, I was very involved in the Tobacco-free Michigan movement... Tobacco-free country movement that has more from, I tried to think of the foundation that put all their money in there, \_\_ Johnson, now there into all these children. But there's a model this been put together statewide, state by state across this country that is work for the smoking issues. That could work. You could look at that as a model of how to impact society at the place where it makes difference for safety of, it's not just our female children, our male children as well. The model about bullying could be taken a look at and that is part of...

JR: That's kind of the beginning.

MS: The beginning for this. I really think that it has to have a monetary consequence to it because that unfortunately, is what most people hear. So that isn't an issue.

JR: So have you thought about coming out of retirement and...?

MS: No, I love what I have been doing, I've been in my garden all summer, I travel in the winter, my 20-year-old daughter... my 70<sup>th</sup> birthday was the other day and my 20-year-old daughter who's the journeyman electrician, journeywoman, I don't know what they call it, sent me a note she's that oh men, that's what they call me, oh men, so excited and you're 70 and you've got the whole world to conquer and I thought, oh my god. I wrote her note back and I said, I've conquered the world I need to conquer it and I'm here to support you as you conquer your world and that's right where I am.

JR: Excellent. Well, it's a good place to be and I thank you for sharing your time with us of very important contribution to what's happened in Marquette and the Women's Center.

MS: Thank you, Jane.

JR: Thank you.

END OF INTERVIEW