THE TRANSFORMATIVE LIBRARY: A NARRATIVE INQUIRY

INTO THE OUTCOMES OF INFORMATION USE

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This qualitative study uses narrative analysis to explore the outcomes of information seeking and use among public library users. Twelve women between the ages of 51 and 72, all residents of Fayetteville, Arkansas who self-identified as regular library users, were interviewed to gather their life stories and their experiences using the public library.

The participants in this study used information to enable learning and, often, a change in their affective state. The participants used the new information they encountered constructively, to engage with the knowledge and experience they possessed; this use of information always involved reflection, dialogue, or both. The outcomes from these actions are the creation of new knowledge, a change in the participants’ meaning schemes, and/or an affective change. In addition, the narratives strongly suggest that information seeking and use by adults in public libraries can sometimes facilitate or, on its own, precipitate a perspective transformation and the adoption of new meanings. Overall, the findings support Mezirow’s theory of transformative learning as a model for understanding information use and outcomes among users of the public library.

The major implications of this study are two-fold. One, it introduces to information science Mezirow’s theory of transformative learning which could provide greater understanding of how adults use information, and the outcomes that arise from this use. Two, it provides library professionals with information about the library in the lives of their users and concrete information about how libraries can enable transformative learning.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

This research is motivated by several simple questions: what happens after people find or encounter information? How do they use this information? What outcomes, if any, do people report as resulting from these information experiences? Does the information they locate or encounter enable them to get on with their lives? If one restricts these questions to information activities (seeking, finding, encountering) situated in the context of the public library, then what claims can then be made about the library as agency in people’s lives?

This chapter introduces the issues and their background as well as research goals, significance, research questions, and definitions. The second chapter provides the context for the research: what is it that we already know, and how these particular questions relate to what we already know. The third chapter outlines the research design, the theoretical framework, methods for data collection and analysis, limitations of the study, and issues of validity. The fourth chapter reports on the findings, while the fifth chapter provides discussions of the findings, implications for information and library research, and suggestions for further study.

Before proceeding, there are five facts about this research it is important to note.

One, this is a qualitative study that assumes an interpretive, naturalistic approach. My questions seemed best addressed by qualitative research because the topic is, to some degree, new; existing empirical evidence is sparse; and theory is underdeveloped or not developed at all (Creswell, 2003). Furthermore, this study, which attempts to create a “complex, holistic picture” (Creswell, 1998, p. 15) of the outcomes of information, is exploratory; there is little research and no existing theory to explain outcomes of information.
Two, this research is infused with a constructivist approach, the belief that “the knowable world is that of the meaning attributed by individuals” (Corbetta, 20003, p. 24). Constructivist learning, defined at the end of this chapter, is a complex theory about human knowledge that ranges from the epistemology of Immanuel Kant to contemporary feminist critics (Phillips, 1995; Alcoff & Potter, 1993), and in chapter three I discuss further my meaning of the term constructivism. While this inquiry moves among information theory and research, research into library usage, and educational theory and research, it does so along the axis of constructivism. The works of John Dewey, Jerome Bruner, Brenda Dervin, and Malcolm Knowles have informed this study, helping to frame both the fundamental questions as well as the research strategies. In the language of Jack Mezirow, constructivism was my “habit of mind.”

Three, in keeping with this perspective, this study uses narratives as data in the belief that narratives are one of the primary ways in which people make sense of their experiences (Bruner, 1986; Mishler, 1986). While there are many different types of narratives, this research captured life stories, which psychologist Mark Freeman has characterized as “big stories” (Freeman, 2006). Life stories require a great deal of reflection, and are useful for generating a specific type of meaning that cannot be caught in narratives generated out of the present. “It is an effort after meaning—often ‘big’ meaning” (Freeman, 2006, p. 133).

Four, this is a multiple case study, and each participant is a unique case. There are twelve cases in total.

Finally, I entered into this research without any a priori hypothesis to test or theory to explore. The intent was to develop an understanding, a theory, of information outcomes in the context of each case, and then explore general outcomes across the cases.
Background

The background for this research draws upon three areas: information behavior research, library research, and personal experience.

As a student of information behavior, I—like many others—noticed a gap in the literature. While rich in research and models about information needs and seeking, there was little discussion of information use. The collective literature of information behavior could be said to form a narrative that begins with establishing information needs and moves on to a complex and well-developed plot involving seeking and finding information, with some attention eventually given to recall, relevancy, and satisfaction. Yet the natural *denouement* of the narrative, the use of information, is rarely reached.

To corroborate this assumption, in January of 2008 I reproduced an exercise conducted by Kari (2007), and performed a search of the peer-reviewed literature in the database *Library and Information Science Abstracts* (*LISA*). The term “information needs” resulted in 1208 results and “information seeking” 1113 results, while “information use” produced only 171 results. Not only has the research been largely focused on seeking, it privileges certain types of seekers. “In order to qualify as information-seekers in most research, individuals must experience a ‘problem situation’ and then formally initiate the search process by querying one of our systems” (Ross, 1999, p.784). In the last decade, so many researchers have commented on this gap, or imbalance, in the research literature (Vakkari, 1997; Todd, 1999a; Rice, McCreadie & Chang, 2001; Spink & Cole 2006; Savolainen 2006, Kari, 2007), that calling for increased empirical research about the outcomes of information is nearly a cliché. Still, little research exists.

In addition, the idea of use has appeared as one of the “big questions” for both information science and library research. Bates, one of the field’s most well-respected
researchers, in reviewing information science’s paradigm, posits three big questions for information science research. The second, the social questions, is “How do people relate to, seek, and use information?” (1999, p. 1048).

For Todd, the question of information use is—or at least should be—one of the driving forces in information science: “It is curiosity about this interaction of mind and information, about how people do something with information to enable them to get on with their lives that is currently shaping information science,” (Todd, 1997, p. 352)

Likewise, Buckland (2003) presents library researchers with five great challenges. The first one is to make library services more meaningful. Buckland points out how nearly all research into public libraries is based on usage statistics, in particular the use of materials. But “the primary impact of library materials is through the meaning they have for our minds. They influence our knowledge, our beliefs, and our attitudes” (p. 678). His challenge to the profession is “how could we achieve a deeper understanding of what makes the use of library services personally meaningful?” (p. 679).

Wiegand has assailed a research agenda “much more interested in process and structure than people” (Wiegand, 1999, p. 24). “I think this may also explain why contemporary ‘information science’ has generally failed to construct models of a personal ‘information economy’ for individuals of both genders, all classes, ages, ethnicities, creeds, and sexual orientations in order to see what information they invariably obtain…and then to analyze how they appropriate that information in efforts to make sense of the world around them in their everyday lives” (Wiegand, 1999, p. 24).

A few years later Wiegand suggests an about-face for library research (Wiegand, 2003). He turns to Foucault’s work on the development of the concept of modernity, which Foucault
claimed has been responsible, since the 17th-century, for dividing life experiences into work and leisure. Wiegand criticizes library researchers for their privileging of information seeking over leisure activities, such as reading-for-pleasure. Work requires useful information (such as reference services), not the reading of novels. Today, Wiegand asserts, useful information is largely digital, which means that most library research is about technology. In a pointed and provocative statement, Wiegand writes that this research agenda has led us to think about the user in the life of the library, where “it might be more illuminating to focus on the library in the life of the user” (p. 372).

Libraries are rich resources for understanding the outcomes of information. After all, they represent themselves as providing free and easy access to information in a variety of forms and take credit for the broad, generalized outcomes that they claim arise from the use of this information: literacy of various sorts, a well-informed citizenry, life-long learning, self-improvement, and self-confidence, among others (Durrance & Fisher, 2003, p. 544.) Furthermore, the public library provides opportunities for myriad information behaviors beyond seeking and browsing, including information encountering (Erdelez, 1997), information discovered by chance (Williamson, 1998), information grounds (Fisher, Durrance, & Hinton, 2004; Fisher, 2005), and information encountering through reading-for-pleasure (Ross, 1999).

At the same time, locating research in a place—as opposed to occupational category, role, demographic group (Case, 2007) or through specific channels or resources—presents a challenge in capturing and making meaningful sense of the phenomena of information outcomes, which is only exacerbated by the variety of services and content available in a public library. These services can range from in-person programs to online chat services, while the content extends from DVDs to books to downloadable audio.
It is important to state at this point that although this research is situated within the library (physical and digital), it is not about the library. The library is not the focus of the research, which is entirely concerned with understanding the outcomes of information within the lives of people. This study is not intended to evaluate the library in any way; determine blocks or impediments to use or access of the library; nor understands ways in which the library “helps.” Nevertheless, it is expected that this research will contribute to an understanding of “the library in the life of the user” and provide information that may be useful for librarians.

Finally, these research questions also emerge from personal experience. For over a decade I worked as a public librarian, providing and designing information services. I observed and participated in many information activities, especially watching users browse to what librarians call “reference,” a form of information mediation. These experiences left me curious about the outcomes, cognitively and emotionally, as people use information. What happens when a student finds an article on automobile emissions and global warming that seems to contradict information she found elsewhere, or a participant in a book discussion group, who lived in Afghanistan in the 1970s, reads Hosseini’s The Kite Runner? In addition to professional constraints about privacy, as a librarian I also lacked, to a large degree, a language, empirical research skills, and theory for approaching “this interaction of mind and information” (Todd, 1997, p. 352)

Research Goals

This study addresses research goals in three areas. At the theoretical level, it will:

Help to bridge a gap in information behavior research and contribute to our understanding of the outcomes of information activities and encounters.

Provide a critical response to existing research on information outcomes.
Connect our understanding of information outcomes with other domains of knowledge, such as learning theory.

At the practice level, it will:

Provide librarians with knowledge about what outcomes their users assign to library-based information activities.

Give a deeper understanding of what makes the use of the library personally meaningful;

Develop a research methodology that will help to augment the existing paradigm and explore the library in the life of the user.

At the personal level, it will:

Address my own interests in understanding the lived experience of library users.

Provide data and preliminary theory that can form the basis for further research.

**Significance of this Study**

While I intend to investigate information behavior holistically within the lives of my participants—considering, for example, seeking, finding, and encountering—this is the first study designed to specifically examine outcomes of information. Because of this, I believe this research is significant for several reasons.

It will provide much-needed empirical evidence for the preliminary understanding of information outcomes.

By using the library as the source of information, yet not the focal point of research, this study should develop claims, again modest, about the effects that the library has on the lives of its users.

This study will be an opportunity to explore the use of narrative analysis, a methodology relatively little used in information science research, as a data collection method for understanding information behavior.
Research Questions

The overarching question for this research is:

What outcomes, if any, do adult users assign to the information activities they engage in through the public library?

Sub-questions are:

What are the general categories that emerge from the data?

What cognitive, psychological, or behavioral outcomes are described?

What processes led from the information actions to the outcomes?

Is there a relationship between information outcomes and other phenomena, such as biographic or contextual factors?

What differences, if any, do the participants report that the outcomes had on their lives?

Definitions

Following are definitions and discussions of the major concepts used throughout this research; other definitions are integrated throughout the text.

Constructivist learning. “Learners are not passive beings who respond to ‘stimuli,’ and learning is not merely the appropriation of previously devised labels and categories. Instead learning is an active process of constructing meanings and transforming understandings. One corollary of this is that because no two people have had identical experiences, each person constructs a more-or-less idiosyncratic explanatory system: a unique map of the topography that we call reality. This has inescapable ramifications for evaluating what people have learned, and it also calls for approaches to research that recognize the highly individual nature of how people undertake learning endeavors” (Candy, 1991, p. 251)

Information seeking behavior. “The totality of human behavior in relation to sources and channels of information, including both active and passive information seeking, and information
use,” Wilson (2000, p. 49). This definition is broad enough to include face-to-face communication as well as more passive reception of information without any intent to use the information; it includes both intended information-seeking and information encountering.

Information gap. “At the individual level, an encounter with a discrepancy or lack of sense in a person’s environment” (Case, 2007, p. 332).

Information seeking. “Behavior that occurs when an individual senses a problematic situation or information gap, in which his or her internal knowledge and beliefs, and model of the environment, fail to suggest a path towards satisfaction of his or her goals” (Case, 2007, p. 333).

Learning. The definition of learning in adulthood is one of the more contested areas in education; theorists emphasize different aspects of learning, including change, human growth, development of competencies, and learning domains, among others. Here, I use Bruner’s definition (1960, pp. 48-49), as it integrates both information and learning. Learning involves “three almost simultaneous processes: (1) acquisition of new information, which is often information that runs counter to or is a replacement of what the person has previously known, but which at the very least is a refinement of previous knowledge; (2) transformation, or the process of manipulating knowledge to make it fit new tasks; and (3) evaluation, or checking whether the way the person manipulated information is adequate to the task” (as cited in Knowles, M.S., Holton, E.F. & Swanson, R.A., 2005, p. 32).

Narrative. “Narrative is a meaning structure that organizes events and human actions into a whole, thereby attributing significance to individual actions and events according to their effect on the whole. Thus, narratives are to be differentiated from chronicles, which simply list events according to their place on a time line. Narrative provides a symbolized account of actions that includes a temporal dimension.” (Polkinghorne, 1988, p. 18).
Narrative inquiry. “Arguments for the development and use of narrative inquiry come out of a view of human experience in which humans, individually and socially, lead storied lives. People shape their daily lives by stories of who they and others are and as they interpret their past in terms of these stories. Story, in the current idiom, is a portal through which a person enters the world and by which their experience of the world is interpreted and made personally meaningful. Viewed this way, narrative is the phenomenon studied in inquiry. Narrative inquiry, the study of experience as story, then, is first and foremost a way of thinking about experience. Narrative inquiry as a methodology entails a view of the phenomenon. To use narrative inquiry methodology is to adopt a particular narrative view of experience as phenomena under study.” (Clandinin, 2006, p. 477). I use the terms narrative analysis, narrative inquiry, and narrative research interchangeably. While some researchers create useful distinctions among these in terms of how they analyze story, these distinctions have not been adopted in any consistent manner.

Outcome of information. The language used to describe the outcome of information remains problematic, characterized by “terminological inconsistency where the terms ‘information use’, ‘information utilization’ and ‘knowledge utilization’ are employed interchangeably…with little clarification of meaning” (Todd, 1999a, p. 852). Many researchers employ information use, which Wilson defines as “physical and mental acts involved in incorporating the information found into the person’s existing knowledge base” (2000, p. 50). Kari (2007), in his review and analysis of the literature on use of information, explains how the term information use has different meanings for different researchers. For some, like Todd (1999a), use is conceptualized as “the way in which the gained knowledge is wielded in action” (Kari, 2007). Here use means taking action, like note taking. For others, information use is seen within cognitive, internal activities, such as integrating new ideas with older ones to produce
something new. Dervin’s Sense-Making methodology emphasizes neither action nor cognition but the consequences that new knowledge has for the person and their situation (Savolainen, 2006); this is more often described as *effects of information*, and can include affect as well. To include the aspects of use and effect, cognition and affect, Kari introduced the term *outcome of information* which I use in this research.

Transformative learning.“Learning that transforms problematic frames of reference—sets of fixed assumptions, meaning perspectives, mindsets—to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, reflective, and emotionally able to change. Such frames of reference are better than others because they are more likely to generate beliefs and opinions that will prove more true or justified to guide action” (Mezirow, 2003a, pp. 58-59).
CHAPTER 2

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter turns to the existing literature to create a conceptual framework for this research. It is in four sections. The first section examines theories and research in information behavior that relate to our understanding of information outcomes, while the second and third sections look at the research into library usage and reading, respectively. The fourth section presents the research into adult learning that can provide context to the outcomes from this study.

Information Behavior

This section provides an overview of theory development and research in information science as it relates to information use.

Over the past twenty years in information science there has been an increased focus on the information user (Tidline, 2005); this often attributed to Dervin & Nilan’s article on information need and uses (1986). Since 1986, there has grown a rich literature of research, theories, and models about information user behavior, documented by Case (2007).

Dervin’s (1999) sense-making methodology as both theory and research has informed the objectives of this research as well as my understanding of both the information user as well as the information search process. Sense-making serves as a sensitizing framework to this research, a group of concepts “that offer ways of seeing, organizing, and understanding experience; they are embedded in our disciplinary emphases and perspectival proclivities” (Charmaz, 2003, p. 259). A sensitizing framework is not a theory but rather a point of departure to approach the data.
As a sensitizing framework, sense-making’s influence for me has been in how it conceptualizes the individual within the metaphor of gap-bridging and the acceptance of gap-bridging as an overriding metaphor for information seeking and use.

Sense-making methodology is a complex metatheory in development for several decades, and it appears in multiple places in this chapter. I return to it again, briefly, in the section on information behavior for its theoretical relevance to information use and outcomes, while in the section on Library Research I review Dervin’s research (Dervin, 1985) into library “helps.” In addition to Dervin’s own work, I am in debt to Savolainen’s recent synthesis of the sense-making methodology and information use (Savolainen, 2006).

Sense-making is a “conceptual tool of broad applicability for use in understanding the relationship of communication, information, and meaning” (Tidline, 2005, p. 113). Its focus is the understanding of how humans create meaning from information. While it has continued to evolve over the years, often described as a “theory-in-the-making,” sense-making has a number of metatheoretical themes that have remained constant.

Sense-making, defined as a communicative behavior, includes “information seeking, processing, creating, and using as central activities” (Savolainen, 2006, p. 1117). These activities are undertaken by human beings, presented as “body-mind-heart sprits moving through time and space, with a past history, present reality, and future dreams or ambitions” (Foreman-Wernet, 2007, p. 7). Humans and the world they inhabit are both orderly and chaotic, and each person is unique in how they construct reality. “Sense-making conceptualizes differences not according to demographics or other static categories but rather according to how people attend to phenomena differently” (Foreman-Wernet, 2007, p.7).
Dervin has placed sense-making within various philosophical contexts, including postmodernism and communitarianism. Nevertheless, the rhetoric around the individual within sense-making remains consistently constructivist. “Sense-making can be seen as behavior which allows the individual to construct and design his or her movement through the time-space context” (Savolainen, 2006, p. 1117). Todd adds that “sense-making is portrayed as a constructive process, and sense is the product of that process. Information utilization is posited as a ‘constructing’ activity” (Todd, 199a, p. 853.). Individuals are depicted as the experts in their own worlds, a source for information in their own right. Each individual’s past is explicitly a part of their sense-making. In more recent years, Dervin goes further, describing actors as theorists “with hunches, hypotheses, and generalizations about how things connect to things and how power flows” (Dervin, 1999, p. 740.)

Information itself is not seen as something fixed or static but open to human construction; “the reference to design is important, because information should be conceived of as something malleable, designable, and flexible, like clay to be molded according to situational needs” (Savolainen, 2006, p. 1118).

The gap is a fundamental assumption about the human condition, “its essence is the assumption that there are persistent gap conditions in all existence—between entities…between times, and between spaces…communicating is best isolated, studied, and generalized by focusing on these gap conditions” (Dervin, 1991, pp. 61-62) and gap-bridging is the fundamental metaphor. “When applied to the word information, as in information need, what is suggested is a gap that can be filled by something that the needing person calls ‘information’” (Dervin, 1983, p. 156).
Gap-bridging is often presented as purposeful and goal-oriented, although that need not be the case. According to Savolainen (2006) it is a highly contextual activity, and gap-bridging consists of identifying, finding, and combining various elements such as ideas, beliefs, and narratives. We may think that particularly in the case of a large gap, the construction of the bridge may occur in several phases; as the bridge builder combines and shapes various elements, he or she may simultaneously step on the bridge partly built towards the opposite end of the gap. When a sufficient number of elements have been found and combined, a good enough bridge has been erected enabling the crossing of the gap. (p. 1121).

A recent emphasis in sense-making is on *verbing* (such as factizing—the making of facts—or defining or hunching) which emphasizes the “the hows of human individual and collective sense-making and sense-unmaking, on the varieties of internal and external cognizings, emotings, feelings, and communicatings that make, reinforce, challenge, resist, alter, and reinvent human worlds” (Dervin, 1999, p. 739). For Dervin, verbing frees sense-making from the assumption that there is only one correct way in which individuals produce knowledge.

Sense-making recognizes that in the acts of information-making, seeking, and using we are not limited “to the cognitive realm (as it usually is in information seeking and use studies) but rather to any realm of experience that actors define themselves as using in their sense-making” (Dervin, 1999, p. 739). Sense-making “gives precedence to the individual, to cognitions, and to the importance of making things happen and moving forward” (Todd, 1999a, p. 853). Recent research (Dervin & Reinhard, 2007) confirms the importance of both the cognitive and the affective in how helpful users perceived sources.

Todd has provided one of the most complete reviews of information utilization—his term for outcomes of information—as well as a discussion of information utilization within information seeking and use behavior (1999a) in which he presents Bertram Brookes’
fundamental equation of information science as a theoretical framework for investigations into cognition and information use.

Todd identifies two perspectives on information use. One is focused on the direct transfer of social science research findings. With a robust body of literature, “in this context, information utilization has been largely conceptualized as ‘acting’—a ‘behavioral doing’—with particular attention given to types of organizational change” (Todd, 1999a, p. 852). The other perspective is that of a user-oriented paradigm which places information utilization in “a wider social context of the information needs and information seeking behavior of individuals” (Todd, 1999a, p. 853). It is this latter perspective which interests us here, “the focus is on the complex dynamics of information needs, context, information seeking, interaction with information sources, and cognitive and behavioral outcomes” (Todd, 1999a, p. 853).

He then goes on to classify the empirical research into three categories, two of which are relevant to this research: instrumental utilization and conceptual utilization. The former measures the outcomes and impacts, and physical changes resulting from the application of information. Conceptual utilization “loosely categorizes what is happening in people’s minds when they do something with information” (Todd, 1999a, p. 854.) It is focused on people thinking about the information and not actions; it is internal, not external, cognitive not physical, and it take into account the knowledge people possess. “In essence, conceptual utilization is about cognitive processes and change; about transformative and formative mental processes where information is incorporated in a person’s store of knowledge, where it is translated and then applied to working situations in actions as instrumental use” (Todd, 1999a, p. 854).

Research into information use and cognition—the processes that people undergo when they use information—remains undeveloped (Allen, 1991). Todd introduces Brooke’s
fundamental equation for both understanding information utilization and as a framework for empirical investigations. “Brookes saw the equation as an interactive cognitive process of what people already knew, how what they know changes through selectively taking in information, and the effect of these changes” (Todd, 2005, p. 199). Brookes’ equation, a sort of *faux* mathematical expression, was developed over many years and saw multiple iterations. It is most commonly expressed as $K[S] + \Delta I = K[S + \Delta S]$. $K[S]$ represents a person’s knowledge structure, while $\Delta I$ is an increment of information, the information input. The outcome, $K[S + \Delta S]$, is the changed knowledge structure. Brookes conceived of our knowledge structures as living, information-seeking entities continuously undergo change.

Brookes made a useful distinction between knowledge and information. Knowledge is information that has been structured and integrated whereas information is fragmented knowledge” (Brookes as cited in Todd (1999), p. 861). We take information and use it to build a coherent knowledge structure, in which information is integrated. Knowledge could be both internal and private—cognitive knowledge—as well as external and public—social knowledge. Both are ways in which people create knowledge.

According to Todd, existing knowledge structures are important in people’s selection or rejection of information. Then we integrate information into our existing knowledge. “He [Brookes] consistently asserted that the integration of this information was not additive, in a sense changing only the edges of the existing knowledge structure; rather, the integrations of information was transformative, modifying the whole structure” (Todd, 1999a, p. 862). The whole structure, according to Brookes, is our cognitive map, private and difficult, at least for researchers, to access.
Todd himself undertook a quasi-experimental study that examined Brookes’ equation using four adolescent girls and their knowledge of heroin. He mapped the knowledge of each girl, then exposed them to information, then mapped their knowledge again, repeating the process three times (1999b). This research revealed that through the exposures to information the girls’ knowledge did indeed change. Five effects of information were identified: get a complete picture (increase complexity, make new connections); get a changed picture (change existing ideas); get a clearer picture (explanation; see how ideas are related); get a verified picture (verify); and get a position in the picture (express an opinion or viewpoint.)

Todd has gone on to develop a theory of information intents that draws on several traditions, including sociology of knowledge and applied social science research as well as human information behavior (Todd, 2005). Its premise is that information has the potential to make a difference to thoughts, actions, and emotions. Information intents, as the name implies, “posits that people engage with information in purposeful, deliberate, and selective ways” (Todd, 2005, p. 200). The theory has since been used in other studies. A large-scale study with over 13,000 school children in Ohio (Todd & Kuhlthau, 2004) asked both students and teachers to articulate again the notion of “help,” this time from the perspective of a school library, and asked the students to measure these helps. “Using information” was one of the categories; “enabling information utilization for knowledge construction ranked third highest of the seven categories of ‘helps,’ with helps related to getting information and using information technology ranking higher” (Todd, 2005, p. 200).

A recent investigation into how students build on their existing knowledge of a curriculum topic and transform information into found knowledge involved 574 students using multiple surveys (Todd, 2006). The students, in grade 6 through 12, worked on projects through
guided inquiry, closely supervised exposures to multiple sources of, often conflicting, information. Changes in knowledge, structure of knowledge, amount of knowledge, extent of knowledge, and label of knowledge were all measured. Did knowledge change? Students did come to know more about the topic, and students themselves perceived they know more, but it was often adding facts to their knowledge base, not actually building knowledge. Some students, however, were more engaged analytically and demonstrated higher-order processing.

Other models include use in the information seeking process. The 1996 version of Wilson’s integrative and evolving model (Wilson, 1999) incorporates findings from other disciplines and stands as one of the most complete models. It begins with the information need of the person-in-context. Intervening variables, largely barriers to information seeking, are presented and three theoretical perspectives—stress/coping, risk/reward theory, and social learning—are all noted as informing information behavior. A variety of information-seeking activities are displayed (passive attention, passive search, active search, ongoing search). Wilson explains how numerous theories of information behavior can be integrated into this model. Information use is presented as the model’s outcome without any elaboration.

As noted by Godbold (2006) in the development of her general model of information behavior, most other theories of information behavior are centered on information seeking, purposeful or not. The exceptions are Savolainen’s everyday life information deeking (Savolainen, 1995), Fisher’s information grounds (Fisher, 2005), and Erdelez’s information encountering (Erdelez, 1997), all of which acknowledge, but do not explore, information use.

An exception is Foster’s non-linear model (Foster, 2005a; Foster, 2005b). Based on qualitative research among 45 interdisciplinary academics, this model describes three activities: opening, or moving towards seeking; orientation, problem definition and solving; and
consolidation; or judging and integrating findings. Unlike most other researchers, Foster doesn’t describe information seeking as a straightforward process but rather as iterative, dynamic, and holistic. Foster also presents three contextual interactions: internal context, such as experience or prior knowledge; external context, such as time or access issues; and cognitive approach. The latter describes “aspects of the mode of thinking observed in the participants, and a willingness to identify and use information that might be relevant to an inter-disciplinary problem” (Foster, 2005a, Cognitive Approach, para.1). Here Foster explores four approaches that investigate use, including flexibility, or willingness to adapt to different information and disciplinary cultures; openness, a willingness to accept all sources as viable until proves otherwise; nomadic thinking, which involves thinking about information with enough diversity you can locate new information; and holistic thinking, or actively incorporating new concepts to create new information or generate questions.

Spink and Cole (2006) created an integrative model that addresses dissatisfaction about the field’s dominant ethos: purposive behavior within a problem solving framework (2006, p. 26). The model integrates three dimensions, which themselves integrate other models: information seeking, everyday life information seeking/sense making, and information foraging. Their model places use in a relationship with the three dimensions, positioning it at the end of the full arc of behavior. “It is our hypothesis that information use is a lead-in or connected to what information behavior is if it is thought of as a whole, multidimensional concept” (Spink & Cole, 2006, p. 29). Spink and Cole’s model is influenced by evolutionary psychology; use is defined as change in hunter-gatherers who collect, for example, environmental data then alter their behavior accordingly. The authors admit that defining the use process in this way makes it highly difficult to research.
The research of Carol Kuhlthau is among the most significant on affect and cognition in relation to information seeking and use. Kuhlthau’s work, within the constructivist tradition of John Dewey, George Kelly, and Jerome Bruner, is based on the idea that we are actively involved in trying to make sense of the world around us and not just passively receiving information (Kuhlthau, 2004, p. 21). Kuhlthau’s information search process was developed from qualitative studies of secondary school students who had a complex task to complete within a specified time frame. The research, which was verified with library users in other contexts (Kuhlthau, 2004, pp. 68-69), produced a six stage model based on common patterns in the users’ experiences. One, initiation, when a person becomes aware of a lack of knowledge or understanding. Two, selection, when the topic is identified and a feeling of optimism pervades. Three, exploration, inconsistent information is found and a feeling of uncertainty and doubt arises. Four, formulation, perspective is focused while uncertainty declines and confidence is regained. Five, collection, information is focused and interest and involvement deepens. Six, presentation, when the results of the completed search can be explained to others.

Several key findings emerged from Kuhlthau’s research. One, the search process is experienced holistically; thoughts, feeling and searching are intertwined. Two, affective aspects were identified, for the first time, along with the cognitive and physical aspects (Kuhlthau, 2005, p. 231). Three, the identification of uncertainty in the early stages was new information that produced an opportunity for practitioners. This lead to the development of the “uncertainty principle.” This principle states that “uncertainty is a cognitive state that commonly causes affective symptoms of anxiety and lack of confidence. Uncertainty and anxiety can be expected in the early stages of the process” (Kuhlthau, 2005, p. 233). While Kuhlthau’s model ends with
presenting and does not extend into use, it has sensitized subsequent researchers in information behavior as to the role that affect plays in information behavior.

Kari (2007) provided a critical overview of the literature of information use, bringing Todd’s analysis up to the present (1999a). Reviewing the literature, he synthesized the different definitions of use, analyzed the outcomes of use hierarchically, and created a taxonomy of information use as a conceptual model. Kari sees basically two outcomes of information seeking: use and effect. Based on the existing literature, he categorized information use, or outcomes, into a variety of dimensions. Physicality of use involves actions that are perceptible to others, what Todd called instrumental use. Sociality of use includes communicating as well as thinking, Todd’s conceptual utilization. Informationality of use includes activities such as providing information and referral or revising search strategies; the information generates other information activities. Specific use includes the many granular results (analyzing, apologizing, cleaning, reflecting) that researchers have pointed to as information outcomes.

Kari also charts how effects of information are expressed; his definition for effect is in line with Dervin’s definition of information use: the change in a person or their situation (Savolainen, 2006). Examples of effects include reducing uncertainty, changing perception of the universe, making a difference, and changing behavior. Kari also divides effects of information into helps and hurts, with the former concept far more developed. Instrumental helps include helping to plan or gain ideas; emotional helps include support, confirmation, or reassurance.

Kari comments on the paucity of theoretical frameworks and empirical research, “a kind of vicious circle of deprivation” (Kari, 2007, Conclusion, para.1). Finally, Kari points out four areas that the existing literature could not address: outcome as process (the how), with attention
to different stages (the when); context (the where); dependence between outcome and other phenomena (the why); and quantitative findings (the how much).

Library Research

As one would expect, research into users and use within the library context somewhat parallels research in the larger information science world. Historically, and up to the present day, library planning and assessment has focused on measurement of library use; this grounding of library assessment in the physical could well be rooted in Melvil Dewey’s idea of “library economy,” which emphasized the management of objects. Typically, these indicators of use include a variety of output measures such as circulation of material and number of reference transactions (Durrance and Fisher, 2003). Overwhelmingly, library assessment positions itself within the library (how is it used) and not in the life of the user (how are you using us). It is about “stuff” and not thought.

An exception to the emphasis on “measuring stuff” was Dervin’s ground-breaking 1985 study of California library users sponsored by the California State Library, which to this day remains the most significant research into library outcomes. The purpose of the study was to answer the question: “How do library users say library use helps them?” “Most library effectiveness studies infer effectiveness simply by looking at the movement of materials” (Dervin, 1985, p. 1). “They assume the delivery of concrete materials and services is the delivery of help” (Dervin, 1985, p. 1)

The study had three premises: information systems are a means to an end, not an end in itself; library materials and services can be used in different ways, dependent on the user’s situation; and information systems can be studied by understanding how the use facilitated people’s movements through their lives.
The sample was a random probability sample of Californians aged 12 or older. One thousand and five questionnaires we completed by phone. Users were asked to describe their most recent visit to any library, how long ago it was, what materials or services were obtained, which of 16 helps they received, and which helps were most important. The helps schema was developed over 13 years and some 45 sense-making studies; Dervin considers them “generic” helps “in that they fit all human situations and yet can be studied in terms of their applicability to specific situations” (Dervin, 1985, p. 3). These helps were then grouped into seven categories: got ideas/understanding; found directions/got skills/reach goals; made contact with others; got support emotional control; felt connected/not alone; got rest/relaxation; got happiness/pleasure.

Findings showed that helps relating to emotional and planning dimensions were identified most, over 90% of the respondents said they got support/emotional control and 89% found directions/got skills/reach goal in their last library visit. The data also showed that 83% got ideas/understanding; 72% got happiness/pleasure; 54% got rest/relaxation; and 3—34% for made contact with others and felt connected/not alone. The results did not show large differences depending on the type of library visited; the biggest difference was got happiness/pleasure which was reported more frequently by public library users.

As significant as this research is, it raises three questions. One is bias. Can information outcomes be measured if the typology is one of “helps?” Here the bias is that more information is inherently good, or that libraries are inherently good, or both. Yet other research has indicated that information use can lead to outcomes far different from a “help,” including confusion and anxiety (Kuhlthau, 2004; Mellon, 1986). Did any of Dervin’s 1000-plus Californians feel hindered by their recent visit to a library?
Two, Dervin states that this study assumes that libraries need to know something else…” (Dervin, 1985, p. 1). That something else is “allowing the user to say what he/she did with the materials/services the library provided….The something else is linking library services to the world outside the library, the world of living day to day” (Dervin, 1985, p.1) A typology of outcomes, however rigorously developed—and Dervin’s is based on empirical research into the interactions between users and systems or sources—is still not the same thing as allowing the user to speak. As for the world outside the library, the world of living day-to-day, this research connects a collection of helps with demographic statistics.

Durrance and Fisher (2003) returned to the idea of information use as help with their investigation into “How Libraries and Librarians Help.” The research framework was developed from the work of Wilson and Dervin as well as Savolainen’s everyday life information seeking (1995). The researchers used qualitative approaches, especially interviewing, and examined a variety of specific multi-site, community-focused services situated in public libraries throughout the nation. They included services for immigrants, technology programs for teens, information and referral services, and consumer health information services. The researchers looked at both the library users and the library itself. Factors included library clientele, who were the primary informants; library-centered factors; library staff; and other stakeholders. The authors make it clear that their research agenda was in part political, as it was developed at a time when all social service organizations were experiencing governmental pressure to be more accountable.

Durrance and Fisher present a varied set of claims from their data. Some are about the library: immigrants are discovering the library, the library is seen as a safe place for teens, and the library is collaborating better with other organizations. Other claims are about communication: immigrants and library staff are interacting effectively; teens are improving
their self-expression skills. The majority of the claims rise from the user’s experience. Some of these claims are cognitive: because of an awareness of new resources, immigrants gain new skills and knowledge; teens involved in a technology program have made learning gains. Other times the claims are about affect: teens in Austin, Texas become more trusting through contact with library staff; teens in Flint, Michigan change both their perceptions and attitudes. The authors add other examples of personal efficacy and affective outcomes: confidence-building, a changed outlook on life, and feelings of accomplishment and hope.

This research fulfills its political mandate; most readers would be convinced that in these specific programs, at least, libraries and librarians are making a difference in their communities. As for contributing to our knowledge of information use and effects, this research leaves some questions unanswered. First, it is never clear whose data the claims are based upon: the library staff, the users, or both. Second, the actual relation between information and effect is rarely made. Readers are left to infer, for example, that if immigrants gained new knowledge from being in the library, it must have come from interaction with library collections or technology, library staff, or peers—but we don’t know.

In recent years, librarians have borrowed the notion of return on investment (ROI) from business and developed economic impact studies and cost-benefit analyses, often conducted at the state level. These typically ask respondents to rate the library on a variety of ‘helps,’ a mix of both personal and social, such as: nurtures a love of reading, is a source of personal enjoyment, attracts patronage to local businesses, and improves property values. A monetary value is then assigned to these services to arrive at an economic impact. These types of studies have become so popular, both the American Library Association (www.alaa.org/ala/ors/reports/roi.cfm) and OCLC, Online Computer Library Center (www.oclc.org/roi/) have created online collections of
ROI studies by public libraries. However, what these studies measure is the overall value of the library to the community and not specific information use in the context of a life.

Reading Research


What then happens in the reading of a literary work? The reader, drawing on past linguistic and life experience, links the signs on the page with certain words, certain concepts, certain sensuous experiences, certain images of things, people, actions, scenes. The special meanings and, more particularly, the submerged associations that these words and images have for the individual reader will largely determine what the work communicates to *him*. The reader brings to the work personality traits, memories of past events, present needs and preoccupations, a particular mood of the moments, and a particular physical condition. These and many other elements in a never-to-be-duplicated combination determine his interfusion with the peculiar combination of the text. (p. 30).

Rosenblatt, in a precursor to reader-response theory, created a “transactional” theory of literature that sees each reading as a unique event. This theory comes to the fore when the participants discuss their engagement.

Public libraries in America, while espousing their support for a variety of information activities through an array of medium, still very much champion the reading of print books. By every measure that libraries use to assess what their users do in the library and want from their library, reading for pleasure inevitably leads the list. Among many committed library users, a significant portion of their time is spent in choosing books, recommending books, reading, reflecting on what they have read, discussing books, then finding new books all over again (Ross, 1999). Yet reading for pleasure is something about which—considering its immense popularity—we know very little.
In the early 1980s, the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress initiated the Books That Made the Difference project, which gathered over 1300 responses, from both well-known and “regular people,” to two questions: What book made the greatest difference in your life? What difference did it make? The report on the project (Sabine & Sabine, 1983), written in a popular, conversational tone, seemed to have two primary goals: to bolster the notion that reading books was a worthwhile endeavor, and to connect readers with books they might also enjoy. Along the way, the authors do make several interesting claims.

One is that the books which the public chose as making a difference demonstrated an enormous range, from *The Boy Scout Handbook* to *The Sensuous Woman* (Sabine & Sabine, 1983, p. 102). Two, the reader’s response to a book is described as being deeply personal; the reader’s response to a book may be different from what the author intended or from how other readers have responded. Three, the same book can have different outcomes for different readers, “it depends on what that person’s reading needs are the moment when eye meets page” (Sabine & Sabine, 1982, p. 103). Four, there is no age when a book can make a difference; some participants cited a book from their childhood while others selected a title from their mature years. Five, what books will make a difference are completely unpredictable by any demographic factors; “It’s all so very personal” (Sabine & Sabine, p. 103). Finally, the authors conclude that reading expands rather than restricts, it increases knowledge rather than lowering it or maintaining the *status quo*.

The authors organize the book by broad, general outcomes. Seeing Yourself in Print, describes encountering a book that depicted an issue or a problem you also had. You Can, Too, Do It, includes readers who overcame different types of adversity through books, such as the woman with cancer who was comforted by Norman Cousin’s *Anatomy of an Illness*. One of the
most significant sections is It Changed My Way of Looking at Things, which recounts the stories of people whose book encounters gave them “a new way of looking at life, a basis for espousing a new philosophy” (Sabine & Sabine, 1983, p. 40), such as the South African man who read Alan Paton’s *Cry the Beloved Country*. “I read this book, and eventually I left home. I left South Africa and became a U.S. citizen.” (Sabine & Sabine, 1983, p. 45.) At least half of the sections (“They Just Make You Feel Better,” “Ray of Hope,”) present books as having an affective, rather than cognitive, impact.

Two studies examine reading in the context of information behavior: an extensive study of 194 committed readers by Ross (1999) and a study of 17 lesbian, bisexual, and queer young women by Rothbauer (2004).

In Ross’s (1999) research, participants were not asked about their information needs and how they went about resolving them. Instead, they were asked how they went about choosing books (the search) and what value this reading had in their life (use and effect). Her inquiry utilized Williamson’s (1998) research on incidental information acquisition and Erdelez’s (1997) research on information encountering combined with the literary theory of reader response.

A key question about use was whether a book helped the participant or made a big difference in their lives. Sixty percent of the participants identified one or more books. Over a third of these books were seen as having had “opened up a new perspective, helped its reader see things differently, or offered an enlarged set of possibilities” (p. 792). In some cases, Ross reports, books changed the world view of readers so much that they went and changed their lives once they finished the book.

Ross organized the responses of how a book made a significant difference in their lives according to seven “helps,” reminiscent of Dervin’s helps (Dervin & Nilan, 1986). These are:
awakening/new perspective/enlargement of possibilities; models for identity; reassurance, comfort, confirmation of self-worth, strength; connection with others/awareness of not being alone; courage to make a change; acceptance; understanding of the world.

Ross asks how narratives can have such a profound effect on people’s lives. In answer, she returns to the theory of reader response. These texts are not acting alone, they are mediated. Readers create in and with the texts.

In conclusion, Ross makes several observations about what this research means for the information search process, several of which have direct bearing on use. One is that the affective dimension is a critical part of the readers/searchers transaction with text, and affect is involved through the search process from selection to effect. Kuhlthau’s (2004) model is recognized as also balancing the cognitive nature of search with affect. Finally, reading occurs within a network of social relations. While we may think of reading as an isolated exercise, readers in fact need social worlds in which to support and initiate the reading of others while picking up ideas themselves, “which explains the popularity of ‘just returned’ shelves in public libraries” (p. 797).

In her examination of reading among young lesbian and bisexual women, Rothbauer (2004) looks at the full arc of information behavior, from searching to use. She locates her reading experiences in bookstores, the library, and the Internet. The library, it turns out, excels as a source for reading materials but rated poorly in providing a social environment, something bookstores were much better at.

She groups the outcomes of reading into three major areas, all of which echo Ross’s findings, although Rothbauer does not use the same ‘help’ constructs as Ross. One outcome is described as “reading for escape/reading for engagement.” While some participants expressed
this as wanting to “escape,” probing revealed that what they wanted from reading were books that “informed their personal perspectives on their present and future experiences” (Rothbauer, 2004, p. 70). Reading may have been an escape from the day-to-day world of work and school, but they saw it as an opportunity to engage with the larger world. This has parallels with Ross’s last help: engagement with the world.

Another outcome Rothbauer identifies is “reading for possibility,” nearly identical to Ross’s first help: awakening/new perspective/enlargement of possibilities. “Nicky, my second participant, expressed a desire for new possibilities and new ways of being in the world while openly claiming a lesbian identity” (Rothbauer, p. 71). Reading about other lesbians and other lesbian relationships help these young women redefine “normal.” It was also a way to learn about sex. “Reading helps center their own experience with their non-mainstream sexualities…relaxing margins of isolation and alienation” (p. 85.)

The final outcome is “making connections with the textual other.” This parallels Ross’s help: reassurance, comfort, confirmation of self-worth, strength. “Comfort, solace, feelings of not being alone and sense of the libratory potential engendered by reading at themes repeated again and again” (p. 87). This comfort and validation, Rothbauer reports, were essential elements in her participants claiming a positive lesbian identity.

The social world of readers is well investigated in Long’s monograph (2003) about book clubs. Long, a sociologist, conducted a qualitative case study of women’s book clubs in Houston that revealed a rich and complex world that afforded participants multiple ways to reflect on their own lives as well as the social changes happening in the world around them. The act of discussing reading among trusted associates, Long claims, “engenders a particular kind of reflection that can have transformation potential either for individuals or for the group as a
whole….Through this integrative process, individuals…can reach new understandings, whether about life or about the text at hand” (Long, 2003, p. 185).

Summary of Outcomes of Information Use

Table 1 summarizes the studies that describe outcomes from information use, most of which have been reviewed above. Caution is necessary in looking at these findings in aggregate: these studies emerge from different disciplines, ask different questions, have different definitions, and employ different methodologies. Nevertheless, this is largely the empirical evidence, developed through the user-oriented paradigm in information science, that exists.

Table 1

Studies that Report on Information Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Research question</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Outcomes/Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dervin, Harlock, Atwood, &amp; Garzona (1986)</td>
<td>What is the helpfulness of information provided to patients by doctors?</td>
<td>Medical patients</td>
<td>Survey, sense-making</td>
<td>Got encouraged Got new/ altered picture Could see the road ahead Identified possibilities Found direction Got away from bad feelings Avoided pitfalls Made progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dervin &amp; Clark (1987)</td>
<td>In what ways has the library helped?</td>
<td>Public library users</td>
<td>Mixed, sense-making</td>
<td>Got ideas/ understanding Accomplished something Decided what to do Got rest, relaxation, quiet Got motivated Felt good about myself Calmed down Felt like I belong, not alone Pleasure, happiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morrison (1993)</td>
<td>What are the effects of information seeking?</td>
<td>135 new staff accountants</td>
<td>Quantitative, surveys</td>
<td>Greater job mastery Improved knowledge of corporate culture Better social integration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(table continues)
Table 1 (continued).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Research question</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Outcomes/Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Julien (1997)           | How does career information help adolescents in making decisions?                 | Adolescents             | Survey               | Helping to gain ideas or understanding  
Helping to plan, decide, or prepare  
Get connected to others  
Got calmer  
Got support, confirmation, reassurance |
| Todd (1999b)            | How is knowledge about heroin changed by exposure to information?                  | Four adolescent girls   | Quasi-experimental  | Get a complete picture  
Get a changed picture  
Get a verified picture  
Get a clearer picture  
Get a position in the picture |
| Ross (1999)             | Has there ever been a book that has helped you or made a difference in your life? | 194 “heavy readers”     | Qualitative, interviews | Pleasure  
Transformative experiences  
Awakening/new perspectives  
Models for identity  
Reassurance, comfort, self-worth, strength  
Connection with others  
Courage to change  
Acceptance  
Understanding of the world  
Helped in being informed  
Helped in dealing with doctor  
Changed the way they felt about their condition  
Condition improved  
Deferred doctor’s visit |
| Nicholas, Huntington, Williams & Blackburn (2001) | Has the information obtained through a health web site had any health outcome? | 1000 web site users     | Survey               |                                                                                  |

*(table continues)*
Several things are notable. One, there is a great deal of redundancy among the reported outcomes. Nearly all of the outcomes can be grouped under the five outcomes used by Dervin and Reinhard (2007): got pictures (got ideas, choices, method), kept moving (got connected to resources, help on continuing, progress made swifter), got support (understanding, listening, not alone), got control (inner/self control, refuge, peace, respite, pleasure), and got there (specific resources, reached destination). This reduced typology includes a balance of the cognitive and affective that is seen throughout most of the outcome groups. Overall, the findings in aggregate support Kuhlthau’s assertions that the search process is experienced holistically; thoughts, feeling, and searching are presented in nearly all of the studies as being intertwined. The one exception is Todd (1999b) which measured changes in knowledge structure.

Also, the outcomes pointing toward cognition are the most complex and sometimes difficult to decipher. Some would seem to point to instrumental learning (mastery of a job),
others to knowledge construction (understanding of the world). A couple would suggest transformational learning, that is, a significant shift in the learner’s perspective, such as books that cause “transformative experiences.”

Adult Learning

Theory from outside of information science provide context to discovery and enlarge our understanding of findings. Based on the varieties of outcomes discussed in the previous chapter, I anticipated examining several theories, including research into pleasure-seeking (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), specifically the relationship between pleasure and content (Stephenson, 1967). However, my participants were consistent in expressing elements of learning as the outcomes of their information use. When these learning outcomes are considered across the cases—as will be discussed more fully in the next two chapters—Mezirow’s concept of transformative learning emerges as the relevant theory for contextualizing the outcomes of this particular study.

Transformative learning is a type of adult learning, and is best understood within the literature of adult learning. As Cranton writes: “Not all adult learning is transformative— but it does not occur separately from other kinds of learning” (2006, p. 18). What follows are brief discussions of Malcolm Knolwes’s concept of andragogy, self-directed learning, and transformative learning; all three are, to some degree, interrelated and important to contextualizing the outcomes from this study.

The concept of andragogy

Adult learning theory provides important context to understanding library users, allowing for a more holistic perspective of their actions. Adult learning theories are largely based in a constructivist philosophy developed from John Dewey, and hold that meaning is created from
experience, that learning is situated within each learners construction of reality, and that the purpose of education (either institutional or self-directed) is the construction of new knowledge. Researchers in adult learning study the learner, library and information science researchers study the user. Adult learning research emphasizes process (the subject is engaged in the act of learning), as well as the internal nature of that process (cognition and perhaps affect). User research has emphasized transaction, with the implied idea that the user is interacting with something (the system, the database, the book) and that the transaction is observable or measurable in some way (the use). In information and library science research, use may be discrete (a query, a book borrowed) and not necessarily an ongoing process. Yet there remain many parallels between adult learning and information science. Both have come of age in the last 40 years, have stronger theoretical development than empirical evidence, and have relationships with professional practice

Andragogy, originally a European concept, was introduced by Knowles (1968; 1970) as a framework for discussing how adults, as opposed to children, learn. There are five main principles of andragogy as summarized by Merriam and Caffarella (1999):

As a person matures, his or her self-concept moved from that of a dependent personality toward one of a self-directed human being.

An adult accumulates a growing reservoir of experience, which is a rich resource for learning.

The readiness of an adult to learn is closely related to the developmental tasks of his or her role.

There is a change in time perspective as people mature—from future application of knowledge to immediacy of application. Thus an adult is more problem centered than subject centered in learning.

Adults are motivated to learn by internal factors rather than external ones. (p. 272).
Knowles work is not so much a theory as it is a model for professional practice, and despite its longevity and influence within education there have been relatively little empirical research focused on andragogy.

It is tempting to speculate about Knowles’s principles and library learners. If learning is indeed an outcome of information engagement through the public library, that learning is likely to be self-directed, with the library user mapping his or her learning experiences independently. The idea of experience as a rich reservoir for learning resonates with reader-response theory; readers interpret and integrate when they engage with a text through the lens of experience.

The duality of problem centered versus subject centered learning is harder to interpret within information seeking behavior. Problem centered learning may well relate to information seeking by those who need information for a specific goal or task, is in a state of uncertainty, or is in a problem situation. It seems especially relevant to Dervin’s sense-making, and the notion that library users have come to the library as detour from their lives to resolve and information gap. Yet librarians encounter many researcher who pursue subject centered information—and, perhaps, subject-centered learning—throughout long stretches of their lives (World War II “buffs”) without any immediacy of application that is obvious or could even be articulated by the researcher.

Knowles’s andragogy has received its share of criticism over the years, in particular for its depiction of learning as an individual act, free of any social and cultural context. Nevertheless, andragogy remains an enduring model for understanding the adult learner (Merriam and Caffarella, 1999, p. 278.)
The term “self-directed learning” has grown to have multiple but related meanings over the years, which Candy (1991, p.23) helpfully clarifies into four definitions. It can refer to self-direction as a personal attribute; the ability to pursue one’s own education; a way to organize instruction within formal, educational settings; and finally, “the individual, noninstitutional pursuit of learning in the ‘natural social setting,’” (Candy, 1991, p. 23). This final definition, which Candy calls autodidaxy, is what concerns us here. I will use the term self-directed learning with the understanding that it refers to autodidaxy.

Early research into self-directed learning (Knowles, 1975; Tough, 1979) seemed focused on understanding the learning behavior in linear steps and stages, not unlike similar efforts by information scientists in understanding the information search process. Its research paradigm emerged from schools of education and largely viewed the autodidact from the perspective of instruction (or self-teaching) and not in a more holistic perspective. Subsequent research produced models that were not nearly so linear (Danis and Tremblay, 1987; 1988) but depicted multiple approaches to learning with random events providing opportunities. Roberson & Merriam, in a recent study of self-directed learning among ten older adults in a rural setting, found that “a loosely organized series of events constituted the process of self-directed learning” (2005, p. 275).

Since Tough’s early work in the 1970s, a significant body of work grew up around self-directed learning in natural settings, and Candy provides a summary of several decades of findings (1991, p. 199):

Few learning endeavors are entirely self-directed, but depend on individual motives and interests shaped by interaction with other people.
Accident and serendipity play an important role in determining the direction that many projects take. Linked to this is the nonlinear nature of such learning efforts.

Many autodidactic projects arise from, and seek to resolve, some problem situation. Most autodidacts are not aware of themselves as in the role of learners.

Self-directed learning is rarely completely solitary. It often occurs in the context of social grouping.

Candy agrees with the premise that autodidacts have learning processes that are complex and unpredictable (1991, p. 175). This is just one of the factors that makes research so difficult. Learning is internal and invisible, and learning among autodidacts is lacking in the assessments of institutionalized learning. “It is argued here that autodidaxy is best understood neither as a model of teaching nor of learning, but that it needs to be studied ‘on its own terms,’” (Candy, 1991, p. 167.)

Public libraries appear in self-directed learning resource as a resource used by learners; in Roberson & Merriam’s study (2005), for example, adults report using the library to pursue genealogical research or using computers to prepare for teaching Sunday school. But as Candy notes, “it was often difficult to distinguish ‘sources’ of information used from ‘channels’ used. One person using a library might claim to use a human planner (the reference librarian) while another classifies this as a nonhuman planner, because he or she has in mind a book or even the library as an institution” (1991, p. 178).

Finally, while not immediately relevant to this research, there is a tradition of library service focused on supporting self-directed learning (Birge, 1981; Burge, 1983; Lee, 1966), most often referred to in the library literature as adult independent study or, in more recent years, adult lifelong learning.
Transformative learning

While andragogy stands in the background of adult learning, the theory of transformative learning is in the forefront, perhaps the leading theory in adult learning today with significant empirical research (Taylor, 1997; 2007) as well as its own conference and peer-reviewed journal. It “has been around for over 25 years and continues to be the most researched and discussed theory in the field of adult education” (Taylor, 2007, p. 173). Not only has transformative learning gone through multiple iterations by Mezirow himself, other theorists have also taken up his concepts, providing critical comment and expanding on what is a complex and somewhat unwieldy body of thought. I offer here a distilled version of transformative learning with the hope that it remains free from distortion.

What is transformative learning? “When a person encounters something that does not fit in with his or her expectations of how things should be, based on past experiences, the choices are to reject the unexpected or to question the expectation. When people critically examine their habitual expectations, revise them, and act on the revised point of view, transformative learning occurs” (Cranton, 2006, p. 19).

Transformative learning grew from Mezirow’s study (1975) of 83 women who were returning to college in 12 different programs. The theory was drawn inductively from structured interviews. It was influenced by both the Brazilian educational philosopher Freire (1970), whose work emphasizes the relationship between personal transformation and social change, and Habermas (1971), whose three types of learning, discussed below, Mezirow drew upon to develop his theory of adult learning.

What changes in people who experience transformative learning is what Mezirow calls our habits of mind, or meaning structures. These meaning structures are our perspectives on the
world, our frames of reference for interpreting experience, and they come from our family and upbringing, education and culture, personality and experiences. Mezirow goes on to introduce the concept of meaning schemes, the more granular rules that make up each habit of mind. (For example, Sam believes that we should live life as honestly as possible, a meaning structure. Sam’s belief that one should not plagiarize in college papers is a meaning scheme).

There are at least six habits of mind: epistemic (knowledge and how we acquire it), sociolinguistic (social norms, cultural expectations), psychological (how we see ourselves), moral-ethical (how we define good and evil), philosophical (transcendental worldview, religious beliefs), and aesthetic (values, attitudes, tastes). Habits of mind are typically unexamined; it can take a disorienting dilemma to bring about consciousness and change in the habits of mind.

The three types of learning that Mezirow developed from Habermas are “broad areas in which human interest generates knowledge: the technical, the practical, and the emancipatory” (Mezirow, 1991, p. 72). Technical or instrumental learning is derived from empirical knowledge and uses scientific laws or technical rules. It is concerned with the objective, observable world. Learning in the sciences, trades, and technology all use technical knowledge.

Communicative learning, also known as practical learning, is “learning to understand what others mean and to make ourselves understood as we attempt to share idea through speech, the written word, plays, moving pictures, television, and art” (Mezirow, 1991, p. 75). “Studies in psychology, sociology, politics, education, language, literature, fine arts, and history focus on communicative learning” (Cranton, 2006, p. 12). While communicative learning can occur by itself, it often occurs through working with others or in groups.

The third way we generate knowledge Habermas calls emancipatory learning, which “is derived from a questioning of instrumental and communicative knowledge” (Cranton, 2006, p.
Emancipatory learning, which Mezirow went on to call transformative learning, is not separate from technical or communicative learning, but rather builds on or extends that knowledge when we question assumed truths. It is emancipatory learning that allows us to challenge our habits of mind, our meaning structures. “Meaningful learning integrates instrumental and communicative knowledge, and emancipatory learning occurs when that knowledge changes a person’s perspective on himself and the world” (Cranton, 2006, p. 16). We do not know, but I would guess that the South African man mentioned earlier (Sabine & Sabine, 1983, p. 45), who left his country after reading Alan Paton’s *Cry the Beloved Country*, experienced emancipatory learning; *Cry the Beloved Country* provoked a change in his sociolinguistic habit of mind.

Transformative learning, as first presented by Mezirow (1975), had ten phases. A *disorienting dilemma* (such as the death of a loved one) often sets the transformation into motion. One’s previous strategies no longer work, causing *self-examination* (the second stage) and a *critical assessment of assumptions* (third stage). The fourth phase recognizes that *others have gone through a similar process*, while the fifth stage involves *exploring options for new roles or actions*. In the sixth stage, learners create a *plan of action*, which has three steps, stages seven through nine: acquiring knowledge and skills for implementing one’s plans, trying out new roles, and building competence and self-confidence. The final stage is *reintegration back into life*. While described as stages, progress through them is not necessarily linear.

Mezirow now refers to transformative learning at a “theory in formation,” and as mentioned it has undergone many changes and expansions over the years. For one thing, today there is less focus on the stages that Mezirow has drawn up; “the emphasis has much more been on encountering the disorienting event and critically questioning or responding to the
assumptions and expectations that make it disorienting” (Cranton, 2006, p. 20). Taylor concurs, noting that the research shift has been away from identifying the stages of transformation, “and more towards making sense of factors that shaped the transformative experience, and how it can be fostered in practice” (2007, p. 185). Furthermore, the disorienting dilemma, it is now understood, need not be a dramatic, life-changing event. Indeed, it can be a growing awareness accumulated over time. Mezirow uses the terms epochal and incremental to distinguish between the two.

There are additional key concepts in transformative learning. One, transformative learning accepts the primacy of prior experience as developed by Knowles, “the subject matter of transformative adult education is the learner’s experience” (Mezirow, 1995, p. 58 in Merriam and Caffarella, p. 326).

Another key issue is the importance of critical reflection, “the process of reconsidering experience through reason, and generalizing the experience to form mental structures” (Cranton, 2006, p. 33). Reflection has the potential to create change within instrumental and communicative knowledge, and Mezirow subdivides reflective thinking into three categories. Content reflection involves considering “the content or description of a problem. It is the equivalent of asking What is happening here?” (Cranton, 2006, p. 34). Process reflection involves examining how the problem is being solved, the strategies being utilized. The third form of reflection, premise reflection, “when the problem itself is questioned” (Cranton, 2008, p. 34), is what concerns us here. It is seen as a “higher level of reflective thinking as it is through premise reflection that we can transform our meaning framework as is opens the possibility of perspective transformation” (Kember, Jones, Loke, McKay, Sinclair, Webb, et al., 2000, p. 23).
In other words, premise reflection is one way that we can change, or at least challenge, our meaning structures.

Finally, engaging in discourse and dialogue serves to help learners question their assumptions and, in turn, test out whether the new meanings they have created through transformation are indeed authentic and good. Dialogue can “occur in one-to-one relationships, in groups, and in formal educational settings” (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999, p. 322).

To better illustrate transformative learning, let’s look at the fictional case of Gloria, a composite created from the true experiences of several individuals:

In her early sixties and recently retired, Gloria decided to learn how to blog. A life-long fan of Mystery fiction, she was looking for a way to share her passion with a small group of friends, all fellow Mystery readers. She had never before engaged in any social networking or learned any “Web 2.0” software that facilitated the sharing of information. Her experience with the Internet had been restricted to searching, making purchases through popular commercial web sites such as Amazon.com, and sending and receiving email. Learning to blog, which Gloria did largely on her own, involved acquiring technical knowledge; in fact, acquiring new technical knowledge has been continuous since her blog was launched. At the same time, Gloria’s blog enables communicative learning as readers share information about authors, writing, and books. Over the past three years, Gloria’s blog—fueled by her deep knowledge, voracious reading habits, and dedication—has emerged as one of the leading resources in the genre. Her blog has moved to an industry-related Web site, which compensates Gloria; Gloria is considered one of the leading reviewers in the field; she has begun to accept public speaking engagements.

In Gloria’s story, as with many learning experiences, it is hard to separate instrumental and communicative learning. Her acquiring of new technical knowledge—blogging software—quickly catapulted her into an environment that enabled communicative learning, about Mystery fiction, as well as additional instrumental knowledge in the form of more Web 2.0 applications. Emancipatory learning may revolve here around several areas, but most significant is the change in how Gloria perceives herself, a change in her psychological habit of mind. This is brought about by the wide recognition of her knowledge and appreciation for her critical skills. This
disorienting dilemma is no “burning bush,” but rather an incremental awareness that is built up over several years. As Gloria’s place within the mystery genre shifts from consumer and fan to participant and critic, her self-confidence and sense of self-worth also changed, resulting in a transformed perspective on herself. The shift is supported by self-reflection by Gloria, as well as dialogue with others, including friends and professional associates, who validate Gloria’s change in self-perception. Set in motion by instrumental then communicative learning, Gloria’s perception of herself today is markedly different from three years ago.

As a text-book case, Gloria’s story represents the full arc of the transformative learning narrative, fully-realized. It is unlikely one would ever encounter such a story in research; narratives rarely unfold in such linear order, for one thing.

Personally, I was familiar with transformative learning through course work in adult learning, but had not really considered it in the context of information behavior until I conducted a pilot study in April, 2007 (see Appendix A). One of my participants in that research, Beth, described two moments in her life that would suggest that they could be disorienting dilemmas: “sudden parenthood,” when she believed she would have custody of a niece, and, later in life, unemployment. Her information seeking and the resulting use of library content and services in response to these incidents might well have been part of a plan of action within a transformative learning event.

The word transformative also appears as an outcome in Ross’s research into readers (1999) as well as an outcome in Sabine & Sabine’s books that make a difference project (1983). It would seem that in both cases transformative implies a significant change in perspective, similar to the way in which Mezirow (1991) uses it.
Finally, what can be said about the Dervin’s sense-making and Mezirow’s transformative learning? This question cannot be answered easily or quickly; as Savolainen (2006) notes, “There may also be translation problems between the vocabularies of sense-making and other approaches” (p. 1124). Indeed, I could imagine a book-length comparison of the two theories. However, a preliminary consideration of the two would begin by looking at three areas. First, each conceives of the seeker/learner as the active builder of his or her own reality. Sense-making creates the ontological category of *verbing* for the development of cognitive or affective elements to enable sense-making; transformative learning situates itself within a constructivist tradition that understands that the learners are engaged in a similar process.

Second, each has at its core an event: the gap in sense-making and the disorienting dilemma in transformative learning. However, gaps can range from the “small,” that which can be resolved, for example, by a visit to the library, to large, metaphysical inquiries, whereas a disorienting dilemma involves the change in one’s perspective on self or the world. A disorienting dilemma *could* be a gap, but not all gaps could be disorienting dilemmas.

Third, each posits a set of outcomes that are largely cognitive and affective. Sense-making’s outcomes again display a broad range, from helps to a change in one’s “horizon,” whereas transformative learning is concerned with changes in knowledge, from meaning schemes to meaning structures, as well as changes in the self.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY AND STUDY DESIGN

This chapter includes discussions of narrative analysis, methods of data collection, methods of data analysis, and issues of validity. The process of determining an appropriate methodology for this inquiry was a lengthy one, but in the end, methodology did not just provide me with a way to approach the research, it forced me to think about my central questions in new ways. Methodology informed my inquiry.

Ontologically, this research stems from the assumption that each individual constructs his or her own reality. However, Candy (1991) clearly addresses the challenges that constructivism makes on research design:

The acceptance of a constructivist perspective poses the researcher and the instructor alike with the problem of how to gain access to each individual’s worldview…Asking questions presupposes first that the respondent is able to articulate his or her understanding and intentions, and second that he or she uses words to mean the same as the researcher does—a particular problem in the case of the autodidacts. Moreover, there is always the likelihood of obtaining the respondent’s “espoused theory” rather than his or her “theory-in-use” (p. 267).

In trying to address these challenges, I turned to narrative analysis, with the understanding, as Bruner has expressed, that narratives are one of the primary ways that humans know and think about their worlds, (Bruner, 1986).

Narrative Analysis

The use of narrative in the social sciences has a long history, and in recent years it has been used in a number of areas of practice. Medicine and nursing, in particular, have made substantial use of patient narrative to understand both the context of the individual in relation to illness as well as in relation to caregivers and institutions. However, story and narratives have been seldom employed in information science (Figa, 2002; O‘Connor, Copeland & Kearns,
2003; Tidline, 2003). While narrative has been proposed as a way to explore the relationship between libraries and users (Labaree, 2006), I have found no studies that accomplish this. Because narrative analysis has gone largely unused in information science, I provide first a brief history of the use of narrative in the social sciences, some of the general characteristics of narrative research, and the specific methods of inquiries researchers use, and how these relate to this particular project.

**Narrative, a brief history**

Sociologists look back to Thomas and Znaniecki’s *The Polish Peasant*, first published in 1918, and the work of the Chicago School. For psychologists, Freud’s use of narrative case studies to create his models of psychological behavior has informed the field ever since.

“Without such clinical illustration and exemplification, psychoanalytic theories appear scarcely intelligible abstractions, and where the field relies too heavily on abstracted theory, it does not make much progress” (Rustin, 2000, p. 37). Anthropologists (Chase, 2005, p. 654) used life stories in the early 20th century to record Native American cultures, such as Radin’s (1926) *Crashing Thunder*. In the 1960s and 1970s feminist scholars took up narrative, redirecting its traditional function as signifier of history, culture, or social change and instead focusing on “women as social actors in their own right and in the subjective meaning that women assigned to events and conditions in their own lives” (Chase, 2005, p. 655). Their work introduced tensions in narrative analysis that live on today: can stories speak only of their teller, but do they speak of a larger world also?

In the mid-1960s, Labov and Waletsky (1967), working from an oral history and sociolinguistic perspective, proposed that all oral, narrative discourse contained an identifiable structure. This structure, as summarized by McLeod (1997), consists of one, an abstract or
summary of the story; two, orientation information, such as time, place, and persons involved; three, the complicating action, or the core of the narrative, describing what happened; four, a resolution, which tells the result of the action; five, an evaluation which communicates the point of the story; and six; a coda which returns speaker and audience to the present. This document has elicited much debate since its original publication—witness the nearly 50 assessments that were published when it was reprinted in 1997 (Labov and Waletsky, 1997). But because of this work, “Many contemporary narrative researchers embrace the idea that how individuals narrate experience is as important to the meanings they communicate as what they say” (Chase, 2005, p. 656).

The recent decade has witnessed a “turn” to the narrative among many researchers across the social sciences. Some (Chamberlayne, Bornat & Wengraf, 2000) see this as a reaction to the positivism, determinism, and social constructionism that has left the social sciences “detached from lived realities” (p. 1). Postmodernism also helped break down the connection between the personal and the social. “The nasty taste in our mouths left by anarchic postmodernism suggests that there is more to life than simply stories. Narratives are always politicized, structured, culturised, and socialized” (Goodley, Lawthom, Clough & Moore, 2004, p. 1). This turn has generated a significant literature about narrative practices as well as the journal Narrative Inquiry. “Researchers new to this field will find a rich but diffuse tradition, multiple methodologies in various stages of development, and plenty of opportunities for exploring new ideas, methods, and questions” (Chase, 2005, p. 651).

**General characteristics of narrative analysis**

The narrative lens has its own, distinctive perspective on empirical research. While not all work conducted under the term narrative analysis shares these points of view, many do and
they remain in the forefront of my mind as I approach conducting and analyzing interviews with my participants.

Narrative research emphasizes a holistic perspective on the phenomena (Stake, 1995) and supports research into multiple realities. In its epistemological perspective, “it seeks to understand a situation as it was constructed by the participants. The task of the research is to stay as close as possible to the particular construction of the participants who originally experienced it” (Shkedi, 2005, p. 5).

Narratives are rich documents, different from other forms of discourse, and are defined as “retrospective meaning making—the shaping or ordering of past experience” (Chase, 2005, p. 656). They are a way of organizing one’s actions, events, experiences into a meaningful whole and seeing the events over time.

“Experience happens narratively. Narrative inquiry is a form of narrative experience” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 19). When people tell us stories, they are recreating their experiences, using narrative as a form of thinking. Narratives are often verbal actions (Chase, p. 657), especially narratives that come from interviews. Arising from a telling, they involve shaping, creating, performing. Voice, that action of telling, is an important part of narrative, yet many aspects of voice (pitch, tone, ellipses) are often lost in transcription. Attention to voice reminds us of the importance of how a story is told as well as what is being told.

Storytelling is universal, according to Hsu (2008), with common themes reappearing both throughout time and across the globe. Stories can “reveal clues about our evolutionary history and the roots of emotion and empathy in the mind” (p. 46). The study of stories, Hsu claims, gives insight into how we analyze information and how new ideas can be integrated into existing knowledge.
At its core, “narrative analysis takes as its object of investigation the story itself” (Riessman, 1993, p. 1). “We ask, why was the story told that way?” (p. 2). And story, according to Bruner (1986), involves two landscapes simultaneously. One is the landscape of action: agent, intention or goal, situation, instrument. The other is the landscape of consciousness, “what those involved in the action know, think, or feel, or do not know, think, or feel” (Bruner, 1986, p. 14). Transposing this to my information users, one landscape is what they did: the seeking they conducted, the books they read, the videos they viewed, the facts they found, the conversations they had. The other landscape is of cognition and affect: how this information may have changed them or their situation.

Narrative analysis inherently works from the individual upwards, “rather than from the social structure downwards” (Rustin, 2000, p. 45). Narrative research is idiographic, focused on the “private, the individual, the subjective view of life” (Goodley, Lawthom, Cough & Moore, 2004, p. 97.) As would follow, it “looks more towards interpretive understanding than explanation” (Freeman, 2004, p. 63). The meaning-making is centered on the individual, or a small group of individuals, and not on a wider population. Literature, operating from a specific work, and psychology, using the individual case, already derive understanding in this way.

This issue of the larger social context is problematic for scholars. Some limit interpretation exclusively to what occurs in the boundary of the conversations. Others (Riessman, 1993; Chase, 2005) connect narratives to “the historical moment of the telling, the race, class, and gender systems…the text is not autonomous of its context” (Riessman, p. 21). Chase sees narratives as inevitably being situated within a range of social resources and circumstances: local setting, social memberships, and historical location. By locating this inquiry within a
homogenous group within a particular community, although simultaneously researching across lives, I am intentionally situating the stories within a context.

As a methodology, narrative analysis also has a personal resonance. I have a background in literary criticism, and I am familiar with the formal devices of narrative and comfortable with the slipperiness of texts and their multiple meanings. I believe that the boundary between fiction and nonfiction is not fixed but rather permeable, and that all texts have multiple truths to impart. I have learned from Derrida that “there is no clear window into the inner life of a person” (Denzin, 1989, p. 14) and that language can obfuscate as much as it communicates.

Strategies of inquiry

A novice practitioner of narrative research, it was far easier for me to learn the history, philosophical underpinnings, and theoretical issues relating to narrative than it was to learn how to actually do narrative analysis. Unlike other qualitative research methods—grounded theory, most notably—there is no prescriptive road map for applying narrative analysis to texts. The student is largely left to reading through monographs, dissertations, and journal articles that claim to use narrative analysis and inquiry to determine how the authors define narrative, create documents from speech, consider thematic and/or language issues, and what units, or parts of the documents, they analyze. This is not, in itself, a bad thing, but it can lead to an on-going state of confusion, considering the wide varieties of narrative analysis that are practiced. As Riessman (2008) makes clear, narrative analysis is operationalized differently throughout the disciplines:

One one end of the continuum of applications lies the very restrictive definition of social linguistics. Here narrative refers to a discrete unit of discourse, an extended answer by a research participant to a single question…On the other end of the continuum, there are applications in social history and anthropology, where narrative can refer to an entire life story, woven from threads of interviews, observations, and documents….Resting in the middle…is research in psychology and sociology. Here, personal narrative encompasses long sections of talk—extended accounts of lives in context that develop over the source of single or multiple research interview (p. 5-6).
Compounding the confusion is the fact that information science lacks any tradition, and has only a few precedents, for examining narrative.

Riessman (2008) presents the clearest road map to conducting narrative analysis. Descriptive and provisional, her monograph draws on candidate exemplars to present a typology of four broad approaches to narrative inquiry. These are: thematic analysis, which considers what is spoken, as opposed to how it is told; structural analysis, or how a story is told; dialogic/performance analysis, how talk is produced and performed; and visual analysis, in which images are data along with the words of the image-makers. These approaches are by no means mutually exclusive, and oftentimes inquiries use multiple perspectives.

In this research my approach is primarily thematic, using narratives that are long sections of talk developed through multiple interviews. While prior theory often serves a means for interpreting narrative, here I allow themes to emerge within the context of each life.

One of the most contested areas within narrative analysis, especially among researchers who take a thematic approach, is the coding and development of themes across narratives. As Polkinghorne says: “In qualitative research there is a general push to provide taxonomies and conceptual systems and so on which sort of look for commonalities across interviews and other things….I think that narrative is quite different, that it really deals with individual lives….when you use narrative as a kind of data which is sort of equivalent to any other kind of interview data…I think it misses the significance of what narrative is all about. That it can capture…in this kind of temporal development of lives, the unique histories of people” (Clandinin, D.J. & Murphy, M.S., 2000).

Touching on this point, Riessman (2008) articulates the specific differences between thematic narrative analysis and grounded theory, as the two are often confused. First, narrative
analysis preserves sequences, it retains the story as an integral unit of analysis, while grounded theory takes the story apart, coding segments for the purpose of comparison and the development of theory. Also, narrative analysis attends to the time and place of narration. Finally, the objective in grounded theory is to “generate inductively a stable set of concepts that can be used to theorize across cases. By contrast, narrative analysis is case centered…the difference between narrative methods and grounded theory flows from this case-centered commitment” (p. 74.)

Research Methods

This section discusses ethical concerns, site selection, sampling, and data collection and management.

Ethical issues

This research did not begin until it was approved by the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Research of the University of North Texas. Participation in this project was not expected to have any negative repercussions for the participants. Participants were fully apprised of the research’s objectives and timetable and were informed that they can withdraw from the study at any time, or end an interview at any time.

Confidentiality was kept in three ways. One, a copy of the names, contact information, and pseudonym of the participants was kept in hard copy, locked with the researcher’s personal papers and to be destroyed after five years. Two, all electronic documents used a pseudonym. Three, while transcripts of the interviews with six of the participants are included, information was changed or [deleted] to insure anonymity.

Site selection

This research was conducted among adult users of the Fayetteville Public Library, Arkansas. Fayetteville was chosen for three reasons. One, I have access to a number of potential
participants through personal contacts. Two, Fayetteville, through its one public library building, has a strong history of library service. Home to an award-winning, new library that offers many, diverse services and which is well-known for its innovative collections, I felt certain I could easily find engaged library users. Three, I had never been to Arkansas and I wanted a research environment that was unfamiliar.

Fayetteville, home of the University of Arkansas, is nestled in the Ozark Mountains and numbers approximately 70,000 residents. It is part of the Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers metropolitan area which has a population of over 420,000 and is home to several international corporations such as Walmart and Tyson Foods, both of which have attracted additional vendors to the area. As of the 2000 census, the level of education and income in Fayetteville are among the second highest in the state, with over 44 percent of the population having at least an associate’s degree and with the median family income at $45,000. The population is 86 percent white, 14 percent non-white. In recent years, it has received numerous awards for being a livable city or desirable retirement destination, and in 2008 was ranked number seven in "Best Cities to Work, Play, and Live" by Kiplinger's Magazine and is regularly named as one of “America’s Most Livable Cities,” by the Partners for Livable Communities.

Sample size, selection, and demographics

“Qualitative researchers usually work with small samples of people, nested in their context and studied in-depth” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 27). I worked with 12 participants, all “regular users” of the public library through most of their adult life. As there is no definition of regular use of a public library (although informal surveys indicate that 10-12 visits a year would be regular use), I sought participants who defined themselves as regular users. On average, my participants attended the library 1.4 times a week.
For research that is exploratory, I chose a homogenous group of participants with the hopes of producing the richest possible data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). My participants are all white women, between the ages of 51 and 71, with an average age of 63. They are all middle-class, although a couple of them were born into poor families and several more come from working class/lower middle class backgrounds. All have attained at least a bachelor’s degree. For more on the composition of the participants, see Table 2, Demographic Profile of Participants.

Table 2

Demographic Profile of Participants

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age (years)</th>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Children</th>
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<td>Ph.D.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>68</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Retired Teacher</td>
<td>Master</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doris</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>Retired Teacher</td>
<td>Bachelor</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esther</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Parent</td>
<td>Bachelor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
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<td>Retired Administrator</td>
<td>Masters</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jane</td>
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<td>Former Accountant, Parent</td>
<td>Bachelor</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Married</td>
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<td>Master</td>
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<td>Widow</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Married</td>
<td>Retired Nurse</td>
<td>Bachelor</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: All participants are white females.

I used snowball sampling to recruit my participants as I wanted to create a homogenous sample. I began with one personal acquaintance and two suggestions from one of the librarians at the Fayetteville Public Library; these, in turn, led to the remaining participants.

For all but one of the participants, my first contact was through e-mail. In this email I explained that as part of my doctoral studies I was conducting research into the experiences of
individuals using the public library throughout their lives. I explained that I was seeking participants who considered themselves to be regular library users. I reviewed their rights and responsibilities as participants—two taped interview sessions of about 1 ½ hours each with possible additional sessions—and attached a copy of the informed consent form. Participants were informed that at any time they could stop an interview or choose to withdraw from the study. Those who expressed interest I contacted by phone to answer questions and gauge their interest in participating. In all, I emailed 22 potential participants to find 12; those who could not participate where out-of-town, unable to commit to the interview schedule, or did not consider themselves to be regular library users.

Data collection and management

Interviews were held in Fayetteville, Arkansas in late winter and early spring of 2008. The interviews were conducted over four different weeks. Within each week I interviewed three different participants twice; in the last two visits to Fayetteville I also had third interviews with three of the participants from earlier sessions. I had third interviews at a later date with two more participants by phone.

All first and second interviews were conducted in a study room of the library. Initially I wanted to find a more neutral space than the library itself. However, the study room, one of several, proved to be ideal. Most importantly, my participants felt comfortable meeting me, a stranger, in a familiar space that was also relatively public. At the same time, as the rooms were in a relatively remote area of the library, participants could come and go without any contact—or even observation—by library personnel.

The first two interviews with each participant were taped and transcribed. In total, over 40 hours of conversation were transcribed. The third interviews, which were more casual, were
held over a lunch, a dinner, a cup of coffee, and over the telephone. These third interviews were not recorded. I wrote memos immediately following the interviews conducted in person and during the telephone interviews I took notes and also wrote memos.

My intent was to conduct the interview with as much neutrality as possible. My objective was to achieve, as Dervin (2007, p. 53) describes, a “naturalistic and holistic approach to interviewing, [in which] it is the informant—not the researcher—who is free to define terms such as emotions or learnings or muddles. While many dominant theories of interviewing attempt to structure interviewing in such a way that the goal is to constrain informant interpretations to research intent, Sense-making draws on different theories of communicating…treating interviewees as knowledgeable informants on their life situations, capable of theorizing events, causes, and outcomes.”

In the first interview (hereafter called “the life story”), I wanted to receive a life story, while in the second interview I wanted the participants to return to that life story and discuss how they used the public library and to reflect on those experiences (hereafter “the library story”). My hope was that the first interview would provide enough rich, descriptive data to allow me to understand my participants’ lives in at least some of their complexity, thereby providing greater context for second interview.

Life stories are a specific sub-genre of narrative. Life stories are “big stories,” and, unlike the small stories produced in everyday conversation, are held by some to be artificial constructions (Bamberg, 2006). While sometimes criticized for their lack of immediacy and closeness to the lived experience, life stories offer other advantages. They “entail a significant measure of reflection on either an event or an experience, a significant portion of a life, or the whole of it” (Freeman, 2006, p. 132.) Reflection, in requiring some distance from the actual
events, can allow for greater meaning-making, what Freeman terms a revelatory power that “cannot occur in the immediacy of the present moment and the small stories that issue from it” (2006, p. 134).

I used a modified version of Wengraf’s biographic narrative and semi-structured methods (2001) to structure the interviews. In this methodology, used successfully in many studies in the last decade throughout the United Kingdom, Europe, and Australia, the interviewer poses a single question to gain a full narrative, indicating that there will be no further interruptions. “The interviewer is encouraged to answer this question with, if necessary, reassurances and prompts for more story. On no account should you as interviewer change this question or ‘spell it out’ in any way, whatever pressure you feel yourself to be under” (Wengraf, 2001, p. 119).

Because of difficulties I had in my pilot project with participants conflating both interviews, and overeager to discuss the library (see Appendix A), I began the first interview by reminding the participants that while I was interested in their experiences using the public library, the purpose of today’s interview was for them to tell me their life story. I then read them Wengraf’s prompt: I would like you to tell me your life story, all the events and experiences which were important to you. Start wherever you like. Please take the time you need. I’ll listen first, I won’t interrupt, I’ll just take some notes for afterwards. Invariably, with just a few nonverbal responses, most of the participants proceeded to speak for around 90 minutes.

At the conclusion of each interview I wrote a memo, or field notes, documenting the experience.

The second interview typically occurred three to six days later, giving me time to review the first interview several times, begin transcription, and create additional memos and for the participants to reflect on their experience.
In the second interview, I began by reminding the participants that I wanted to hear about their experiences using the public library. Because of the different ways participants in my pilot study defined the public library, I began with a definition:

By ‘the public library’ I mean any of the services you might receive through the library as well as all of the content in the library—the books, CDs, videos, and more—that you might use in the building or at home, in your car, at work, or anywhere. I also mean any interactions you might have with people at the library—whether library staff members, people you may meet, or friends you might run into—as well as experiences attending classes or programs. Finally, I also mean to include any experiences you might have online through the library, or by accessing the library from your home or work computer.

I then provided a prompt: Please tell me your experiences using the public library throughout your life, and reflect on those experiences. Start wherever you like. Please take the time you need. I’ll listen first, I won’t interrupt, and I’ll just take some notes for afterwards.

Unlike the first interview, this interview provoked more varied responses. Some participants easily launched into a recount of their experiences using public libraries, while others would start then stop, seeking affirmation that “this is what I wanted.” In a few of the interviews, I had to use some additional prompts. These included: asking the participant to return to a period of their life and recount their library experiences in more detail; or—for those who were active readers—I drew on Sabine & Sabine’s research (1983) and asked if there were any books that made a difference in their lives; finally, I asked some to describe their last library visit, which often provoked other memories and reflections.

Again, I authored a memo immediately following the interview and sometimes created several more memos in the days immediately following as I reviewed the tapes, comparing the first and second interviews.

The third sets of interviews were to investigate more closely stories that strongly suggested that information use resulted in a transformation of some kind. Again, care was taken
to retain neutrality in these interviews. When contacting the participants I informed them that I wanted to speak with them again to revisit some of their experiences. The first participant requested that this meeting not be taped and that we meet in the library coffee shop as she wanted a more relaxed, informal experience. I adopted this for the other two other interviews. While the environment and tone was more casual, I was no less careful in how I sought information: in all five third interviews I asked the participants to recount specific stories again, slowly and with as much details as possible, and to reflect on them.

Data analysis

All of the first and second interviews were taped, resulting in over 40 hours of conversation, and were fully transcribed. The transcripts were uploaded into NVivo, qualitative research software that was used to organize the documents and to facilitate further memo-writing, note-taking, and the coding and manipulation of data.

Each individual in this study was considered to be a case. A case consisted of two interviews—the life story and the library use story—sometimes a third interview, as well as memos, notes, and in a couple of instances correspondence. The primary goal for data analysis was to answer the research questions within the boundaries of each participant’s life. As a secondary goal, analysis was conducted across the cases, as described below.

The narratives for each case were read repeatedly and coded iteratively; the coding was inductive and descriptive, moving from broad, general codes to more specific ones. Units that were coded were usually narratives or parts of narratives and occasionally factual information; with each case, coding developed into a two-level structured list. There was no attempt to develop a coding schema that could be applied across the case studies, however, as it turned out there was an enormous overlap in codes which was useful in the cross-case analysis. More
important than coding were memo-writing and note-taking, which were used to capture the experience and immediate impressions of each of the interviews, connect the life story and the library use story, and capture ideas during transcription and later readings.

**Limitations, validity, and trustworthiness**

There is some concern with the issue of truth in narrative, and some scholars are wary of fictionalizing elements in life stories. This is much debated point, with Riessman stating that “historical truth of an individual’s account is not the primary issue” (1998, p. 64). Facts are understood as being part of an interpretive process, and the same event, told by the same narrator, can change over time. As with the sense-making studies that Dervin has undertaken, this research “is not intended to present essentialist pictures of user behavior as concrete aspects of reality, but rather phenomenological pictures of how users construe their worlds” (2007, p. 76).

Critics also express concern with the level of subjectivity in narrative work, especially in the role of the researcher in constructing stories from texts. In presenting the narratives—condensing them and excerpting from them—I have been mindful of the biases and expectations that I, as a reader, bring to the texts.

The point of validation with narrative is trustworthiness rather than truth, according to Riessman, who posits four ways of approaching validation. This perspective on validation is echoed by multiple narrative researchers.

One is persuasiveness and plausibility. Does the story ring true for the reader? Is the interpretation supported with evidence from the participant’s accounts?

The second is through correspondence, having participants review the work. This is very useful for stories, especially when a story has been distilled from lengthier text; it is less valuable
with interpretation. In the case of this research, most of the interview transcripts were reviewed by the participants; however, not all could be reached.

Third is coherence: global, local, and thematic. Global refers to the overall goals a narrator has for the story. What do they want to impart? Local coherence refers to specific devices used in the narratives, such as linguistic devices to connect, or using vignettes to create juxtaposition. Thematic coherence is about content; do themes reappear throughout a participant’s interviews?

Finally, Reissman advocates for pragmatic use, validation of the information over time by a research community. This however, is a long-term process not applicable to a dissertation.

In this research, I took the following steps to address issues of validity and trustworthiness:

A journal of the study was maintained for self-reflection. It was used to document my own biases and how they may influence my research as well as the interview process and the issue of reactivity, that is, my role in influencing the interview situation. As a former librarian with many years of public service experience, a journal to record my reactions was very useful.

I had a long-term involvement with the research participants.

I developed rich and varied data, and produced a final report that incorporates multiple perspectives, proper quotations, and contextual information.

I am ensuring reliability through transparent data collection: creating a retrievable database, preserving the analysis documents, and maintaining a chain of evidence (Shkedi, 2005). This will allow others to confirm or question the research. In addition, transcripts from the interviews were shared with the participants.
Finally, I intended to share the findings from this research with two groups in Fayetteville, one consisting of the participants and the other of library employees. With the group of participants, especially, my intent was to determine if the findings “made sense” and whether they did or did not resonate with how they perceived their experiences as library users. However, several of the participants reacted negatively to the idea of any such meeting, fearing loss of confidentiality. While I assured them that pseudonyms would be used and personal details disguised, they still believed they could be easily identified. This caused me to reconsider my plans, finally abandoning the idea of sharing the findings with either the Fayetteville participants or library workers.
CHAPTER 4
FINDINGS

This chapter presents the findings through the words of the participants, and begins to answer the overarching research question for this study: What outcomes, if any, do adult users assign to the information activities they engage in through the public library? It opens with a summary of the general findings, including a discussion of browsing, the dominant way that the participants sought information, and then moves on to examine several of the “outcome narratives.” Further discussion about the findings—addressing the research questions, the implications of this study, caveats, and thoughts regarding subsequent research—are pursued in chapter five.

General Findings

Data was collected over several months, giving me time to begin the transcription of interviews and some preliminary analysis before proceeding to collect data from the next set of cases. As stated, I did not approach the cases with any existing theory. Rather, I sought to answer the research questions within the context of each life, or case, and then perhaps generate categories, or general concepts, across the cases. Considering the wide variety of outcomes (see Table 1) from existing studies of information use, I was cautious in my expectations of creating any general knowledge.

This section considers first the information seeking and use behavior, then the nature of the knowledge sought, then the outcomes through examination of the outcome narratives.

Browsing as dominant information behavior

Behaviorally, “browsing is characterized by the act of scanning as an individual moves through information or a physical environment. The two senses of scanning—the close
examination or the quick glance—reflect two different approaches to looking through a surrounding or a resource in which multiple layers of information or objects are presented; scanning implies multiplicity of the scanned object” (Chang, 2001, p. 218.)

In the few instances when my participants describe using library systems, such as the online catalog, these incidents were nearly always related to browsing, such as browsing through a resource like Amazon.com before they purposely searched a catalog or searching for a title they happened to remember so they could browse within a related, general area in the library’s stacks. In my many narratives, I had only one report of a participant seeking information without browsing.

The participants in this study interacted with the library—its services, collections, and programs—in their own way, each as unique as a fingerprint. A few reported that in recent years they have come to prefer interacting with the library online (checking the catalog, renewing material, requesting material from other libraries) and visit the library just to pick up content, several only used the library in person, while others blended online and physical use. How they used the library, and what they used it for, ranged tremendously and there was often great variance within each case depending on context or the period within each life. But at the heart of so many of these interactions was browsing. Systems and services that libraries have created to organize information and make it accessible—such as catalogs, indices, reference librarians, and pathfinders—while used extensively by two of the participants were left unused by most of the participants. Browsing through physical collections extended from the participants’ earliest memories of using libraries to the present. Search, even for very specific knowledge, often took the form of physically browsing through materials. Many participants commented on the “browse-ability” of the new Fayetteville Public Library with multiple tables for book display,
including several for different genres, and easy-to-browse movie, music, and periodical collections.

In seeking to understand the information behavior among my participants, and thus in coding the narratives, I have relied on Chang’s Dimensional Taxonomy of Browsing Patterns (Chang, 2001, p. 286), which clusters browsing activities into the following five general categories.

“Seeking a specific item” includes nonbrowsing, when metadata (such as a library catalog or a book’s index) is used to find specific information; situational browsing, which refers to scanning other items in the area while locating a specific item; and opportunistic browsing, which involves scanning items incidental to locating a specific item.

“Looking for some things with common characteristics” includes systematic browsing, such as looking through citations under a specific heading; evaluative browsing, examining objects to evaluate common characteristics, such as books on a library shelf; and focus browsing, which involves going to a resource area after consulting a bibliographic tool.

“Browsing to keep up-to-date” is monitor browsing, which refers to continuously scanning a resource, like a journal, that provides information of new development in an area.

“Learning or finding out,” is when the searchers desire to find information motivates scanning activities; it includes indicative browsing, scanning parts of an information object, like a newspaper, to learn specific information and preparatory browsing, learning something not specified, such as a searchers looking through a known magazine for potentially interesting articles.

Finally, there is goal free browsing or what I think of as “browsing for fun;” it occurs when there is no stated goal in mind.
**Knowledge is exclusively communicative**

As mentioned earlier, technical or instrumental learning, as used by Mezirow, is learning that is derived from empirical knowledge and uses scientific laws or technical rules. In the interviews, there is only one mention of a participant seeking technical information, when Esther recalled seeking health information, and she asked a reference librarian for assistance. All the other information sought is communicative learning, “learning to understand what others mean and to make ourselves understood as we attempt to share ideas through speech, the written word, plays, moving pictures, television, and art” (Mezirow, 1991, p. 75).

**Learning as an outcome**

Of my 12 participants, two presented no outcomes. One of the participants, despite having been screened, was ultimately not appropriate for the study as her library use was minimal. The other, while she could recount use in broad terms, was either unwilling or unable to reflect on the outcomes of those experiences.

Among the remaining ten, I was surprised, as I transcribed then read through the interviews, at how prevalent learning seemed to appear as a potential outcome, although over time I also heard affect as an outcome related to learning. Of course neither I nor any of my participants ever mentioned learning by name. But if we return to Bruner’s definition of learning (the acquisition of new information, which often runs counter to or is a replacement of what the person has previously known, but which at the very least is a refinement of previous knowledge; transformation, or the process of manipulating knowledge to make it fit new tasks; and evaluation) then learning (with related affective changes)—as will be discussed below—is overwhelmingly the outcome of information use among this group of participants. Participants
discussed activities, such as reading for pleasure, that might lead to other outcomes, such as enjoyment or comfort, but no one mentioned these as outcomes.

Even more surprising was that many of the participants presented narratives where information use facilitated a change in how they saw themselves, their pasts, or the world around them—sometimes in very dramatic ways. These changes were reminiscent of perspective changes, changes in the habits of mind, suggesting Mezirow’s theory of transformative learning. As I read each case over and over, I wrote memos that looked closely at the learning outcomes in the library story, placing them in the context of the life story. I also considered them in relation to adult learning theory, including the writings on andragogy, self-directed learning, and transformative learning.

Slowly, transformative learning began to emerge as a way to understand information outcomes among my participants and as I began to look across the cases—comparing memos and narratives—the argument for transformative learning grew significantly stronger. Reflection and dialogue were significant elements in many of the outcome narratives. New knowledge, or changes in meaning schemes or meaning structures, was reported. Furthermore, several of the participants told stories that resonated strongly with perspective transformation. I conducted a third interview with some of the participants, seeking a more detailed telling of these transformative experiences. Throughout, I remained skeptical, and sought alternate explanations.

The strength of these narratives is that we get to hear people, in a very direct way, describe what they “did” with information, what were the outcomes (on their thoughts, their feelings, and their lives), and whether these outcomes caused them to take further actions, to move on in some way. However, the richest contribution of these narratives, to return to Kari’s
four areas left unaddressed, is to our understanding of context (the where) and the dependence between outcome and other phenomena (the why).

Fundamentally, what I found in these outcome narratives was that information, once found and determined to be appropriate, gets taken up by the seeker and becomes part of another activity—integration with existing knowledge through reflection and/or dialogue—and is used to create new knowledge that results in a change in meaning schemes and/or an affective change—and may even set into motion or facilitate a perspective transformation, and the adoption of new meanings. Indeed, it was the potential presence of this last factor, perspective transformation, which alerted me to the idea of transformative learning as a potential model. All of the stories in which the participants discussed outcomes supported this finding, without exception.

Finally, I struggled with how to represent the narratives as findings. I wanted to honor the individual agency as well as the process of analysis, which was centered on each life, allowing particularities and context to inform my understanding. Thematic understanding—such as dialogic learning or reflective learning—grew from the comparisons of memos about each individual’s life/library story, not from coding across the texts. Also, I felt a responsibility to represent the sense-making that I engaged in with these narratives, and to give the readers a full understanding of how transformative learning can be used as an overarching theory to explain information use and outcomes among this particular group of public library users. Finally, and most importantly, I wanted to provide that contextual information that situates these information encounters and outcomes within a life, giving them additional meaning.

To satisfy these needs, in this chapter I present several of the “outcome narratives” from the interviews. In the next chapter, by revisiting the research questions which have guided this study, I present a thematic assessment drawing on multiple narratives.
Outcome Narratives from the Case Studies

What follows are outcome narratives from the case studies. The complete transcripts of both interviews for each of the six participants included in this chapter can be found in an appendix; names and other identifiable facts have been deleted as well as some references to sensitive issues.

Throughout the interviews, this is ample discussion of information, how it gets found and used, as well as outcomes—although rarely expressed in those terms. Outcome narratives are different, separate from the text around them on several accounts. First, they are stories as we traditionally define them, ordered sequentially with a beginning, middle, and an end. Also, as DeFina notes, they “include some kind of rupture or disturbance in the normal course of events, some kind of unexpected action that provokes a reaction or adjustment” (DeFina as cited by Riessman, 2008, p. 6). In these narratives, the participants describe the full arc, from information need to use to outcome, which is often splintered or presented incompletely elsewhere in the interviews.

Considering how neutral the questioning was, and how few, if any, prompts were used, the interviews generated many outcome narratives, often several from each participant. The ones below were chosen to provide maximum diversity among participants and outcomes.

In addition to the story, which typically comes from the second interview, the library use story, there are also excerpts from the life story (the first interview), and, when available, the third interview (focused on perspective transformation).

These sections include three voices. One is in the third person, with me the omniscient narrator, retelling parts of the life story and library story to provide context or, occasionally, to condense a story. The second voice is that of the participants themselves; this is the outcome
narrative, and it appears as an indented, single-space text. These excerpts from the transcripts employ line breaks to represent the pauses and natural rhythm of the spoken speech. The final voice found in these retellings is my own, as researcher, trying to make meaning from these narratives. Throughout my analysis and presentation of these narratives, I have tried to remain aware of how my own biases may have had a hand in reshaping these stories and have endeavored to be as truthful as possible to the lived experience of each of the participants.

Finally, as is discussed in the next chapter, where transformation is presented as an outcome, I am only claiming that the data suggests it as an outcome.

Katherine: information and transformation

Katherine (Appendix C) is sixty-two years old and has been retired for the past eight years after a highly successful career in journalism and later corporate communications, when she worked for, then directed, communications for several leading, international firms. She moved to Fayetteville in 1996 and for the past several years Katherine has been deeply involved in writing, both memoir and playwriting; a theater major in college, in many ways this represents a return to an earlier passion.

Katherine’s life is rich with library interactions. Today, as a writer living in Fayetteville, she reports visiting the library three or four times a week. These visits largely consist of browsing books, video, and DVD for recreational purposes; conducting research for her fiction and autobiographical writing; and connecting socially with other readers, reinforcing the idea that reading does not take place in a vacuum (Ross, 1999; Long, 2003) and that self-directed learning is often not an isolated activity (Candy, 1991; Meziro, 1991). However, I want to explore two specific outcome narratives in Katherine’s life: the “interplanetary humanist narrative” and the “management narrative.”
Katherine was born in a working-class suburb of Chicago. Her father was a World War II veteran, and her parents were married immediately following the war.

We lived in Berwyn, my grandmother's bungalow. It had two bedrooms and one bath. We were my parents and four kids, my grandmother, who had a room up in the attic, and a boarder, who'd been there since the Depression. We all, you know, shared meals together. The boarder happened to be an inventor, working for Honeywell. He was working on inventions related to television, so we were one of the first to have a TV, a color TV.

Katherine remembers using the library in Berwyn:

It was a storefront. It probably had three racks, I guess, all together. And we all got library cards. I happened to live about two blocks, which involved crossing two streets. And I went there at least once a week, probably three times a week. I'd actually go there, took my library card, take out the three books that they would let me take out, read them, and bring them back. So I did that in probably first, second, and third grade.

Later her family moved to another Chicago suburb, North Riverside, “it was one of the first suburbs to be developed in the ’50s. The houses were all pretty uniform. My father called it Shangri-La because we actually had a lawn.” Memories of the small, antiquated North Riverside library are different: “The public library was not even someplace I would think of going. I
remember going to see it and walking through thinking, ‘Who would ever find anything here to read?’”

Katherine was raised Roman Catholic, and attended parochial schools for most of her education, including an all-girls, Catholic high school. She remembers visiting the central branch of the Chicago Public Library in those years:

And then in high school,
I had a friend who was precocious.
Her name was Julia Worth.
She was an artist, a writer.
She was always kind of sitting back laughing.
She was very mature for the high school.
She had this attitude about her,
and she liked me,
and so we would take off for downtown Chicago on the elevated train.
I didn't know you could do that until I met Julia Worth.
So off we'd go,
and we'd spend the morning at the art museum,
and then we would go to the Chicago Public Library.
And there I just fell in love.
Just the smells of it.
She taught me how to use the Dewey Decimal System,
and then we would go off,
in our opposite directions for hours, like almost every Saturday.
So there I discovered, you know, this just opened up all kinds of avenues to me, in art, in writing, music, all kinds of things, new areas of fiction.
And she was of course, always introducing me to new authors, that were stimulating.
Katherine positions the public library as a source of intellectual adventure, a means of discovering new ideas, art, and music. Information seeking is something that is both shared (with Julia Worth), and performed independently.

Katherine described her Catholic high school as intellectually and culturally both closed and open. It was a world largely bound by Catholic thinkers and authors who supported, or at least did not challenge, Roman Catholic view. At the same time, the school was run by a very progressive order of nuns, who experimented with new ways of teaching. In her senior year, Katherine had an experimental, interdisciplinary course that combined English, history and religion and which included readings from such authors as Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, and Teilhard de Chardin.

At the end of that course, Katherine had to write a term paper. “It was one paper for all three subjects. There was a lot of weight on that one paper.” She remembers going to the Chicago Public Library to research it. Her description—of the process of finding new information, sifting through it, creating new knowledge—is powerful.

That is where I was working
on the interplanetary humanism paper.
What does that mean?
To this day I'm really not sure.
It was something I came up with,
you know,
sitting on the floor of the Chicago Public Library in the stacks,
you know,
just going through
discovering that there was this whole secular way to look at religion.
Humanism goes back
to the early founders of the United States in this country,
but I didn't know that you could think of a philosophy
without attaching it to religion.
So there I was.
I just -- you know,
I'd come home very, very late at night.
My parents would be very upset.
I had stacks of books.
I'd be reading always,
and I was just feverish,
just discovering this whole new world.
I couldn't wait to put this paper together,
which got me into all kinds of trouble
in the Catholic school.
So that wasn't where they intended all of this to go. [Laughter]

The subject of the paper was “interplanetary humanism:”

That's what the nuns wanted to know,
"What is that?"
But I was, you know,
in the stacks and reading,
and "This is what I have been waiting for my whole life.
You know, this explains everything.
This is the theology I understand."

The paper landed Katherine in a lot of trouble with the school authorities. In returning to
the original narrative, she goes on and explains that even her father was called in to speak with
her teachers.

They felt that I had plagiarized the whole paper,
and accused me of that, which was awful.
And, because it was so uncommon
to write about anything
that was clearly way outside
of what the Catholic parameters are
or that Catholic libraries were involved in.

Katherine indeed created new knowledge, new both to herself but also new—and
apparently threatening—to the culture of which she was a member. In the end, Katherine
received three grades, ranging from an A from the English teacher to an F from her religion
teacher, with the overall grade somewhere in between. In the third interview, I asked Katherine
to reflect again on this experience. She first acknowledged the course itself: “It was such a good
learning experience to be set free. Everything else up to this point had been so closely guarded.”
Then she turned to the public library.
I had gone to my Catholic school library, but there you were protected, you weren’t exposed to things that weren’t chosen. I remember so well being in the Chicago Public Library and making my own choices at 17. It was very powerful. In a way I’ve spent the whole rest of my life researching like this. I think I would use the word empowering, to realize at 17 that you could do this. The grade didn’t matter to me, or the paper really, what matters was the realization that there was all this material out there, and I could put it together. It set me free.

After reviewing the transcripts from the interviews, Katherine wrote me to clarify some points in the transcriptions. In retrospect, she wasn’t sure what the actual grade was, “but the grade was the least important part…I’d opened a door to my future,” she wrote (Katherine, personal correspondence, September 24, 2008).

Altogether, this suggests that Katherine, in seeking and using information to complete this major paper, experienced a disorienting dilemma, of the type Mezirow termed epochal. New information would seem to have been formed by her to create new knowledge—an understanding of humanism—which brought about a shift in perspective, or worldview. At first glance it would seem to be a change in Katherine’s philosophical frame of reference (“I was just feverish, just discovering this whole new world.”) And it is certainly likely that there was a change that was metaphysical, or at least theological. But the text more strongly points to an affective change, a change in her psychological frame of reference. In this last excerpt, information seeking and use did enable the construction of new knowledge—perhaps a new cosmology. But what were more significant were the changes they created in Katherine’s
identity. The act of seeking and using information (“what matters was the realization that there was all this material out there”) was followed by the act of construction (“and I could put it together.”) It is this new sense of personal agency, it would seem, that was “powerful,” “empowering” and which “set me free.”

Katherine went on to graduate from college then graduate school, married, pursued a career in journalism during the tumultuous late sixties, then, in the early seventies, entered her first management position in corporate communications, a career she remained in until 1992 when she resigned to pursue a career as a consultant. In an email, she explained this transition: “I started my own business (first in Memphis, then moving it to Arkansas). There were only two ways I was marketable.... I could do crisis communication, which I hated. Or I could do employee communication. Being at [deleted] helped me see how unusual my experience had been at [deleted] and [deleted].... and I headed to the library to see what other companies were doing” (Katherine, personal communication, May 21, 2008). She described this search in greater detail.

I just started to mess around, pull books off the shelf, dip in and out of them. It’s a form of recreation. I allow myself the luxury of finding new ideas. That began at the library, you know, just fooling around at the Chicago Public Library going from one book to the next to the next to the next. "Oh, who's this?" [Laughs]

Katherine cited her information seeking and use experience in high school, which now has become a part of her identity, “the luxury of finding new ideas,” and goes on to describe what happened when she did find relevant books that began to answer her questions:

And so I was able to draw on a lot of the training I'd got in my corporate jobs,
but also I was looking for the new stuff, new ideas that were coming out. So I was looking up I would spend hours in the library, just getting information on team developments, motivation of employees, you know, ways to reward people. And one author led to another to another to another to another to another. So most of what I'd put together in training, I gathered from books that I got out of the library.

And reading those [books], you know, even though I had been exposed to so many seminars at [deleted] and other places, reading those books made me realize that you could conceive a whole workplace in a whole other way than I had even seen it. It was possible to manage people in a whole other way, to motivate people in a [deleted] other way, that there didn't have to be a boss-subordinate relationship. And so that led me into a 10-year business, a practice I brought factory to factory.

It's hard to go in at the corporate level because they want to keep doing what they're doing, but you could find a plant manager who'd be willing to try something. And so I was able to do a lot of experimental work. And the genesis of it all was at the library. So that was a change in my thinking professionally.

Together, these two excerpts create Katherine’s “management narrative.” In this story, Katherine demonstrates one of the essential ideas of adult learning—found in the writings of Dewey, Bruner, Knowles, and Mezirow—that adults construct knowledge through the prism of their previous experience. For Katherine, this previous experience is her years of experience as a manager, her prior education, and her on-the-job management training courses (“And so I was
able to draw on a lot of the training/I'd got in my corporate jobs”). This knowledge, in combination with the new information she discovered through a range of books, helped her to create a vision for managing others.

What this narrative demonstrates so clearly is how information seeking and use—the seemingly erratic browsing through books—through the mash-up, or combining, of old knowledge and new information, then through the activity of reflection, can create new knowledge, and, perhaps a new way of seeing the world, a change in one’s meaning perspective. But here it also goes further, and Katherine actually creates a new plan of action (“It was possible to manage people in a whole other way”) and goes out into the world to pursue it (“And so that led me into a 10-year business”)—the ninth and tenth steps of Mezirow’s original transformative learning theory.

What isn’t immediately clear is what motivated this information seeking. What gap, in Dervin’s terminology, brought Katherine into the library? Considering the amount of time invested in the seeking, and the complete redirection of her career subsequently, this episode suggests that Katherine experienced a disorienting dilemma, perhaps a questioning of her beliefs about the nature of work.

In her life story Katherine talks a great deal about management, and how she was successful in leading people. In her last position before becoming a consultant, she was director for corporate communications for a company whose values she did not share. She was unhappy, both personally and professionally, in particular with their hierarchical management style, and was eventually fired from this position. In her life story, this dissatisfaction/firing precipitated her information seeking, her research into management. The idea of “conceiving a whole workplace in a whole other way” and her closing line, “So that was a change in my thinking
professionally,” supports the idea that a change in her meaning perspective may have taken place.

Doris: race and information

Doris (Appendix D), 71 years old, is now retired. A native of Oklahoma, Doris went to the state university there, where she majored in theater, then headed to New York City, where she spent most of her twenties working in theater. She returned to Tulsa in her late 20s, a single mother, ready to establish herself in a new career. By chance, she ended up teaching theater, a career she found she loved, first in a junior high then in one of Tulsa’s leading high schools, where she was for many years. In later years Doris moved to Arkansas, wanting the experience of teaching in small towns. She retired to Fayetteville about a decade ago.

Doris reported that she was always a library user, and she described using libraries to support her work as a teacher and as an active reader of fiction, especially genre fiction. But in retirement Doris’s use of the library changed, or at least began to be used in a different way.

Five or so years ago, Doris was listening to a television show she had taped, when the program ended but the tape continued. She continued to listen to the next show, a documentary on the History Channel about the Tulsa race riot of 1921. One of her former students, Scott Ellsworth, was being interviewed. Although it is a long segment, the riot is best explained in Doris’s own, albeit abridged, words.

And then I discovered that a student of mine who'd graduated Central in 1972 had written a book. It was his doctoral. And he was going to school at Duke, and I think one of his teachers was John Hope Franklin, who may have inspired him or may not have. I haven't talked with him yet.
But he like lifted the lid on the big secret in Tulsa, and that is that there was one of the worst race riots in the country right there in Tulsa.
And the African-Americans had built a complete community—banks, hotels, lawyers, newspapers, lots of business.
And it was called Greenwood, is called Greenwood.
And at some point, some young black guy got caught, maybe, in an elevator with a girl—a white girl who was running the elevator.
And that was like in the morning, and by that evening, they were planning to lynch the boy.
And the newspaper was a big part of that, and my dad worked for that newspaper later.

In World War I they took black soldiers. They taught them how to use a gun, and when it was over, they let them take the gun home.
And so the black community had men who knew how to use things and took their guns with them down to the City Hall because they were going to save this young boy.
And there is no proof anywhere as to who fired the first shot, which side, but it ended up with the white group being much larger, chasing everybody else back across the tracks and following, instead of just being happy then, they followed them, they ended up burning the entire town of Greenwood, which included I think about 600 buildings, homes and regular buildings, a church that had just finally gotten built.
It was classy.
And what people they could find that didn't manage to escape or be killed, they rounded up and put them in what we would call concentration camps.
There were truckloads of bodies being carried out of the area, so that most people don't even know what happened to relatives.
What I'm saying this about is that I was teaching the grandchildren and great grandchildren of the people who survived, and even those who died. And nobody talked about it. Nobody knew anything about it. It was totally a big—it was this big shameful secret.

The Tulsa Riot is not even included in most of the books about those kinds of things that were going on in the '20s. Most books, even the History of Civil Rights, has a lot of things, like the little town of Elaine, Arkansas, was very well-publicized and studied. But most of the books had nothing about—because they didn't know about Tulsa.

This random encounter with information set in motion years of information seeking, learning, and creativity. Doris got a copy of Ellsworth’s *Death in a Promised Land: The Tulsa Race Riot of 1921* which connected her to other resources, which in turn sent Doris back to Tulsa to research.

But I have had wonderful experiences in one of the branches called Rudisill, which is in Greenwood, that I talked about yesterday. Basically the black township. And this library houses practically all of the material and artifacts about the African-American history in the area. And it is fascinating. A lot of them are research, or reference only, so I keep going back. This is where my student spent a lot of time when he was researching for his book.
Doris has returned to the Tulsa libraries and has read most of the published materials as well as consulted primary sources. Initially she looked for specific items she discovered through references in Ellsworth’s book, she now describes browsing through the African American collection at the Rudisill branch. The discovery of the Tulsa riot had a deep, personal connection for Doris. It was unsettling for her; and Doris made it clear that she spent a great deal of time reflecting on these events, her childhood, and the community in which she grew up. Part of it was the shock of being a white, native of Tulsa—whose family has roots in the area—and growing up with no knowledge of the riot. Part of it was also, as she mentioned, realizing that she had taught the children of the survivors of the riots.

I don't know how many of them personally, especially the African-American students, how much they knew. From what I gather from the writings that I have read, most of that community kept it a secret, too. This young woman who called me from Detroit said she didn't know anything about it until Scott printed his book.

Part of Doris’s information seeking has been to reach out to some of her former students, especially her African-American students, to discuss their past history in Tulsa. But her ongoing research project centered on the 1921 riot has prompted other questions. Doris had lived through another racially turbulent period in Tulsa, the years of school desegregation.

The Tulsa Public Schools were integrated in 1968, so I was part of that beginning, and had made friends with some of the African-American teachers who were teaching in segregated schools, also. And I loved doing it. I was crazy about my students. I got absolutely in so much trouble because I was treating them all as colorblind, and there were other teachers that just—you know—
“Why did you cast that person in that role?”
And they were very prejudiced.

Doris has rich memories of those years, the challenges of integrating a high school, the many plays she directed. But she also wonders if there was a back story, a history to those years that she was not privy to. In particular, she wonders what memories her African American students have of those years, and how they may be different from hers.

Doris’s research into an historical incident, the Tulsa riot, and the realization that a world she thought she knew was actually quite different, has prompted her to revisit her own history, and she has undertaken research about Tulsa in the late 1960s and 1970s. This has been a large-scale information seeking undertaking that has sent her in multiple directions. She has been reexamining her own knowledge of the past. She has been using library resources for primary documents—plays she produced, news accounts. And she has also been tracking down, through various web resources such as classmates.com, her African American students to speak with them and learn of their experiences during those years. Finally, Doris has begun writing about Tulsa’s past. This reexamination of such a great swath of personal and social history would imply a transformation on Doris’ part that is both sociolinguistic, her understanding of history, as well as psychological, her position in that history. Information has served as both prime-mover and facilitator to these transformations.

Mary: information and meaning schemes

Mary (Appendix E) was one of the few participants who was an Arkansas native, having been born in Fort Smith 62 years ago. After many travels outside the state and country, she
eventually returned, graduated from the University of Arkansas, married and settled in Fayetteville, and had two children.

Mary presented herself as being care-free and relaxed, rooted in the present, more concerned with experience than memory, valuing the spontaneous and unplanned. Her life story was short on facts but strong on humor and affect. At the same time, Mary is CEO of one of the largest non-profit in northwest Arkansas, focused on the well-being of preschool children. The organization has grown significantly under her direction, and she is clearly an accomplished manager and fundraiser.

Early in her library story she presented her perspective on information seeking and use in the library. It is a wonderful paean to browsing, both goal-free browsing and searching for a specific item.

But what I love about libraries is you can take risks. You know, if you're going to buy a book, you're going to be pretty sure you want to read that book. And the library, you can just wander around, and if something catches your eye, you can give it a shot. You may hate it, and it may be something wonderful. And it could be on any subject, you know. "Oh, all right. I don't know anything about that." You try it out. That's I think one of the best things that there's that element of being able just to jump off at any spot you want to stop at. And you can stay there a while if you like it, but you can get back on and just go on and do something else. And that's what I really love about libraries is there's so much here that you can just browse around and pull anything down. And then you can go to the specifics for specific needs,
like a cookbook or—
you don't want to buy a cookbook that's on some bizarre thing,
but you want one recipe.
And you use it,
bring it back,
and move on.

Mary’s last phrase, “and move on,” is language that is strongly reminiscent of Dervin,
whose outcomes always include information as enabling people to move on with their lives.

Mary’s belief in serendipity, at least as an information seeking strategy, is extreme, and
far greater than any of the other participants. She believes in the power of chance:

The weirdest thing about it now,
because I have to wear glasses to read,
it's hard to do that [browse the shelves].
It's much harder because if you have to lean way down
and you have glasses, they're always falling off.
And I've noticed that it's not as comfortable as an experience
as it used to be,
just because I'm so blind without glasses on.
And then there's the one time I went without my glasses,
and somebody else had to pick out all my books for me,
which was good.
It turned out great.
I can't remember what any of them were.

Mary’s library use story was full of information about her life as a reader—likes and
dislikes, passionate interests and books that failed her—but included little information about
outcomes, until she remembered Anne Fadiman’s *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*.

I was telling you about the Marshallese people,
I was reading a book recently
that they had in the book club section.
And it's something and I Fall Down.
And it's about a,
I guess Laotian maybe family
in California that has an ill child.
And it's this social worker,
I guess,
or some kind of medical person,
maybe a nurse,
trying to get them to get the right kind of medical treatment for her
and that big struggle between the family,
what they wanted.
They wanted the best for their child.
It wasn't necessarily what the nurse thought was best.
And I've told a lot of people who are struggling with the Marshallese:
Read that book.
It's a different culture,
it's the same thing we're trying to do:
Force people into our little categories and—
but it was done really really well because—
and all turned out horrible.
The child died eventually,
but she was an extraordinarily ill child,
and probably would have died.
But the woman managed to write it
without condemning them for what they couldn't do
and what they wouldn't do,
which,
you know,
sometimes is the same thing,
sometimes it isn't.

In talking about her work in her life story, Mary had mentioned the different immigrant
groups now living in northwestern Arkansas, including people from the Marshall Islands, with
the linguistic and cultural challenges this represents for social service organizations. She
discussed the Marshallese, of whom 6,000 to 8,000 now live in Washington County, Arkansas—a
tenth of the Marshall Island’s population. The opportunity to work—many are employed in the
poultry industry—and community attracts them to Arkansas. The Marshallese people in
Arkansas have some serious health issues brought on, Mary believes, by their adoption of a
Western diet. Although they live in the United States legally, they are ineligible for federal
health-care such as Medicare and Medicaid.

Mary discussed Fadiman’s book at length. It made her think, she says, about how you can
design services for people whose cultures are different from the prevailing norm. Fadiman’s
book, about the Hmong in California, presented a culture that positioned medical practices
within a spiritual belief system. Mary was struck by how the book showed how one incident could be viewed so differently—by the Hmong community and by Western medical practitioners. Mary made clear that the book allowed her to reflect on her own organization, and the services it provides to Marshallese families.

But that was really interesting, and it really made me think a lot, I mean, I haven’t forgotten it. I could really see how we were always trying to fit people into a Western thought pattern, and it's impossible for them to do that.

Again, there is evidence of constructivism. Mary takes her knowledge (“how we were always trying to fit people into a Western thought pattern,”) which, because of her career, she has unique insight, and compares it with this new information. “It made me think a lot,”—in other words, she has been reflecting, making meaning out of these two ways of thinking. From the data, it was difficult to assess the extent of the change Mary underwent, or perhaps it was too soon. It may well be that there was a change in a meaning scheme—the smaller units that comprise a meaning structure. Yet it could be that Mary, over time, fundamentally saw a turn-around in how she perceived the relationship between her organization and the clients they serve—with long-lasting effects.

**Madeline: incremental transformation**

Of all the participants, Madeline (Appendix F) most fully described a life enmeshed in reading. Her father was a college professor, and she grew up surrounded by books which she was allowed to freely pursue. In addition, she developed a wonderful relationship with the children’s
librarian in her home town in Idaho, who led her through a variety of reading experiences throughout her childhood.

Madeline is 52 years old, married to an archaeologist and the mother of three young men in their early twenties. Unwell for much of her adult life, she was eventually diagnosed with a neuromuscular disease that often leaves her ill and depleted of energy. Although someone who typically has a lot of energy, the erratic course of her disease has presented challenges for her, including her work life.

Madeline was unlike the other participants in that she pursues extensive research projects that can go on for several years; this research is background for fiction she is working on. She describes herself as an expert library user, and while she favors invitational browsing for locating leisure reading, she is adept at using the online catalog and databases, which she often connects to from home. She then described what she researches.

Well, I go through spells.
And...that's one of the other big things is I—
So then I decided I was going to write novels.
And so I've been trying to do that since I was like 30.
And in doing that, I would end up going on these huge kicks where I would read 50 or 100 books on a certain subject, and especially when I was thinking I was going to get my master's in ancient history.
So mostly I probably have used this library to pursue these on various big kicks of reading.
Like, I read probably 100 books on the Bronze Age.
And there weren't too many of those here, but I did get some through interlibrary loan.
But then the next big thing I've been reading about is World War II, and this library was really good for that.
So I've probably read, I've probably read maybe 200 books on that, on the Holocaust and I wasn't so interested in battles and tactics
because the novel that I'm thinking about was more of a personal novel, but on resistance and spying and diplomacy and biographies and Holocaust memoirs.

Later, she goes on to describe her most recent project, a fantasy novel that explores cultural imperialism.

it's based on this society that is like the ultimate cultural imperialist and they just go out and collect artifacts. My husband deals a lot with artifacts in museums and theft and NAGPRA [Native American Graves Protection Repatriation Act] and all that. So about this society that goes out and collects all this really great art and artifacts from all these other societies, which they try to keep primitive rather than like letting them develop, So the main character has to be a diplomat and an artist and an artisan and a linguist and a storyteller because that's how she gets things done in the villages is by telling stories, you know, and—

Anyway, I am going to have to do a lot of research for that. [Laughs]

These projects are “her passions,” she says. They have sustained her, while, at the same time, she continued to pursue them against significant odds. In her third interview, Madeline reflected on what she found so tremendously compelling about these projects in which she has invested so many years of her life. What they had in common was that they were all societies that were in coming apart, disintegrating. “We don’t really know what destroyed the Bronze Age,” she explained. “But of course we know what happened in World War II.” The Second World War was especially important because it was the first time a society came apart, “and we have record, first person accounts, of what that experience was like for the people who were there.”

Whatever it is that Madeline wants to learn from these societies in turmoil, she has yet to discover it. “There is something I need to know,” she said. “Something that keeps bringing me
back.” This information seeking—rooted squarely in a questioning of her philosophical perspective—does not have an outcome. But perhaps the outcome is not some epochal change, but a deep and incremental one.

At the end of her first interview, her life story, Madeline told of a conversation with her youngest son, a freshman in college. He was working on a philosophy paper, and wanted to know what she considered to be the meaning of life. In language that echoes her talk about her extensive research projects, sharing some of the same diction, she discusses a type of outcome that—while not the meaning of life—can provide some metaphysical or spiritual insight.

You're never going to know what the meaning of life is. Nobody knows what the meaning of life is, nobody ever has, and nobody ever will, maybe unless they hit nirvana, so you could work in that direction. But here's what I think. I think Joseph Campbell had it right: If you follow your bliss, if you follow what your own particular passion is, you get all you're going to get, which is a clue. And now and then, you get a clue, a little piece of the meaning of life. And the clues are specific to you and your interests and your bliss. So what you have to do is to pursue those interests with all your heart and all your might, and you have to try to stay aware enough so that when a clue falls into your lap, you know it's there. That's it. That's all I've got.

Madeline’s clue-building process is reminiscent of one aspect of Dervin’s sense-making. While gap-bridging through the library is often associated with the notion of helps, derived from
Dervin’s 1985 study, as noted previously gap-bridging can consist of identifying, finding, and combining various elements such as ideas, beliefs, and narratives. It can be a complex, cognitive process. Madeline may well be constructing a “large bridge,” in several phases, and only when, or if, enough elements have been found can she cross this gap. The process Madeline describes above, small insights slowly gathered over time, may also indicates incremental transformation.

*Jane: information and discourse*

Jane’s (Appendix G) interviews were marked by a direct, forthright quality. Trained as an accountant at the University of Arkansas, she entered that field in the late ’70s when there were few women accountants and “they were still looking for starched white shirts and ties and everything.”

She met her husband at the age of 30 and left Fayetteville soon after when he was accepted to graduate school in New York State. She left accounting a few years later when the first of her three children was born. She and her husband spent several years in Italy, and then returned to Fayetteville a decade ago. In addition to raising her children, Jane has been active as a volunteer, serving on several boards in Fayetteville.

Like nearly all of the participants, Jane was involved in book discussion groups throughout her adult life. These groups were not typically in the library, yet they drew on the library resources for choosing books as well as the books themselves. The Fayetteville Public Library has an extensive service for book groups, with a browsing collection, reading guides, and multiple copies for check-out.

Her book group is one of the central themes that runs through her library use interview, and she discusses how the group goes about choosing titles, alights briefly on many titles, until she stops when she get to *The Red Tent*, a novel by Anita Diamant.
Oh, The Red Tent.
I loved The Red Tent.
Great book for a women's book group to read.
That was our best discussion ever.
For one I felt like that book
really explains how a polygamist marriage can work
to the benefit of women
because the workload is shared.
I love the fact that there's this red tent and the camaraderie of women.
You know,
during the time of the month that they're unclean,
then they have to be sequestered in this tent,
and everybody outside the tent is thinking:
"These poor women.
Those poor unclean women have to be in that tent for three days,
you know,
wasting away."
And they're in the tent having meals brought to them,
a respite from their hard workload of cooking,
you know,
three meals a day over a campfire,
and moving—
packing up tents and moving tents.
And they would just talk and have a break and a rest
and have their woman time, you know, their time with women there.
And a total break,
like a total vacation every month for three days.
I'd love it, you know?

Jane goes on to discuss the novel at length, then turns to a discussion of her reading group:

We discussed all this and laughed about it.
And just the way that it shows how—
I mean, women—
more than ever,
I think,
women nurture each other.
That's a known fact,
whether they recognize it or not.
You have to develop that and respond to it and be aware of it.
And these women in the red tent were aware of that.
It was such a strong part of their life,
you know,
going to the tent when you had your baby there,
and you stayed in that tent for six weeks.

There was just a real nurturing.
You could see that.
And it just was so interesting to me to go back to 2,000 years ago,
and it was a real door into how—into women's lives then,
I felt like.

That's probably—
I would say that might be the most significant book I read,
I have read,
for me personally,
and the discussion I had,
and the thoughts it provoked,
both,
you know,
in our discussion of the book and later.
And there were only like three or four women that could come that night,
and we talked about that book.
In my current book group,
We talk about the book about 10 or 15 minutes,
and then we always seem to digress into other things,
which,
you know,
that's okay.
But that book we talked about for two hours, you know.

Jane and her fellow book group members analyzed the text and extracted multiple
meaning from it. These meanings they then took and compared against the knowledge they
had—of women in society, of their own marriages, and perhaps most importantly the roles which
women play—or should play—in each other’s lives. In a much different way, the functions of
their once-a-month, women-only book group were seemingly mirrored in *The Red Tent*, perhaps
making them think of their own inter-relationships differently.

As Greene has stated, for literature to be transformative, it must be part of some ongoing
intentional activity (as cited by Jarvis, 2006, p. 70); book discussion groups meet those criteria.
For Mezirow, rational discourse “will help adults become critically reflective of meaning perspectives and arrive at more advanced meaning perspectives” (Mezirow, 1991, p. 78).

Mezirow outlines factors that a group needs to have to cultivate rational discourse: be free from coercion, be able to weigh evidence and assess arguments objectively, be open to alternative perspectives, have equal opportunity to participate (1991, pp. 78-79.) In most ways, the women-only book groups in Houston which Long studied fulfill Mezirow’s expectations.

Jarvis (2006), having studied women reading romantic fiction in a group setting, concludes that fiction in this sort of setting can “offer the kinds of ‘disorienting dilemmas’ that Mezirow and others have identified as triggers that start the transformative process. Thus transformation is not dependent on the timing of a particular life event but can be stimulated by an imaginary event” (p. 76.)

Carol: information and reflection

By her own admission, Carol (Appendix H) did not have an easy childhood. Born in Oklahoma in 1942 to a mother who was 16 years old, she was the oldest of eight children. Carol is honest and direct in recounting those years, although I sensed that such frankness was not easy for her. Nevertheless, throughout her first interview she repeatedly returned to the issue of hardship.

When my father got out of the Army, he traveled and took his family all over Oklahoma. And he tried farming, he tried a number of different occupations. As I recall, we were not rich in money. We were rich in adventures. And I know, you know, the love of my parents, but we were not well-to-do.
Her father had problems with alcohol, and “from the time I was born until I left home, we lived in 56 different houses, and so we moved a lot. And so I think in ninth grade, we lived in three different towns.”

By the time I reached high school age, there was no money for college. I was a good student all through school, Regardless—I mean, I don't mean that in an immodest way, that I loved to learn, I loved to read, and I took advantages of any situation where I could learn or where I could read.

Carol did love learning, and she put herself through college by working at the telephone company, fell in loved and married, helped her husband complete his education and a master’s degree, then graduated herself.

And after 10 years, I completed a degree in elementary education with 128 hours. I attended four colleges and did not lose a single hour. [Laughter] I thought that was a miracle in itself.

They moved to Fayetteville for his work, were she completed her master’s degree and embarked on a career in education. Her adult years have been happy ones, full of a career and a spouse she loved, children, travel, and volunteer work.

In her library story, Carol talks about her life as a reader, mentioning a few book titles. But the only one she stopped and talked about at any length was Jeannette Walls’s *The Glass Castle: A Memoir*, a book she came across while browsing through the library:

Have you read *The Glass Castle*? The one—she—and I can't remember the author. It's an autobiographical story of her family.
And I don't know whether she was a migrant child or whether her parents just moved a lot, but eventually they are homeless in New York City. And she has—through education has become—I think she is either a broadcast journalist or some kind of writer, and she sees—she going down the street, and she sees her mother climbing out of a dumpster. And her parents are basically homeless, or they eventually become homeless in the story. And I can reflect back on those things and, you know, see things from my own past that, you know, gives me insight. And, you know, I've long since got over the idea that I was the only child that grew up that way. I think that I was blessed in the fact that I was able to work and be able to get an education. So, yes, that does—I mean, it makes me reflect on things from my own past. But I also did that reading Lois Lenski and Cotton in My Sack. I mean, there are books that, you know, I think are good for children who may think that they're the only one that has problems at home or there are things that they think perhaps they can't overcome.

In hearing Carol discuss The Glass Castle, I was reminded of Rosenblatt’s transactional theory of literature. This book is memorable to Carol not just because of the book as a piece of literature, but because of “the special meanings and, more particularly, the submerged associations that these words and images have” (Rosenblatt, 1938, p. 30). Not only does Carol bring to this work her past, Rosenblatt would argue she also brings to the text her present needs and preoccupations.
Is Carol engaging in introspection, or is this actually reflection, what Dewey defined as the “careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the ground’s that support it and the further conclusion to which it ends” (cited by Kember, D., Jones, A., Loke, A., McKay, J., Sinclair, K., Tse, H., et al., p. 22)? At the end of the story, Carol provides a sort of coda:

But I still feel like America
is a place where if you work hard enough
and you are determined,
you can do it.
And so I like to see children be aware of that fact,
that whether it's a Hispanic child who is here illegally,
a Muslim child from Saudi Arabia,
and just realizing that we are a diverse nation
and the fact that if you hang in there—
I know that there are exceptions to that rule, too—
But you can work hard and things can get better.

Carol’s encounter with *The Glass Castle*, I would argue, set off multiple reflections, first about her own biography and the tension between a past of poverty and flux and present of affluence and stability, and how much the past remains with us, indeed a part of us. She then goes on to the political question of whether such a transformation narrative—a part of our national mythology—can still be realized today.
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter presents the conclusions from this study by first looking across the cases and comparing the outcome narratives retold in chapter four. I then revisit the research questions that guided the inquiry, return to the caveats and the implications of this study, and finally go on to consider future research. Table 3, Cross-narrative Analysis, presents the seven outcome narratives collectively.

Table 3

Cross-narrative Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Cause or Gap</th>
<th>Information Behavior</th>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Outcomes/Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Katherine</td>
<td>High school assignment</td>
<td>Systematic browsing</td>
<td>Coming of age</td>
<td>Constructed new knowledge: metaphysical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Read and integrated</td>
<td>Exploring secular thought</td>
<td>Greater sense of personal agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>multiple books</td>
<td>Identity formation</td>
<td>Psychological</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reflection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katherine</td>
<td>Need to discover better ways to</td>
<td>Systematic browsing</td>
<td>Middle age</td>
<td>Constructed new sociolinguistic knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>manage people</td>
<td>Sought new ideas</td>
<td>Lost job</td>
<td>New perspective on workplace, how people learn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Integrated past knowledge</td>
<td>Desire to see the workplace</td>
<td>New perspective on her own career</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>and new information</td>
<td>in a new way</td>
<td>Creates and executes a plan of action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reflection</td>
<td>Alter identity</td>
<td>Affective dimension: renewed self-confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doris</td>
<td>Chance encounter with video</td>
<td>Sought book</td>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>Constructed new knowledge about history, race</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sought multiple materials</td>
<td>New information set</td>
<td>Creates and begins a plan of action: investigating personal history, 1970s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Browsing</td>
<td>in motion a reevaluation of</td>
<td>Perspective transformation: sociolinguistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sought people</td>
<td>history and personal history</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reflection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*(table continues)*
Table 3 (continued).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Cause or Gap</th>
<th>Information Behavior</th>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Outcomes/Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>Chance encounter with a book</td>
<td>Free browsing</td>
<td>Older adult Perspective on work: helping immigrants</td>
<td>Constructed new knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reflection</td>
<td></td>
<td>Changed meaning scheme about service to other cultures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Possibly discussion</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Madeline</td>
<td>“Needs to know something,”</td>
<td>Systematic</td>
<td>Midlife</td>
<td>Incremental philosophical transformation, “a clue, a little piece of the meaning of life.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nagging metaphysical questions</td>
<td>browsing</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nonbrowsing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reflection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jane</td>
<td>Chance encounter with a book</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>Midlife</td>
<td>Constructed new knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reflection</td>
<td></td>
<td>Change in meaning scheme: women’s relationships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Affective dimension: shared experience, not alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carol</td>
<td>Chance encounter with a book</td>
<td>Free browsing</td>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>Affective changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reflection</td>
<td></td>
<td>Shared experience</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In considering these outcome narratives collectively, four points are evident. One is the surprising number of information experiences that were generated by chance. Previous research (Table 1) has largely situated outcomes in the framework of “helps,” with information seeking brought about by a need to resolve a problem or gap. While the participants often engaged in casual information seeking—free browsing—only in a couple of instances is the seeking purposeful. At the same time, it is likely that the information (a nonfiction portrait of a health care system that fails a family from a different culture, a memoir recounting the experiences of growing up in poverty) is taken up by the participants, read and reflected upon, and used in the
construction of new knowledge, precisely because it addresses a gap, or at least a deep concern, in their lives.

Many researchers—including Dervin, Mezirow, and Kuhlthau—have pointed to the connection between cognitive and affective outcomes. This research lends credence to those findings. Feelings and knowledge are all jumbled together in the narratives, and have to be teased apart, sometimes phrase by phrase. Often, as in Katherine’s management narrative, the outcomes are both cognitive (the creation of new concepts of management) and affective (a new understanding of one’s own role).

Finally, the scale of the outcomes which the participants reported is significantly different from the previous studies. The participants, when asked to recount their experiences in using the public library, and to reflect on those experiences, went into their pasts and returned with big stories of sense-making. We know how momentous these outcomes are because of the language the participants use (“This is what I have been waiting for my whole life/You know, this explains everything), but also because we have such rich, contextual information. We know, for example, about Doris’s experience in desegregating Tulsa’s schools, her experiences with racism, her roots in the community. This allows us to understand why research into the Tulsa riots was so important to her. We know of Carol’s tough childhood, which makes the memoir The Glass Castle such a point of reflection and solace for her.

In developing Table 3, in addition to Mezirow’s concepts, I tried to use Dervin’s typology of five outcomes: got pictures, got or kept moving, got support, got control, got there, (Dervin & Reinhard, 2007). Some fit, but ultimately these descriptors were a mismatch. A concept such as identity formation, for example—arguably what Katherine was involved in
throughout the construction of her interplanetary humanism paper—is too far removed from the concept of “help.”

In this context, narrative analysis produced two sets of outcomes, either very general information with little reflection (“when I was in my twenties, and the kids were little, I read a lot of mysteries”), which is not examined here, or “big narratives,” rich in affect and deep meanings for the participants, some of which are discussed in chapter four. Time did not seem to be a factor in remembering these “big narratives,” many of them arose from incidents that were ten, twenty years ago, or longer. These results provoked me into revisiting the methodology to better understand why I collected only “big stories,” producing, as a result, a different set of outcomes than did most previous research.

Freeman (2006), a psychologist whose research centers on narrative, explains that life stories demand reflection that “entails a going-beyond the specific discourse context in which “real life” talk occurs. It is an effort after meaning—often “big” meaning. Indeed, it is a making-meaning, an act of poiesis, in which one attempts to make sense of some significant dimension of one’s life….the operative assumption that you can somehow tap into the deep well of self and extract its innermost dimensions” (p. 133).

The results of this study are very different from Dervin’s 1985 research into public library “helps,” for reasons that have more to do with the methodology and less to do with the notion of “helps.” Dervin’s research was closer to the action. In investigating a user’s most recent experience in the library, her research collected “small stories,” or at least “medium stories,” if small stories are captured immediately and in the moment. She also collected a broader variety of outcomes than did this research.
This is, according to Freeman, because big stories, life histories, are by their nature revelatory. In effect, I asked for big insights and understanding, and I received them. As Gusdorf wrote: “Memory gives me a certain remove and allows me to take into consideration all the ins and outs of the matter, its context in time and space, [like] and aerial view sometimes reveals to an archaeologist the direction of a road or a fortification or the map of a city invisible to someone on the ground” (as cited by Freeman, 2006, p. 134.)

The neurobiologist McGaugh (2003) provides additional context for understanding why this research methodology produced these outcome narratives. “Memory, in a most general sense, is the lasting consequence of an experience; but it is clearly more than that, as the same can be said for sunburn, blisters and calluses. More specifically, memory is the consequence of learning from an experience—that is, the consequence of acquiring new information” (p. 3). McGuiagh explains that most memories fade, while highly arousing emotional experiences—such as the ones my participants recounted—are what gets remembered.

Research Questions

What outcomes do adult users assign to the information activities they engage in through the public library? What are the general categories that emerge from the data? What processes led from the information actions to the outcomes?

The participants in this study used information to enable learning and, often, a change in their affective state as well. This learning was communicative learning, as defined by Habermas and Mezirow. The participants used the new information they discovered constructively, to engage with the knowledge and experience they possessed; this use of information always involved reflection, dialogue, or both. The outcomes from these actions are the creation of new knowledge, a change in the participants’ meaning schemes, and/or an affective change. In
addition, the narratives strongly suggest that information seeking and use in public libraries can sometimes set in motion or facilitate a perspective transformation and the adoption of new meanings. Overall, the findings support Mezirow’s theory of transformative learning as a model for understanding information use and outcomes among users of the public library.

Transformative learning became the lens through which I understood these information outcomes for several reasons. The stories the participants provided were rich in several things. First, they centered on outcomes. How this informational experience changed my life was the *raison d'être* behind the telling. Second, the participants described how they used the information. Third, there was rich biographical information to expand the meaning of the experience and answer why, within this person’s life, this information helped to create this outcome. Transformative learning theory shares the same point of view as the participants; as a theory, it maps the experiences the participants narrated. Because it is a learning theory, it is centered on the outcomes (how has learning changed you?) and the process that adults take to reach those outcomes (what did you do to enable this learning?) In this research, of course, a large part of those activities involved information and libraries.

The information seeking narrative, as mentioned earlier, begins with need then proceeds through seeking for information, using information, then outcomes from this information. Most of the research within information science is centered on the early part of the narrative: need and seeking. The first line in Figure 1, structures of information seeking narratives, outlines the narrative and highlights the emphasis within the literatures.
Figure 1. Structures of information seeking narratives.

The second line outlines the narratives shared by the participants in this study. Often it began with an abstract, to use Labov’s structure, which served as a summary of the story, invariably focusing on the outcomes. Need and seeking were sometimes mentioned, often fleetingly. But the real focus of the story, in a reverse of information science research, is use (Labov’s evaluative action) and outcomes (the resolution of the story.) That was what made these experiences memorable, it was the outcomes—and how their lives were changed—that was the motivation for the story-telling.

On a more pragmatic level, it was the descriptions that strongly suggested perspective transformation as an outcome that first suggested transformative learning. It was by exploring these events, as well as the dominant activities described by the participants (reflection and dialogue), that transformative learning began to emerge. Transformative learning is not a theory about information use, but it is possible to enlarge the theory by introducing information use, as others have done by introducing research from a variety of disciplines, such as analytical psychology (Boyd & Meyers, 1988). Finally, transformative learning is well-developed with many empirical studies (Taylor 1997, 2007), such as those on reading, which have helped to correlate some of the findings in this research.

While the outcomes presented by the participants may differ from those generated by Dervin, the findings also reinforce many of the ideas that make up sense-making. My participants did act as theorists, experts in their own worlds, who use their past knowledge as
part of the sense-making. They depicted themselves as agents, actively involved in designing and molding their own realities. Time and again they presented themselves as having done something with information, created something new (knowledge, understanding) and then, in a resolutely Dervin-like fashion, they moved forward.

Brookes’ fundamental equation as a framework for information use is consistent with an understanding of information use within transformative learning. Both Brookes and Mezirow present information use as cognitive processes, working with what we already know and the information we select. Brookes’ changed knowledge structure $K/S + \Delta S$ is analogous to the changes in meaning structure. Both place the developmental of new knowledge in the private sphere—cognitive knowledge, reflection—as well as the public sphere—social knowledge, dialogue. Finally, Brookes’ distinction between information and knowledge is supported by research within transformative learning.

What cognitive, psychological, or behavioral outcomes are described? What differences, if any, do the participants report that the outcomes had on their lives? The overwhelming cognitive outcome, as described in several of the case studies in chapter four, was the encountering of new information and a subsequent process of integrating this information into the existing knowledge base.

Linnea’s reading of Timothy Egan’s *The Worst Hard Time: the Untold Story of Those Who Survived the Great American Dust Bowl* is an example. A trained landscape architect, and a self-described “tree-hugger,” Linnea brought to this book both professional knowledge and political knowledge. In addition, there was personal knowledge; her in-laws had lived through the 1930’s in western Kansas:

And I remember my father-in-law talking about it one time.
He was going to pick up my mother-in-law from somewhere,
like she was coming in on the bus. And he took a broom and wet it and swept down the walls because he didn't want my mother-in-law to see all that dust. He wanted the house semi-presentable when she came home.

In reading this book, Linnea was involved in a complex process of creation. The information she discovered in Egan’s book changed her perception of her previous knowledge, while at the same time she brought her existing knowledge to bear on Egan’s text.

In Linnea’s case, it is likely that this book brought about a change in a meaning scheme, a smaller, more discrete element of a meaning structure. This could be affective—a reconsideration of and greater empathy for of her in-laws, for example—although considering her life story it is more likely to have contributed to her political/environmental knowledge as well.

Most of the information outcome narratives described cognitive outcomes; and over half described affective outcomes in addition. Several of these affective outcomes are profound, involving the expansion or altering of identity. Four of the narratives—such as Katherine, who developed a career as a consultant in part through information seeking and use—described an outcome that allows them to “get on with their life” in an immediate and tangible way.

Is there a relationship between information behavior and outcomes and other phenomena, such as biographic or contextual factors? Biographical and contextual factors were coded in both sets of interviews. As has already been discussed, biographical information, largely from the first interview, the life story, greatly expanded the understanding of the information outcomes within the context of each life.

Looking across the narratives, the most significant factor to emerge was related to gender, mentioned by about half the participants, who discussed the limitations that gender
placed on their career choices. Millie, a retired nurse, has throughout her life been a
tremendously active library user and book discussion participant.

And I was at Berkeley in the mid '60s,
which was quite an experience.
And I remember in high school my parents said:
"You will go to college,
and you will get a degree.
And you can be a teacher,
a nurse,
or a secretary."
And now I think that was very limiting.
They were still in a '30s, '40s, '50s mindset.
And I know women were going into other professions.
Nobody ever said you could be a doctor.
And we weren't even counseled in school to be something else.
So I said:
"Well, I don't want to be teacher,
and I don't want to be a secretary."
My mom had gone back to work as a secretary.
"So I guess I'll be a nurse."

In some of the narratives there was an implication that unsatisfactory career choices as
well as the experience of being a full-time parent limited the opportunities for cognitive
development, and information seeking and use through the public library was a way to
compensate for that gap. In particular, for some of the women, the ability to participate in dialog
and "collective knowing" that libraries offer, such as book discussion groups, was a way for
cognitive and affective development that their careers or roles may have otherwise restricted.

Demographic data—such as childhood and present-day economic status, marriage,
educational level, and number of children—was all coded but there were no significant findings,
although the variance in these factors was negligible. Nor was there any correlation between
childhood library experiences and use and outcomes as an adult.
What this study does leave unexamined is the link between transformative learning and growth and development. Adult development is positioned by Mezirow as an outcome of transformative learning. Mezirow (1991, p. 155) states clearly that the process of perspective transformation is “the central process of adult development” (Merriam and Caffarella, p. 333). The relationship between information seeking, use, outcomes and developmental stages, as found in the work of King and Kitchener (1994), is ripe for investigation, and transformative learning could well serve as a bridge between the two. For this study in particular, the developmental research known as women’s way of knowing (Belenky, Clinch, Goldberger, and Tarule, 1986; Goldberger, Tarule, Clinch, and Belenky, 1996) may provide additional insights.

Caveats of the Study

There are three caveats to this study. One, this research was undertaken with a small group of participants who self-identified as regular library users; the group was, by design, a homogenous sample. While the findings are strong, their meaning, when applied beyond this sample, is limited.

Two, the participants in this study lived information-rich lives. Their talk was filled with references to a variety of information seeking they perform in the course of their daily lives, from scanning newspapers to Internet searches. Even those who use the library as almost the exclusive channel for physical or digital content still utilize a variety of other sources for browsing. I was painfully aware that in choosing to restrict my inquiry to the public library, and ignoring other resources and channels, I was not capturing the information behavior of my participants “in the round,” and thus, perhaps, limiting my understanding of their library usage.

Three, this study was designed, and interviews were collected, to capture and make sense of a variety of information outcomes from information seeking and use in the context of the
public library, perhaps to create typography of outcomes. It was designed as preliminary research in an area of information science where we had little empirical data. It was not created to examine the relationship between information seeking and use and one specific theory of adult learning, and the fact that transformative learning emerged as such a dominant theory is, ultimately, a bit of a mismatch between the instrument and the finding. There is little information, for example about actual knowledge construction, how information changes cognitive structures. For this reason, I remain cautious in what I can assert as the findings from this research, especially regarding change in habits of mind, or perspective transformation.

Implications of the Study

There are six implications of this study, for both information science and the practice of librarianship.

One, this study validates narrative analysis as a research methodology within library and information science. Case-centered narrative analysis can produce rich, context-dependent new knowledge (Riessman, 2008. p. 194) that can be usefully combined with other knowledge to augment our understanding of information behavior.

Two, narrative case studies force us to focus on the stories of information users. They serve to ground theory in the particulars of lived experience, and they give users a voice in the construction of theory.

Three, this study introduces Mezirow’s transformative learning theory into information science as a context for understanding information use and outcomes. While this research was modest, it points to the opportunity for further exploration of transformative learning and information outcomes.
Four, this study provides librarians with insight into how library users integrate library resources and services into their lives. It provides librarians with a means of collecting rich data, in the form of stories, which can be used both to understand and present their users’ experiences, and can be effectively combined with quantitative measures.

Five, it asserts the primacy of browsing as the preferred means of search within the library, and challenges librarians to better support online and physical browsing.

Six, this study makes explicit the powerful role that public libraries can play in the lives of library users, as well as the deep relationship between library use and learning. The discussion of transformative learning as a concept for understanding information outcomes should provoke librarians to develop better programs and services that encourage transformative learning, especially in the areas of critical reflection and discussion and dialogue.

Future Research

The outcomes of this research point towards two divergent, yet related, research agendas.

The first is to expand the findings to determine if these results can be produced among other populations. Do the findings from this study hold true for other regular library users? What are the outcomes among, for example, 30- to 50- year-old men in Chicago? Do other demographic groups respond to this inquiry with outcome narratives? If so, do these outcome narratives suggest transformative learning?

The second research agenda is to generate a deeper understanding of the findings. This could be achieved by developing a sample of confirming case studies (Merriam, 2008) where the participants are regular library users who report transformative learning experiences through information use in the public library. This research would be constructed to generate rich data that would allow a closer examination of how information is used in conjunction with existing
knowledge, the activities of reflection and dialogue, changes in transformative perspectives, and the role of developmental stages in relation to information use and outcomes.

This research began with several simple questions: what happens after people find or encounter information? How do they use this information? What outcomes, if any, do people report as resulting from these information experiences? Does the information they locate or encounter enable them to get on with their lives?

Certainly these questions remain. However, I believe that through the close examination of the narratives of twelve women in Fayetteville, Arkansas, some answers—and yet more questions—have emerged.
APPENDIX A

PILOT STUDY
A pilot project was conducted in April, 2007. The purpose was fourfold: to try out the interview schema, better understand the research issues, gain experience interviewing, and gain experience transcribing and coding. I interviewed three people: one man and two women. The interviews with the one man and one of the women failed, as both participants conflated the two interviews in one; despite repeated attempts on my part to separate the life story from the library story. From this I learned that I needed to be very clear about expectations from the outset, and clarify the purpose of each interview. The third interview was more successful. A memo summarizing my experiences with this participant follows.

The participant, who I will call Beth, is sixty-five years old and had been retired for three years. A life-long resident of Jackson Heights, NY, she grew up using the local library and considered herself a regular user, “at least once every couple of weeks,” throughout her entire life, with the exceptions of her later high school years, “when I was too busy,” the four years she was away from home at college, and a post-college year spent in Israel. Beth is white, single, has no children, and lives alone.

The interviews took place at Beth’s home, both on the same afternoon. The first interview, 45 minutes long, consisted of the life story prompted by a singular question, as described above; after a short break there was a second interview, again using a singular question, where she was asked to discuss the use of the library throughout her life and reflect on those experiences. There was some conversation, typically for clarification, during this 80 minute interview. There were no follow-up interviews.

The entire 125 minutes were transcribed and analyzed in Atlas.ti through an initial round of coding. Below I include some of the codes I used in brackets.
There was a significant difference between the two interviews. The life story that Beth provided seemed very thorough, was detailed, and provided an almost clinical overview of her life. She organized it by phases (teenager, first entering workforce) punctuated by specific life events (getting her own apartment, death of parents). Beth employed a lot of humor in the telling, and a good deal of self-mockery.

When she turned to tell of her experiences in using the library, Beth seemed thrown off kilter. The narration slowed down and became more ruminative. As a listener, it sounded less rehearsed. She discussed childhood memories, and a few specific books. Thinking about library use in her life prompted a great deal of remembering and associating.

During this second interview, Beth shared two stories. I was aware of both of them “as stories” during the telling, and studying the transcripts corroborated this. The first story was told in a fragmented fashion—Beth kept leaving the story and then returning to it. It was the story of the year in which her niece, then eight years old, came from California to live with Beth, who was then in her 30s. The child’s only parent, Beth’s sister, was undergoing treatment and subsequently hospitalization for severe depression and was unable to care for her daughter. Beth described the ways in which she used the library during that year, and the effects these encounters had on her life. These included researching and reading about depression to understand her sister better (info seeking, mental health), and reading books from the “parenting collection” to understand the developmental needs of her niece (seeking, parenting). She described using the children’s room as a place to spend time with her niece (place), who arrived during the summer, sharing books with her as a way to get to know her (use: reading together; outcome: affective) and also using the library as an opportunity to meet other parents and children in the neighborhood (outcome:social). It would seem that Beth, a lifelong library user,
was using the library to prepare herself, in a variety of ways, for a new and very unexpected role: parenthood.

The “library story” was fragmented with other stories about her niece—how she had to reconfigure her apartment for the two of them, or what their relationship has been like since the niece returned to California. The narrative had to be reassembled and distilled. It is interesting that in presenting her initial life story, Beth had made no mention of this year.

The second story was easy to identify, as her telling of it followed Labov’s structure (orientation, complicating action, evaluation, resolution) almost exactly. Beth, who worked as an actuarial in the insurance industry, was laid off when she was in her mid-40s. This triggered a period of intense self-evaluation, in which Beth both looked outward at an evolving economy and inward at her own interests. Referred by her human resource department to a job information center at a public library in Manhattan, Beth eventually visited it with some trepidation (library anxiety). While Beth did not use the center extensively, from her story it was clearly pivotal in both situating her in a new state (unemployed) and in guiding her to her next career. She discussed two specific resources she gained through her contact with the library: a social organization, the Five O’clock Club, (outcome: social) which provided her with a social and volunteer network, and the text What Color is Your Parachute? (seeking: career) which she used as a guide to both understanding herself (use: affect) and her position in the workforce (use: career). Partly inspired by her experiences with her sister, Beth returned to school and became a social worker. This experience suggests transformative learning, the change in a meaning perspective (Mezirow, 1981) for Beth, undoubtedly one of the most significant in her life, and the use of library information was a key element in her meaning-making (outcome: transformation).
I did not return for follow-up interviews with Beth, and if she were to be part of my study, I would want to explore deeper both these stories, among other topics, with the intent to analyzing the telling on a much more granular level. In addition, at the end of the second interview, there was discussion of how in her retirement, reading-for-pleasure, especially mystery fiction, had informed leisure activities, such as travel; this is an area for further exploration as well.

As I reflected on the experience, several thoughts arose. One, Beth had described herself as a lifelong reader of nonfiction, who “always had a book with her.” Only in retirement did she take up reading fiction, and she was somewhat disparaging of this. I was surprised how few books she mentioned, and that her life as a reader was not something she discussed until she reached retirement. After all, between the two stories she told, over a decade passed; there must have been hundreds of books there. I was also surprised that there was no mention of non-goal oriented information transactions. Are these too difficult to remember? Despite promptings, Beth was unable or unwilling to remember these experiences. Perhaps the idea was too odd for Beth to articulate?

Both of the stories were based on purposeful information seeking: “becoming a parent” and “finding a new career.” Dervin would term both of these “gap-bridging,” when the road ahead has washed out and you need to find a new beginning (Savolainen, 2006). Mezirow might characterize them as “disorienting dilemmas.” I was reminded of a participant in Ross’s study of committed readers, who said that “If I find something happening in my life, a high point or a particularly low point, my first trip is generally to the library to see if I can read something about it” (Ross, 1999, p. 787.)
A focus on crises or turning points is a characteristic of storytelling, but unlike Riessman’s narratives of divorce (“and that was the day I couldn’t take it any more”) I wasn’t sure if, or how, these turning points would show up in information behavior. But Beth just brought her crises into the library with her.

Finally, I questioned my interview design. The first question, the life story, produced a useful document that allowed me to understand the participant better and which functioned as a point of reference for understanding their life. And I was pleased that the second, also very non-structure interview, elicited the two stories. But I wondered if I should be prepared to conduct semi-structured interviews as well, if such open-ended questions elicit only a limited response.

For Ross (1999), in conducting research among committed readers, asking a specific question about whether a book had changed you or made a significant difference in your life brought forth a strong response.
APPENDIX B

COPY OF IRB LETTER
February 12, 2008

Office of Research Services

Brian Kenney
School of Library and Information Sciences
Texas Christian University

Re: Human Subjects Application No. 08-037

Dear Mr. Kenney:

As permitted by federal law and regulations governing the use of human subjects in research projects (45 CFR 46), the UNT Institutional Review Board has reviewed your proposed project titled “Building a Typology of Information Outcomes: The Experiences of Public Library Users in Fayetteville, Arkansas.” The risks inherent in this research are minimal, and the potential benefits to the subject outweigh those risks. The submitted protocol is hereby approved for the use of human subjects in this study. Federal Policy 45 CFR 46.109(e) stipulates that IRB approval is for one year only, February 12, 2008 to February 11, 2009.

Enclosed is the consent document with stamped IRB approval. Please copy and use this form only for your study subjects.

It is your responsibility according to U.S. Department of Health and Human Services regulations to submit annual and terminal progress reports to the IRB for this project. Please mark your calendar accordingly. The IRB must also review this project prior to any modifications.

Please contact Sheila Bourns, Research Compliance Administrator, or Boyd Hendon, Director of Research Compliance, at extension 3940, if you wish to make changes or need additional information.

Sincerely,

Kenneth W. Sewell, Ph.D.
Chair
Institutional Review Board

KS: sb
CC: Dr. Elizabeth Figa
APPENDIX C

TRANSCRIPTS OF KATHERINE’S INTERVIEWS
First Interview: Life Story

BRIAN KENNEY (BK): I would like you to tell me your life story, all the events and experiences which were important to you. Start wherever you like. Please take the time you need. I’ll listen first, I won’t interrupt, I’ll just take some notes for afterwards.”

KATHERINE: Okay. Let me just make some notes myself so I ... Let me see. What if I break it up into 10-year increments? How about that?

BK: That's great.

KATHERINE: I was born in Chicago. My parents got married right after World War II. And my dad had been a captain. He was with the 1st Division that landed in Normandy. And he came back and married his sweetheart, who had waited four years. And they got married and lived in a little apartment in Cicero, Illinois, which was right on the elevated tracks, in a little apartment right across from where his mother's apartment was. She was a single mom with three kids.

And then we lived there the first three years, and then moved in with my grandmother in Berlin, Ohio. We lived there for a while, moved to Wisconsin for a year, where I went to kindergarten, and then we came back to Berlin. We lived in Berlin, my grandmother's bungalow. It had two bedrooms and one bath. We were my parents and four kids, my grandmother, who had a room up in the attic, and a boarder who'd been there since the Depression ... We all, you know, shared meals together. The boarder happened to be an inventor working for Honeywell. He was working on inventions related to television, so we were one of the first to have a TV and
the first to have color TV. And he was always mixing chemicals, which I still don't know what
that has to do with television, but that's just something he did. He was always mixing stuff up in
the garage.

And then when I was in fourth grade, we moved to North Riverside, Illinois, where I
went to a Catholic school again. I'd been in a Catholic school before, and fourth grade. Then we
moved to -- North Riverside was one of the first suburbs to be developed in the '50s. The houses
were all pretty uniform. My father called it Shangri-La because we actually had a lawn, and it
was a 50-foot lot. Full of houses, full of yards. Kids could play forever in the streets, just having
a great time. I know a so-called DDT truck when they would come along on their bikes, which
I'm sure we're all going to pay for some day. And let's see.

So fourth grade, that's where my parents lived. And I lived there when I was in fourth,
fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth. Eighth grade I was elected the one who ... in my church, the May
queen, which gave me all kinds of status, and I remember I was the in-demand babysitter. All
the kids wanted the night queen to come ... [Laughter]

So then I went to a Catholic high school, a Catholic High School called ... in Westchester.
Kind of a rough school, a little bit. The girls in it were pretty tough. And by freshman year I
was, you know, goody two-shoes: straight A's and in the Honors program. Really pretty good.
By sophomore year I was venturing out. I was smoking cigarettes, hanging out at the White
Castle, hoping to meet boys, which we rarely did, but always hoping. [Laughs] And then my
parents sent me away to boarding school junior year. They had enough of that.
And actually I was expelled at the end of my sophomore year for a little prank. You know, we had skipped school and were going to -- we just all went out to coffee. And because the manager had cracked down, and they were just making more and more rules, and they held everybody in real tight. And so everybody decided to run out and escape one day. And that was the day a bomb scare was called in. Not by us, but by somebody, and so we were blamed and we were expelled.

So then I went to boarding school for a year in Indianapolis, and I got into an equal amount of trouble there, pretty much. I had a roommate from Cuba, who was a refugee ... and studied piano. I was also a pianist. I'd been studying piano since fourth grade on and ... better .. win our competitions. And senior year I came back to the same high school, but I had reformed and matured. [Laughs] And again, a straight A student, which made me able to finally get into college.

As a senior I was very responsible. I was involved in a lot of activities. I volunteered in the inner city of Chicago, working with kids, teaching reading to them. I went to the library in the inner city and read books to kids every Saturday morning, which -- you know, we were not that close to Chicago, so getting there in itself was -- you know, took some doing and some risk. But there was a group of us who did it.

And so what else ... boyfriends. I remember going to the library senior year to work on a paper. You know, this is ... it was very progressive, other than all the rules about being quiet, we
were extremely progressive intellectually. And we were doing ... I had history and English and theology and one other subject. They were all tied together with one paper.

And so I would go to the Chicago Public Library to work on the paper, and got deeply involved in all these really non-Catholic things. And finished my paper on interplanetary humanism, which [Laughs]...That's what the nuns wanted to know, "What is that?" But I was, you know, in the stacks and reading, and "This is what I have been waiting for my whole life. You know, this explains everything. This is the theology I understand." And they felt that I had plagiarized the whole paper and accused me of that, which was awful. And -- because it was so uncommon to write about anything that was clearly way outside of what the Catholic parameters or the Catholic libraries were involved in.

And so it was, you know, humanism, a humanistic way of viewing the world, actually. But I wound up arguing my case before a whole group of nuns, and they gave me a passing grade: not an A, but a B-minus, actually.

And I graduated and then went to Clarke College. In Dubuque, Iowa. Which is -- at the time it was a really good theater school, and I had at ... Mary, one of the things that I was doing was the theater department. And we only had eight in the department. So because I was tall, I got all the boy parts, and really got into it, thought I was really pretty good because there were only eight of us, so you naturally think ... you get a part every time. And when I got to Clarke and everybody was much better than I was. There were people from all over the country, and they'd studied. And I started to realize how serious it was, how intense and serious the study of
theater really could be, which is exciting, but also a disappointment because I wasn't that good at it.

But I was good at writing, so I started writing plays. And so I did that for two years at Clarke, a lot of play writing, some acting, and a lot of theology, of course. And then went to Marquette University. In Milwaukee. It's a Jesuit school.

Anyway. So what precipitated that was the summer before -- the summer after my sophomore year I got a job at the Chicago Tribune as a reporter. They hired me because I was a theater major, and they wanted someone who could do impersonations on the phone [Laughter] - - which, you know, once I got into journalism, I realized how wrong it was. [Laughter] But that's why they wanted me. They wanted me for the action line so I could pretend to be a tenant or pretend to be looking for an apartment. And then they would just blast or go after the landlord who wouldn't hire [sic] someone who was Hispanic or black. So I would do that ... I would do whatever they wanted me to do.

But then they started giving me things to write and then decided I could write. And then they were all working on getting me into the journalism school. So half of them were from Marquette and half of them Northwestern. And [deleted], who went to Marquette, called and got me into a J school, which was not easy to do at that late date, but she did. And so she made the call maybe August 10th, and five days later I showed up at Marquette, you know, with ...

[Laughs]
And at Marquette it was a big awakening for me. This is, you know, to put it into perspective historically, this is the summer of ’67. So I was at the Tribune. There were reporters who were going out to cover the Detroit riots, and the racial issues were just beginning to emerge, antiwar protests were just beginning to happen.

And I got to Milwaukee and got off the -- you know, arrived at the train station and started walking down Wisconsin Avenue. Every store front was boarded up … and I was the only person on the street. I was too naive to realize that walking down the street was not a good idea. And my parents wouldn’t have thought of it, either. But I had to walk 17 blocks along this street to get to the university, which was also in an inner city neighborhood. So I went from this very sheltered experience … to, you know, what was going on in a major city.

And my first day, someone came around and asked me to sign a petition because the university was going to expel somebody with long hair. And my view at the time was the university was right. You know, why does he want long hair anyway? And within a year, I was a completely different person. I was involved in protests. Because I was a journalism major, I was also covering a lot of the civil rights marches and the antiwar protests. So I would get to go and interview people, which saved me in a way, because some of my friends would wind up in jail, but I was just there taking notes.

And so that was junior year. And senior year, you know, was pretty much the same. I got more deeply involved as a journalist. I applied for a job at the South City Times. I needed money. And I didn't tell them that I was white. I just applied and sent in some writing samples,
and they hired me. So senior year, I was a ... for the South City Times, which was a militant African-American newspaper. And I covered all the meetings, which was easy Marquette was right there, you know, surrounded by a ghetto.

So I would cover all the meetings and do interviews with people and just submit my stuff. And nobody ever asked. And the first time it ever had any repercussions was when the Triple O was formed. And I was at the beginning meetings of the Triple O. That's the Organization of Organization. And so I was one of the people who was there at just a little table like this, and there were 10 people around it saying they were going to form an organization. And I'd write about it.

And it grew and grew, and I kept covering it. And I didn't notice as it was growing that I was the only white person present at all these meetings. So finally there was a meeting of maybe 300 to 500 people, and they said, "The time has come when we ... that we cannot involve white people anymore. White people, no matter how good they are, cannot understand. And so we are going to ask that white people leave this meeting." And I'm looking around and I don't see any white people leaving. [Laughs] And they guy next to me said, "He means you." [Laughter] Me. So I left.

And so then the guy who was the head of the Triple O, who had seen me covering everything, called me and asked me if I wanted to instead do an interview. So I did. I had him come up to my apartment at Marquette. And the landlady stopped him, you know, just wouldn't even let him go, didn't want to let any black people up to my apartment. And that was kind of an
eye-opener also. I hadn't really thought about my own apartment that way because we were in the ghetto, but she was trying to protect her tenants, I guess.

And so he came up, and he was there for probably 2 1/2 hours. I interviewed him and wrote a story that was also published elsewhere ... he was ... And he liked it, I guess, because he called me after that and asked me out on a date. And so that was another test for me because I wasn't ready for that.

And the big issue for me was that he was so angry. I just couldn't imagine the intensity of a relationship like that. It just seemed way too hard. And so I just told him that professionally I couldn't date him. But it was also -- I wasn't ready to deal with all of the other racial issues that would be involved ... So that is Marquette.

I was also -- you know, I had a boyfriend, who is now my husband, in my senior year. And, you know, it was the time where sexual liberation and everything. There was all that. More open than it had been. We were kind of at the cusp. I had been at Clarke College, where we had to wear caps and gowns and white gloves to Mass very Sunday. We had to be in by midnight on Saturday and Sunday, and by 9 every other night. And when we came in, you could kiss your date at the door, but the nuns were there, and at midnight, they'd flip the lights on and off, so it took the romance out of it. You know, there was -- [Laughs] So that's what I came from.

And then at Marquette, everything was so different. Everything was so open. You know, when I met my husband, the first time we went out, he took me back to his apartment, and I
asked when we were going to go home. And he looked like me like I had ... [Laughs] "Like, you can't go home. There aren't even any buses running yet. It's not possible."

And so that was a tremendous transition. But by the end of senior year at Marquette I was living with him. And he went to the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee, so he was way at the other end of the town. We weren't -- when I say living together, I mean we'd spend four days at his place, four days at my place.

So it was a major shift in values. And for my parents it was overwhelming. It was just more than they could handle. And he was also Jewish, which made it totally difficult. And they couldn't fathom ... they had sent me to college to find a husband [Laughs] and now this is what had happened.

So I graduated and got a job working for a newspaper. And the newspaper I was covering increasing, or -- I tended to be the reporter they would send to cover civil rights issues, like when Father Groppi was marching in Milwaukee, to go and interview him. When there would be a demonstration on the university campus, I would go and interview the faculty and the students and do a story. So I wound up getting a lot of the assignments that the older reporters didn't want to take, perhaps.

I got involved in peace marches and with the women's movement ... people on their attitudes toward peace. And after about eight months I got promoted to what had been the women's department, to be editor of what had been the women's section, but they decided to call it -- I want to say Lifestyle or something like that.
But it was really -- you know, it was a former Jesuit who was the editor of the paper, and he was extremely militant. His wife was Margot Houston, who was the leading feminist in Milwaukee, so he wanted to turn this section into something that would be ... [Laughs] And I was -- you know, it really wasn't coming well from inside me. And I was really not intending to be that person, but I became that person. I became the one who wrote a lot of that stuff and did a lot of the interviews. And I reported for about a year and a half.

And then through that, I got married, which then I moved to Chicago. During this time, when I was doing the reporting, he was still in Milwaukee finishing school. So he would come and get me on his motorcycle, you know, most weekends. He would just come on Friday afternoon. We'd spend the weekend in this basement apartment where he lived ... these wonderful little Italian people who were ... had built the whole place for them, you know, so the doorways were all ... [Laughs] little tiny Italian stove And so they lived upstairs, and we were kind of in the basement with, you know, a lot of beads and paraphernalia around. [Laughs] And other friends coming over. It was a good time. It was -- the '60s were a wonderful time to be young.

And after we moved to Chicago and got married, I got a job in the inner city of Chicago teaching. I was a fifth grade teacher. The way that happened was that I had applied for a job on a newspaper, and one of the four Chicago newspapers had just folded. I can't remember which one now. But there were about 300 people on the street. So it was hard to find anything. And there was a suburban paper that told me they would hire me, but it would be six months, and
suggested I get a teaching job as a sub in the inner city because the pay was pretty good, $40 a day.

So that's what I did. And the only requirement was that you do graduate school while you do it, so I did that. I took some graduate classes and taught. And it was a disaster. It was -- I would take the elevated to the subway, the subway to another elevated and then the bus, and then I would walk through the ghetto maybe 10 blocks to work. And there was gang graffiti, you could hear gunshots sometimes in the early afternoon. People would stop me. The police would stop and ask me what I was doing in the neighborhood. "Do you know where you are?"

[Laughs]

So I had a fifth grade class. And at first I had training with mentally handicapped kids, and then I got my own class. And the class was hard to handle, and it was really difficult. It was hard to really get anything done. Kids arrived with no books, no pencils, no paper. There were no supplies. The kids would -- I think they wanted to learn, but none of them could read in fifth grade. It was very difficult, so I just created games for them to play with -- we had math games, teams competing against each other with math and I put in whatever I could in flash cards, whatever I could find, since we didn't -- we had some books, but not enough for everybody.

And I had been a reporter, so we created a newspaper and I had them write newspaper articles. That was really interesting. I learned how to handle myself in class. I think I took the wrong way. You know, the parents would come and tell you to just beat them. You need to whip them. You're not whipping them enough. If you whip them, then you won't have any
problems. But I just couldn't envision myself whipping these kids, who a lot of them were bigger than I was. So it couldn't work out, not well, so we didn't do that.

And then I went to work for a public relations firm in Chicago for about two or three months. I was really not a good fit there, especially coming from where I had come. [Laughs] And so they fired me. And after they fired me, I put an ad in -- there is a professional publication in Chicago for journalists and PR writes. And I was, "I've just been fired by [deleted]. I need a job." And all these people called me. Probably ten people called and said, "Oh, they fired me, too. They are such assholes. Come and talk." So I found another job that way.

So then I worked -- I got a job working for the [deleted], which was the parent company - or the parent organization of the premier coordinating committee that invented Earth Day.

So I joined them a couple months after the first Earth Day and organized the second one. I did publications for them. I did about five publications, special events. And we would do raids on industry. There was a lawyer and, you know, a community relations person, and me. And the three of us would go to [deleted] and do raids, writing down all the things that they were doing, and we'd go to City Council and report the violations. So it was an interesting time, and it got me deeply involved in the Earth movement at a very early stage, and ... deep feeling for that. So that was '71, '72.

And let's see from there -- so I worked there for about a year and a half. And then my husband, [deleted], got a job in Wisconsin. And we moved to Wisconsin and we rented a
farmhouse, which was maybe 40 miles from Milwaukee. It was only $120 a month for a house that had four bedrooms, a huge living room, a huge dining room, huge kitchen. But the downside was that we had to share a bathroom with the farmer's son, who had the other half of this big house. And we also had no insulation, which we hadn't thought about, so -- [Laughs]

And the linoleum on the kitchen floor was peeling off. And so I got a job with the phone company there, working corporate communications for them. And Rich was working for -- I think at that time a can -- he was selling canned goods or can containers to different clients. And so he worked at home.

And on weekends we had great parties. We had our own acre that we grew our own vegetables on, made all of our own bread. We'd make big pots of chili and stews. And our friends would come. They'd sleep all over the floor. We'd have 30 people, 30 or 40 people just sleeping on the floor. And get a keg of beer and ... [Laughs] And it was a good time of our life. We really enjoyed that.

And then still in Wisconsin we bought a house that was, oh, 100 years old at the time, in town. It was just a Victorian house, and we did a lot of work on that.

Just -- this is in Ocomonore, which is still, you know, pretty close to where the farm had been, actually. It was on a lake. We had a little canoe. I bought a canoe. I came home one night with a canoe. Somebody was selling a canoe, so now we have one. [Laughs]

And I was still working in media relations. The irony of that is that we were -- you know, aside from our normal jobs, we were very political in other ways. So we didn't have
television. We didn't believe in it. We didn't eat meat. We didn't eat, oh, I can't remember, grapes, you know, whatever--lettuce. [Laughs] So we were really kind of out of touch, you know, and yet I'm doing media relations every day without having any idea of what might actually be going on in the media because I really wasn't watching -- you know, at work I would watch to see what our story did on TV, but I really wasn't paying any attention at all. We still had a stereo because when Nixon was on, we turned the stereo on, and we had big speakers. And so we turned the stereo way up, which we rarely even did there. And the cats tore into the speakers and ripped them apart. So I remember Nixon resigned and the cats were pulling the speakers apart [Laughs] which seemed appropriate.

On the farm also we used to play chess every night. We used to go out on the porch and play chess. It was one of our main avocations during that time.

Then [deleted] got moved again to Chicago. I stayed in Milwaukee another four of five months to finish doing what I was doing, and then I tried to find a job. And I found a job – [deleted] transferred me to a job working for the [deleted], their national training center ... where I became the communications drafter, and eventually built a department there of about 12 people, you know, we did publications, special events – a lot of publication work.

It started out with doing a magazine ... magazine for them and doing interviews with – I started – to make it more interesting for myself more than anything else, I started interviewing science fiction novelists and, you know, having issues with an interview with a science fiction writer and do a story, or an interview with someone who had an invention. Because the ideas is
to create inspiration for the engineers who had come for training. So that was fun. We got a lot of awards for our publications.

And then I also joined the [deleted] at the time in Chicago and started getting more and more involved with them and became an officer. Then I was a vice president, and then an officer. I became the president of the [deleted], which is – I don’t know if you know that group, but it’s like a group of – it started out as magazine editors, but ... group. It is primarily people who did communication in a more honest way than the public relations team did, maybe. And then there was [deleted]. The members tended to – there tended to be a lot of goons involved in what they did, I guess would be the best way to – [Laughs]

So I was at the [deleted] for about four years. It exposed me to a lot. And my immediate boss at [deleted] was in New York City, so I got to New York a lot. I saw a lot of plays, got to meet a lot of the people in New York. I had a job offer there that I seriously considered, but – and then we decided we didn’t want to do that. Rich really didn’t want to move to New York, and we didn’t want to be commuting ... So that was the end of the ... years ‘til about 1980.

And then I was able to get a transfer to ... which is downtown in Chicago. And that at the time was considered among the [deleted], the most successful PR department, except for New York, very – maybe 200 people in the department.

And so in the next six, eight years ... six, seven years with them, I got to move in a lot of different jobs. I was a corporate speech writer, for a while. I was an issues analysis, where my whose job as an issues analyst for two years was to just work with [deleted] – and pick an issue
that would have impact on [deleted]... in the future, and write all of the pros and all of the cons of
taking a certain position on it and propose a position for the board to consider.

It was an interesting job, I think. And I was editor of [deleted]’s magazine for a while,
which was a four-color, you know, 30-page magazine that was also extremely issues-oriented
that had a lot of professional level writing. So I hired a lot of writers to work for it. I also hired
people from the newspaper – from the Tribune – actually the Tribune, the Today, and the Sun
Times and the Daily News were the four papers. But by that time I think we were down to two,
so I hired people off of the newspapers to work for me.

So it again felt comfortable, like a newsroom. I liked that. And I had people around me
who were reporters [Laughs]. And I was in advertising for a while. I did advertising, advertising
strategies. I got to learn how professional that can be and how scientific it has to be and
understanding audiences, and let the strategic planners determine exactly what message is going
to reach which audience and how to position what really needed to be positioned. So that was
fun.

And after all of that, I interviewed for a job at [deleted]. They’re the ones that do the
[deleted]. And I was hired as Communication Director there. And I started out with a
department of about 12 people, and by the time I was finished, I had 40 in my department. I
think I was good at managing people, and so wherever I went people tended to follow [?] things
I’m doing: Well, why don’t you manage this, and why don’t you manage that. Some of these
things were not clearly related, but – So one of the things I had was the Documentary Video Group.

And so – oh, that’s another thing – another job I had ... about. I’ve done documentaries and won awards for them, so that’s – this Documentary Video Group maybe catalyzed it. You know, it just worked out that all the guys tended to be – in the Documentary Video Group, and there were more women in publications, which was not intentional, but it just kind of fell out that way. And we produced some really interesting work. We had a lot of freedom, and we could do things for public service, so we could do public service announcements where we could do videos for use in various situations, whether it was at schools, you know, a variety of different types of audiences, some ... so that was part of – that’s probably where I’d rather – really had the most excitement was what we did there.

And we did annual meetings, annual reports. And then [deleted] had a chance to take a job in Memphis, and I had been clamoring to move out of the city because by this time I had a child. And we were both commuting and awful opposite direction for an hour and a half each, and I just really wanted to get out of the city. So this came up, and we decided to move.

And as it worked out, one of those synchronicities, one night I went with a friend who had had a similar background to mind. And in the country there were not that many people who had a background similar to mine, maybe 10 at the time, and [deleted] was one of them. I told her that we might move to Memphis. She said, “Well, you know, I just interviewed for a job in Memphis, and I turned it down.” So before I got back from lunch even, she had had them call
me, so I had a message waiting from [deleted], and they flew me down, which should have been a bad omen to me. They flew me from Chicago to New York, but the next day, “Can we see you right away?”

So I get off the plane, and they’ve got a limo waiting there to take me. [Laughs] And so I met with them, and I accepted the job. It paid way better than what I was earning, and it to be a Public Communications Director for [deleted]. They were headquartered in – just outside of New York City, but this job was located in Memphis, but actually was a corporate job. So they had someone who had Corporate Media Relations and someone who had Corporate Employee and Community Relations. So I was responsible for national – I guess international, although there was very little international work. So – and that took me in a whole different direction than I had ever hoped to be in [Laughs], a world I didn’t even know was out there. And if I had stopped to think even for a moment, I probably wouldn’t have accepted that job. But I did.

And it sent me into a world of Dioxin lawsuits, focus group interviews, lots and lots of meaningless meetings [Laughs], way too many lawyer ... and meetings with lawyers who are horrible people when you get them into groups. And I was able to stand it for about, I guess I was there two years, almost two years.

And the guy who hired me, I trusted. His name was [deleted], who was – his experiences were the same as mine. He was, you know, a flower child who wrote poetry and told me he thought we could change this company and turn everything around, but what they really wanted to do was get people like me in their ... changes because they had had such violent strikes, you
know, where the employees were throwing rocks through the windows of the corporate limos with ... and it was bloody. It was just – and they had years and years of this bloody mess, and they were hoping somebody would come in and begin to change the way communication happened.

And [deleted] and I were of one mind, and although there were –[deleted], who was in synch with what I would have done. So I went to work for [deleted], but then a year and a half later, they fired [deleted] ... he was out. And they brought in a guy named [deleted] from Chicago, who was as evil as the rest of the company. [Laughs] And [deleted] and I were able to survive together maybe three weeks, and he fired me.

So it was an awful time in my life. I guess I learned so much. I learned a lot about crisis communication because I was constantly handling crises. My second day on the job I got a phone call from somebody from an oil company, and I didn’t even know we owned an oil company. I didn’t even have an org chart. I didn’t know that it was actually an umbrella company for hundreds of different companies.

“Oh, we got us a little old oil spill here.” I said, “What?” “In the Gulf.” [Laughs] And mostly he was calling me to see how to cover this up.

So the whole thing was – I don’t think my stomach ever relaxed for a day when I was there. I don’t think I ever felt comfortable. I just got through it because I didn’t know what else I was going to do in Memphis if I wasn’t doing that because we weren’t prepared then for me to not be working.
So finally I got fired. And I started my own business in town, and I did that for about ten years.

I was a consultant. I could have been a crisis communication consultant because I’d done enough of that with [deleted] had its share of crises, too. We had quite a few of those. So I could have done that. But I decided to specialize in employee and team communication. And that was really rewarding work. I would work mostly with factory workers. I’d go in and help them develop their own strategic plans, help teams to be self-directed, to solve problems on their own, to communicate team to team, you know, taking it really into the – mostly what I had done before had been on a macro level, and so I got to work on a just the people level, which is extremely fun. And I did that for a long time and had a good time.

But then we moved here, and it made it harder. It was harder at the time to even get a flight out of here to go anywhere. And so the business just sort of died away. I didn’t go after ... and it just sort of gradually dissipated.

And so we moved here in 1996. I’m trying to think. I don’t remember exactly what time we – what date the business actually was not functioning anymore. Gradually it was less and less a part of my life until we finally said, “You know, you might as well just give this up because you’re not doing it very much.”

And I started doing more writing at that point. I started – I took a play writing course at the university. I had studied play writing before in college. I took another course here. Started doing play writing, started writing fiction and getting involved more in church activities.
I was going to the Catholic church here, St. Joseph’s, and then there was an incident where there was a boy who was beaten up because he was gay. And there were fundamentalist Christian kids beating him up, quoting the Bible to him, quoting Leviticus 7. And I had this – a pretty horrible feeling about that, and so I went to church Sunday and waited, and nothing was said. I felt something at least ought to be said, that as Christians we were all ... at some level, but ... to happen, or at least you denounce it and say, “That isn’t who we are.” But nothing was said.

And then shortly after that, somebody proposed this Human Dignity ... here in town, which the idea was to do what should have been ... anyway, but just ... as a city, we as a city will not discriminate because of race, gender, sexual preference. And several of the churches signed it, and our priest said, “You know, they said St. Joseph’s signed it. I just wanted to let know we did not sign it. That was a mistake.” But not why or why not or –

So in the meantime, [deleted], who was the priest of the Episcopal Church, is there on page one every day ... “We are culpable. We have a responsibility here.” So I just wanted to go there. And I did. And I stayed, so – [Laughs] And I’m now an Episcopalian. And so one of the things that absorbed my life for the first few years –

So one of the things that absorbed my life after joining was that, you know, I became – people were kidding me about just moving right into St. Paul’s because, you know, I was a reluctant Catholic for the last ten years before. I mean, I went on Sundays and I would read. I’d even say hello to the priest. I don’t think he ever knew who I was, and I didn’t get involved in very much. You know, I was a reader at Mass, but I really didn’t get involved.
Now I was doing something every single day of the week. I was working at the homeless shelter, and I was involved in the science and religion discussion group, the book discussions. I was organizing readers, events. I was bringing in speakers. I was on a panel to bring in speakers. So this – I just a couple years ago started pulling back a little bit so my life would be more balanced, but really this church has just been such a life force for me in every way. It introduced me to this whole community of writers that I’m a part of now, and most of them are also part of St. Paul’s. So the changes have been wonderful.

Let’s see. What else? What else do you want to know? I guess I haven’t really talked about my family or my husband or my son [Laughs]. It’s been more a résumé.

Yeah. Well, one other factor in this that I didn’t mention, you know, I have a son, one son who was born when I was 34, which is relatively late in life. And he had disabilities. He’s had a variety of different diagnoses: ADHD, different kinds of things. He’s exceptionally gifted. You know, he can listen to classical music and play it. He was an artist. He could do charcoal drawings. He could play chess. When he first started playing chess, he’d watch people play and memorize their games.

And then he’s play that game over and over, and then he’d go and play that person and be able to beat him because he’d memorized the game. So exceptional gifted ... but also a lot of it I was doing ... the school system to get accommodations for him ... which was essentially more time on a test because everything that he’d look at, you know, he’d see, you know, 900 options that other people didn’t see. And so I helped him a lot and worked with him ... He got into
college, majored in engineering. Dropped out after his sophomore year. He was home for six months and ... rethink what he was going to do again ... So now he’s an engineer ... He’s – you know, if I would tell you this about him when you’d meet him now you would probably find it hard to believe because he doesn’t seem to even have a lot of the autistic symptoms that he had before.

He seems to relate to people in a very normal way. Some of the genius has gone away, too. So I don’t know if his brain has just changed ... in a different world. So a lot of who I am relates to who he was, too, and probably my reaction to the whole Human Dignity issue was so much tied up in [deleted] because he was often discriminated against in the same way, the same kinds of things ... happen.

And interestingly, the only kids who he had for friends were ... and he had a lot of gay friends because they seemed to understand each other on some level ... were gentle, and [deleted] was gentle and not critical of anyone. He never had the slightest bit of – he didn’t have any sense of discrimination in his heart. And all of his friends, you know, he always was so open. He didn’t even seem to be aware. You know, he’d be bringing home people of all different races, and those things weren’t even issues to him [Static] this is an interesting person, and that’s all.

So it makes me feel good. You know, somebody talked about Barack Obama as being the post – appealing to the post-racial generation, and I love that. Maybe that’s what we’ve done. Maybe we have raised a post-racial –maybe there is this generation of hope coming up.
We can’t expect that it would include everybody in the generation, but maybe. That would be wonderful. That’s all I can think of.

BK: Well, thank you.

Second Interview: Library Story

KATHERINE: [In progress] -- memory of a public library was when I was 6 years old or 7 years old, right when I first learned to read, and having our Catholic school teacher take us to the library. And we walked among the stacks to see what was there. And this library was in Berlin, Illinois. It was a storefront. It probably had three racks, I guess, all together. And we all got library cards.

I happened to live about two blocks, which involved crossing two streets. And I went there at least once a week, probably three times a week. I'd actually go there, took my library card, take out the three books that they would let me take out, read them, and bring them back. So I did that in probably first, second, and third grade.

Then we moved to North Riverside, which is another small town in the Chicago suburbs. The library there was even worse, and ... So it was not accessible to me at all. You would need a car to get there. But my parents ... [Laughs] So the only library I had then was in the back of our classroom in the public school from fourth grade to eighth grade.

And it was a decent library, I guess, as public school ... libraries can be. I read everything that was available for me on the girls side. I remember once going into the boys side. The boys
side had all kinds of murder stories, and they had sports stories [Laughs] things I never even thought for a minute about looking at.

What I liked were the horse stories, for the most part. So I read every horse store that was ever done and found the Cherry Ames, Student Nurse books, and, gosh, anything I could really get my hands on I would read. The Wizard of Oz, the whole Wizard of Oz series, The Emerald City of Oz, the whole -- all of the Oz books ... through a couple summers, I think.

And I read voraciously. I would go to bed at night, pretending to go to bed, and I'd get up and hide in the closet with a flashlight and read 'til maybe 2 in the morning. I read all summer long when I wasn't helping take care of the kids in my family. I would read to them. So reading was always very big. The public library was not even visible [?]. I remember going to see it and walking through thinking, "Who would ever find anything here to read?"

It was just awful. And then in high school, I had a friend who was precocious. Her name was Julia Worth. She was an artist, a writer. She was always kind of sitting back laughing. She was very mature for the high school. She had this attitude about her, and she liked me, and so we would take off for downtown Chicago on the elevated train. I didn't know you could do until I met Julia Worth.

So off we'd go, and we'd spend the morning at the art museum, and then we would go to the Chicago Public Library. And there I just fell in love. Just the smells of it. She taught me how to use the Dewey Decimal System, and then we would go off in our opposite direction for hours, like almost every Saturday.
So there I discovered, you know, that just opened up all kinds of avenues to me, in art, in writing, music, all kinds of things, new areas of fiction. And she was, of course always introducing me to new authors that were stimulating.

And then I went to boarding school for a year, where there was no library, no access to anything. And came back my senior year. That is where I was working on the interplanetary humanism paper. What does that mean? To this day I'm really not sure. It was something I came up with, you know, sitting on the floor of the Chicago Public Library in the stacks, you know, just going through discovering that there was this whole secular way to look at religion.

Humanism goes back ... to the early founders of the United States in this country, but I didn't know that you could think of a philosophy without attaching it to religion. So there I was. I just -- you know, I'd come home very very late at night. My parents would be very upset. I had stacks of books. I'd be reading always, and I was just feverish, just discovering this whole new world. I couldn't wait to put this paper together, which got me into all kinds of trouble in the Catholic school. So that wasn't where they intended all of this to go. [Laughter]

And then I got into college, and, you know, the love affair with the Chicago Public Library of course continued. I went to school in Dubuque the first two years, so every break that I got I'd come back and I preferred working on my papers at home, where I had access to much more than Dubuque could give me. So most of my papers -- But now the papers were on, you know, method acting, all different kinds of theater and play writing, discovering all the new playwrights ...
And I worked one summer at NBC, where the director of the Goodman Theater was teaching me how to be a makeup artist. So what we would do most of the time when we weren't doing makeup is we'd sit on the floor, and he would tell me what I should be reading. Then I would run the next morning to the library and get books on Zen Buddhism so that I could speak intelligently with him the next night. I wanted to be ... so I'd read about Buddhism. He introduced me to the playwrights I must read and to the materials I had to have. So that was a whole other trajectory.

Then my junior year in college I got into journalism because then, you know, as a journalist you're always researching. I already knew where to go for a lot of things. And the Milwaukee Public Library was wonderful. The Clarke college library in Dubuque, Iowa, was also pretty decent. And I had a reputation for sort of living there, and I would just bring all of my stuff and set up on a table and just kind of make myself at home there, do all my homework there ... anything that I thought of that would come into my ADHD brain [Laughs] I could just get it right then.

And then at Marquette, the library, you know, was not too bad. They had put in a much nicer ... The Marquette library and the city library in Milwaukee were pretty decent resources. I was fortunate in that way, you know, to be able to find almost all of what I wanted. And at the time, I'm trying to think, when I would be doing papers on taxation ... [Laughs] or social justice issues. And I could pretty well ... anything that I really needed to find. And there I would go to books and periodicals. I was not drawing on any other media ... just periodicals and books.
And then, let's see. I graduated from college, and I was a reporter still, and as a reporter drawing on a lot of materials as I needed it. And I went into the corporate communications group [deleted] and -- I had other things to draw on there. And I worked for DELTED for a long time, and the corporate library was magnificent. And they had hired a professional librarian, [deleted], who ... used to work for ... So it was a good breeding ground for librarians, as well. And then one of the jobs I had with [deleted] was at the ... Performance [?] Center in ... And they had the library ... The way that happened was that there were a lot of PhDs working at this center, engineering PhDs, but also some ... PhDs and people who had been .. so we'd get together and brainstorm and decide -- there was really no central source of technical information for the whole ... no central place you could go. So what if we created something like that?

And we hired a librarian. She was a Japanese-American woman with three other degrees, as well as, and then just full of excitement. So she reported to me, and together we just kind of brainstormed ...

And of course she was also drawing on other public libraries and other information and everything. Everybody ... So it was exciting to me to be so much a part of the process and see how information was catalogued because really what she started out with -- I didn't know what she was going to do with all of it. And she started out with maybe 10 rooms like this room, you know, up to the ceiling with boxes, piles, with these notes, handwritten notes, and somehow, you know, in three years she put all that together into a system that was accessible by computer by
everybody. So that gave me tremendous respect. Mostly I was standing in awe of all of it, you know ... all I had to do was just ... [Laughs]

So from all of those corporate jobs, let's see, within the DELTED. And then I had a job as an issues analyst later on, where I was completely dependent on Nexis and Lexis every single day, and then I went to the public libraries to draw on information. And maybe we'd be studying how to structure a rate -- how rates should be charged ... and so then I would have to go in and get sociological background and other things that could help me. So it was fun to have a job that allowed me to just ... with the librarian ... [Laughs]

From there, I had other corporate jobs. Started my own business and doing my own business, I was managing teams. And so I was able to draw on a lot of the training I'd got in my corporate jobs, but also I was looking for the new stuff, new ideas that were coming out. So I was looking up -- I would spend hours in the library, just getting information on team developments, motivation of employees, you know, ways to reward people. And one author led to another to another to another to another to another. So most of what I'd put together in training, I gathered from books that I got out of the library. I couldn't always get what I needed, and so I would -- luckily when this library was starting to get up and running, I could come here and tell them, "I really need this author. I want to be able to read this person," and they would get it for me.

So even if it would be new stuff, I could get it. And then after that, after I retired gradually from corporate -- all the training work that I'd done. I started writing, and writing
prose. And that of course puts you right smack in the middle of the library, researching or looking up materials. My husband and I did about probably five, maybe -- and damn, I just remembered I had five to bring back for him and didn't. [Laughs]

But that's what we're doing all the time is taking out four or five movies at a time. We take out CDs. He's retired now and most of what he does, now he's working on photography and other projects, so, you know, he brings in the new CDs, puts them on so he's got music all over the house, music in the car. When we get tired of it, it goes back to the library and we get more.

And also at this library I am very active in other things. I've gone to the Arkansas Playwrights Workshop, which meets here on Mondays, so that has been an extremely important catalyst for me as a playwright. I had written plays early on, and in the early days to get your play produced just required enormous commitment. And you had to have people who were really interested in them.

Now, with this group, I can get together with a group of potentially 30 playwrights and actors from the university and community, and on any given day we get 15 who show up. And so I write a scene, and the actors perform it, and then I get feedback from everyone, and I rewrite it, and two weeks later I come back with the new version of the scene, and then they perform it. I get more feedback, until it's ready to go.

Monday was an exceptionally good night, last Monday night, because I'd been working on a play for about six months. And they kept saying, "Oh, you know, there's something missing. We don't quite know what it is, but we don't understand the motivation of this character
and this character, and we don't know what this person really wants." And so I tried again. "No, no, it still isn't there." On Monday night they told me it was. So that was an "Hallelujah!"

moment for me. But without the library, without this happening here, it wouldn't be possible. It just wouldn't -- I could never find actors to do it.

I used to -- before this group, I used to -- some of the plays I wrote had older people in them, so I'd go to senior centers and talk people into being in my plays. And they would do it. [Laughs] They were happy to do it for me, and I even found some retired professional actors

[Laughs] which is -- But now I don't have to beg anymore. There are actors who are there to do that. So that's on Monday nights.

And then I've also done [deleted]'s workshop here. And she's somebody you definitely should look up. She teaches at the library.

I think now her class is sponsored by the Continuing Education Office of the university. But before the library was the only sponsor. And, you know, she taught here. Her husband was also the director of a library at a university. He died a couple years ago.

And she teaches poetry. So off and on probably for eight years I've done Rebecca's class. She has a steady group of about 10 people who are always in it, and then others who come and join it, so maybe 15 to 18. And the class just does poetry, reading and reviewing and working on and improving the poetry.
I've also done [deleted] fiction class and play writing class is here. I probably take in probably six classes here at the library and have attended various workshops, just all kinds of things that come up here. So socially, you know, it's a very big part of my life.

And it is for so many other people here. They just -- you know, you look at the playwrights group ... probably 30 to -- I'd say 30 people, but actually I think ... they may even have 60 people who come at just different times. So there's a ripple effect in the community.

If I'm working on a play, I almost always run across a historical issue that I've got to figure out. You know, one play is set during World War II, so then I had to figure out what actually was going on during World War II. And I guess play writing and fiction writing, they both have the same issues. So then I will have to go in and find everything that I can related to that period.

But it also helps that I have other playwrights and other writers. I belong to a fiction writers group, too. We don't meet here at the library. We meet at a coffee shop. But I can ask them, and they will refer me to books very often, you know, this piece of fiction will inform you or this, you know, get this biography or this historical study.

So history, but also, I'm doing an autobiographical work now. It's a series of short stories, which is called [deleted] ... stole my title from me, and so now it's going to maybe be called [deleted].

And so even writing about my own life, I've had to go back into the '50s and find out what was going on, you know, historically. But it also helps to get a hold of some other things,
like ... you know, other people who had attempted to do that, and Nuala O'Faolain, the work she
did on her Irish Catholic family. There are some things about my Irish Catholic family that I had
to be very brave to reveal, so it helps to be able to get someone like Nuala O'Faolain, although I
have to say it scares me when she describes, you know, at the end of the book how she spent
Christmas day walking alone because none of her siblings really want to be with her anymore.

[Laughs] It's called Are You Somebody. She's Irish. And she's the daughter of Sean O'Faolain,
who is a very well-known writer in Ireland and public figure. But she reveals, you know, their
actual family life, which was nearly destitute because he was out drinking all the time. And --
which is pretty much the Irish family pattern. [Laughs] ...

Oh, also I belong to a book club. It's a group of women, nine women in Fayetteville, and
the book club -- it's extremely challenging. This group of women is so exciting. It includes
several faculty members from the university and people from all walks of life and all different
ages, from 30 to 60 years old.

So a wide range of opinions on every issue. Now I've got to remember the books that
we're reading. We just finished Water for Alison [?], and I'm now reading Jeffrey Eugenides' book. It begins with an M. This is after The Virgin Suicides. It begins with an M, and I just can't
-- that's waiting for me right now on hold. So that and then, let's see. Oh, we've read a couple of
... works. One -- oh! Suite Francaise, just finished that one, which was also great. Have you
read that?

BK: No. I'm behind --
KATHERINE: Yeah.

BK: -- because I've been working on school.

KATHERINE: Write that down, Suite Francaise, for when your --

BK: Suite Francaise?

KATHERINE: -- PhD is finished, yeah.

BK: Who's that by, do you know?

KATHERINE: Irene Nemirovsky. She's a Jewish writer, a Russian Jew who is living in Paris, and she was killed by the Nazis ... But you're reading the book thinking, "Boy, doesn't the author have any idea what was happening to the Jews?" because it's all about other things, but it doesn't even mention the Jews or anything about the Jews, which is what we're conditioned to expect from a World War II novel. And the reason she didn't was that she was probably afraid. And she was already in trouble, and then ... all of the correspondence following it, all of the correspondence, you know, she gradually comes to realize, you know, the depth of the problem she's facing. But that was exciting.

And another cool thing that they do at this library is that there's a table just full of clips with some sample books. So if you do run out of ideas for your book club, which you never do, but if you do, they're there. And when I was taking Suite Francaise out, I went to the library and -- because I couldn't find it in the stacks, and she found it for me. It was on the Book Club table, and she said, "But there's also a guide that you really should have, but it's not here now. I'm going to put you on the waiting list."
So she volunteered information that's going to make the discussion much richer when I finally get the guide. So the level of helpfulness in this library is wonderful. People just go out of their way. They want to know what you read, and then they'll suggest, "Oh, you might want also want to read this other author, or if you read this poetry, you might like this or this ..."

BK: You had mentioned that there was a part of your life you were working a lot on your son's education, advocating for him within the school system. Was the library a part of that?

KATHERINE: Yes, it was. It was. It could have been a better, bigger part. You know, this was at the time when the old library was there, so I couldn't find everything I needed. But I did -- I was able -- first of all, his first diagnosis was with ADHD, and so I got everything I could out of the library on that. And so then I could go to the doctor or anyone with very important questions.

Then later on they thought that he had Asperger's syndrome, so then, you know, I just of course dove into that and got every book I could find through the library. I asked them to special order certain books on Asperger's. I also needed to know how to do an IEP, which is -- that's an individualized education program for kids in special ed.

And at the time, if a child was diagnosed with autism they wouldn't do anything because the state was then, "Well, if the child is autistic, there's nothing that can be done to improve it and nothing that can be done at all."
So the doctor generously kept the ADHD diagnosis so we could get help. And -- but then I had to become an expert on education plans, to the point where I then became a counselor to other parents and worked at the Literacy Center and some of these -- it was hard enough for me. I had to fight the school system to the point that I was nearly in tears to get just a small amount of help for him. And so some of these other parents who were facing this are bilingual -- or, you know, bilingual is a stretch. They would [?] speak English, and not understanding our country that well, much less how the school system works.

And, you know, I went in there, and I fought hard, and they hated me. Just the whole -- I'd say by the time he got into high school, you know, a large percentage of the high school faculty detested me. But there was another percentage that fought for Zack so hard: his physics teacher, his chemistry teacher. Anyone who had him in science or math realized what a mind he had, but they couldn't tell that unless you put him in a quiet room by himself to take his tests. Otherwise every possible distraction would get in his way, and he'd just leave the paper blank and turn it in. So here was a kid who had F's, you know, and graduated with a scholarship. So, you know. [Laughs] But a lot of that, the resources here that I wish had been here are not here even now ... A lot of what I had to find, I had to find on the internet, and so that's something probably libraries are looking at ways they can help parents. There are so many parents who have kids with special needs and they have no idea how to do that. So if there were groups formed at the library for parents helping parents --and ways to do the IEP, you know, ways to ... ways to stay sane, you know, ways to handle the problems at home, how to work on homework
with your child, how to keep your sense of humor, you know, all of those things would help a lot. And it wasn't offered then, and I don't know that it is now. Maybe. Maybe I'm wrong, but I suspect no.

The Literacy Center had really tried to do it, and that didn't work very well, either, because part of the problem is that a lot of the kids who have the needs, who have disabilities, have parents who also have disabilities. So you set up an appointment with the parent, and the parent doesn't show up. So that's part of it. But if there were resources here, that would be great.

BK: Okay. Switching gears a bit, can you think of books that really made a difference in your life?

KATHERINE: Okay. Well, just near recent past, starting my consulting practice, reading Driving and Chaos [?] and several other books that helped me see. One of them was called something of the Buffalo, Power of the Buffalo or something, Flight of the Buffalo. And reading those, you know, even though I had been exposed to so many seminars at AT&T and other places, reading those books made me realize that you could conceive a whole workplace in a whole other way than I had even seen it. It was possible to manage people in a whole other way, to motivate people in a whole other way, that there didn't have to be a boss-subordinate relationship.

And so that led me into a 10-year business practice of successfully bringing factory by factory. It's hard to go in at the corporate level because they want to keep doing what they're doing, but you could find a plant manager who'd be willing to try something. And so I was able
to do a lot of experimental work. And the genesis of it all was at the library. So that was a change in my thinking professionally.

I think reading certain plays when I was in college -- you know, Franny and Zoey, of course, changes everybody. But also Saul Bellow changed me a lot, and Waiting for Godot. Who was the author of that one, Waiting for Godot? ... But those playwrights. You know, there was a whole group of playwrights. But that whole group of playwrights, and I can get that for you if you want. But being introduced to that way of writing, and seeing that you can really kind of take it in a whole different direction. You don't have to have a beginning, a middle, and a happy end, that allowed me to start doing some things as a playwright that were quite original and interesting ...Milwaukee riots when I was only 21, so --

And so that began just at the library, you know, just fooling around at the Chicago Public Library from one book to the next to the next to the next. "Oh, who's this?" [Laughs]

I was writing and producing documentary videos, and I did film. And I did some even semi-fictional work for corporations, you know, for employee involvement programs, but some really creative things. So I was writing scripts. And I was a speech writer. For three years I was a speech writer. I told somebody, you know, "I used to write for a lot of characters. Now I just write for one." [Laughs] So, you know, writing for the spoken -- or writing for a spoken medium, I guess, has been part of my life, but it was dormant. I didn't really -- I didn't do anything from the time I was 22 until I quit working as far as play writing itself. So from 22 until maybe my mid-forties, maybe 45 or so I started picking it up again.
It was depressing to see that I wasn't as good as I thought I was, or as I had remembered being. It was harder, and I was in a class with all young people, you know, so I was an older woman in a class with 21- and 22-year-olds. But by the end, I think I was getting back up to speed again. I was beginning to think like a playwright again, where most of what I was doing was so influenced by the corporate work I'd done that it was, you know, coming out and fast and furiously, but not good.

BK: Mm-hm.

KATHERINE: And now I seem to go into a deeper realm, maybe.

BK: Mm-hm. The last time you were here ... the other day you were here and part of your visit was spending time with me.

KATHERINE: Mm-hm.

BK: So I guess that wasn't a typical type of library visit. But maybe think of the time before that. Can you just walk me through?.

KATHERINE: Mm, okay. Well, typically I come in with my husband -- well, not typically. I'm here about three or four times a week. And if I come in with my husband, he and I will first go to the book sale and see what new books we might want to buy for a dollar. So we kind of look through those and might spend a half hour doing that.

And then we go our separate ways. He will head toward the CDs and then run over and get me and tell me, "Have you ever heard this? Have you ever heard that?" [Laughter] And then
he'll look at the movies, and say, "Do you remember seeing this one? Do you remember -- Well, here, we've seen this director before. Let's just take it." So then he's picked those out.

And then I head up toward the fiction. Sometimes I'm looking for a book for the book club or one that I know about, or an author I want to find. Other times I might find a -- I might want to just wander around alphabetically and just see who's there. Sometimes it's just fun and relaxing to just do that.

The last time I was here before your visit, I had two strange encounters that day, very interesting. One of them, a woman in Middle Eastern dress came up to me and asked me if I would do a synopsis for her? What's the academic word for it, for a synopsis? It begins with a C. I can't think of it.

BK: Hmm.

KATHERINE: Anyway, she asked if I would do that for her. I said, "Well, you know, I don't work here." "I know." And I said, "So is this for a class?" She said, "Yes, it's for a class." [Laughs] And I said, "Do you need help with it because of your English?" "Yes!" "But it's your homework, right?" "Yes." I said, "Well, I'm working on something right now, so I don't think I can help you." But it was just strange. It was just strange. And then about 15 minutes later, somebody else came over to me, a kid who looked like a college student, and he had just received an e-mail. He's printed it off, and he said, "What does 'recipient' mean?" [Laughter] So I must look like I work here, you know? I think I've just been here too much.
But anyway, so I'm in the stacks typically, and that kind of thing can happen. I might go over to the computer and look up certain authors or certain books, or I might be led to look up a certain subject and find something else. I might check my e-mail while I'm there.

And then if I still have time, I go down to the periodicals. We don't subscribe to any magazines. It's easier to just not get them and have to recycle them later, so we just go to the library and we can check the ones we want to. So I might spend an hour or two doing that, going through those.

And on a day I'm there by myself, I might have my writing with me because I do do that. And I might just curl up in a corner and do some writing. It helps me sometimes to just write ... before I put something down, and it's such a quiet, relaxing place. The phone isn't going to ring and who's going to bother me [?]. So that's ...

And also, I also often will meet somebody at the littler coffee shop outside ... So, you know, and other times if I'm walking out I'll very often see another writer there, and we'll sit down and we'll talk. And the other writers send me on a lot of wild goose chases, too. You know, the writers in my writing group, they're into -- the other three all happen to have an anthropology background, so that makes it very interesting. But then they'll say, "Have you thought about this? Or have you thought about that? Or have you thought of the derivation of this word?" Well, I think you need a Greek word there instead of what you now have." So then I've got to go and find a Greek word. [Laughs] So that's my life.
I'm trying to think of what other books I influenced me as a child. The Wizard of Oz Very much so. I wanted to be Dorothy. I could see that she was somebody who could lead, and I wanted to be somebody who would lead. So that influenced me, as well as Huckleberry Finn and Tom Sawyer. I wanted to be Tom Sawyer. And so I came pretty close. I used to like to go to the woods and see like snakes and frogs and ... But I liked reading what he did, because I could imagine myself doing all those things.

[paragraph deleted]

KATHERINE: From 1983 to maybe '88 or '89, we lived in Oak Park. And the Oak Park Public Library at the time I thought was the best library I'd ever seen. Now this one I think is better. But it made everything accessible, and it was right near the train station, so when I got home from work, I could stop there and pick up whatever I needed. Usually I'd pick up my son up from daycare, and the two of us would go there. I'd find the play I needed, but we'd also find things for him. And it was just -- it was extremely accessible, user-friendly. And it had a lot of the same activities and feel that this one does, and big huge plants were growing everywhere. But not that library is going to just ... and appears dated compared to this.
First Interview: Life Story

BRIAN KENNEY (BK): Okay. I would like you to tell me your life story, all the events and experiences which were important to you. Start wherever you like. Please take the time you need. I’ll listen first, I won’t interrupt, I’ll just take some notes for afterwards.

DORIS: I thought about bringing all the things I've written down. I thought, no, that would confuse me. I was born on December 18th, 1937, in Okmulgee, Oklahoma. When was 3, the family moved to Tulsa, and I stayed there through college, and then did a bunch of running around. In college I majored in theater, and swore I would never be a teacher. So I went on my way, I worked in ad agencies and a bunch of things. And by ’63, I got myself to New York.

And in New York, I really -- I got there in the middle of a newspaper strike, so the only choice to get a job to keep going was to go to a head hunter. Well, I went to Kelly Girls because I'd worked for them before. And I got a job in an ad agency, the biggest one in New York. It was [deleted]. Don't ask me anymore what it stands for. I had a good time. I made enough money. I lived in the Lower East Side, which is not the East Village, but at the time it was not quite that posh. In fact, there was an abandoned building next door that I think was a bathhouse, but I'm not sure.

I worked in advertising most of the time I was in New York, but in the meantime I got to work in an actors -- not the Actors Studio, which I would have loved. I worked with a director who was making -- getting ready to make a name for himself, and he had a group of actors. And I had never had any work on improvisation. It hadn't quite made it out to Oklahoma. Even though I had terrific professors, they were more technically oriented.
And it just blew my mind. I just thought that was the neatest stuff. And we weren't doing like the improvisation that you see, like Saturday Night Live and those things. We were actually doing characters and working out plots and trying to get our minds to think. And I really appreciated that later.

[paragraph deleted]

So off I went to Kansas, and lasted three months there. He was an alcoholic, and I hadn't realized how that would affect when I had a kid. So I went back to Tulsa and was faced with trying to earn a living again, and discovered that even though I had worked for the biggest ad agency in the country and knew all of the radio and television markets, there was no job for me that would pay enough to live away from my parents' house.

And the woman in Kelly Girls, which is where I turned again, said, "Oh, my husband teaches vocal music at Central, and he would just love to have somebody like you. Can you -- why don't you go into teaching?" And I said, "Well, I never got my certificate." So we talked and realized that I was only like one semester of classes -- actually just one class and student teaching away from doing it. So my folks said, "Stay here and do it."

And I was at the university and did a bunch of plays because that was my thing. I was never a lead role in anything, but I was a good character actress. And I did my student teaching that summer, and I got my first job in a junior high school.

And within the year, I found out I really loved it, and I loved the kids. Don't give me elementary kids. I'm not good with them. But high school and junior high was really wonderful.
And I stayed there for four years. And that school fed into Central High School, so within four years I was at Central High School, working with this woman's husband and helping direct musicals, and it was just -- it was marvelous. And I stayed there from 1970 to 1980.

The Tulsa Public Schools were integrated in 1968, so I was part of that beginning, and I had taken some in-service courses and things with that and had made friends with some of the African-American teachers who were teaching in segregated schools, also. And I loved doing it. I was crazy about my students. I got absolutely in so much trouble because I was treating them all as colorblind, and there were other teachers that just -- you know, "Why did you cast that person in that role?" And they were very prejudiced. But I directed three plays, a musical -- well, I was the co-director on the musical -- and then we did this great big talent show that had been going on for 50 years, which was the big thing and which produced an awful lot of people that went on.

But I did that show. We had about 200 kids that participated in it. All the music was live. Most of the music was arranged by students. And just gave kids a wonderful break. I loved doing it.

And I finally in -- okay, we started in '70. In '76, the town had decided they didn't want a downtown high school because this is a period of riots. We had to have -- I mean, there weren't any riots in the school, but kids got into trouble when they got out of the school, and people were getting into the school to stir it up.
And so first they got some guards on the doors. And I had a student who was a fire-eater, and he brought his stuff to do a demonstration speech. And he was caught on the way in. I mean, this guy was a straight A student, musician, the whole works. And so they dragged him down to the office and the principal called me down. And I said, "Yeah, he told me he was going to do this." You know, you don't think about those things then. And so he okayed it. He kept the stuff in his office.

And he came down and watched him do his fire-eating act, which he then took to the variety show, and he also started working with a group called the Spotlight Club. And they did melodrama as the first part of it, and then they had talent and everything at the end. And he did fire-eating acts all the way through. It was funny because when he first started, he didn't know that he had to talk, you know. Here it is, and he did it. And I worked with him on that. He was one of my prize students. I loved him.

And I did lots of shows. I started out with Up the Down Staircase, which was fairly new then. And it was pretty evenly divided between black and white. And in fact when we rehearsed in the evenings, everybody made sure that nobody went into the hallways if they didn't have somebody with them. And the kids made a big laugh at it: Well, if a white goes down, they've got to have a black and vice versa, you know, just making fun of it. And being downtown, we also in the evening parked in regular parking lots, and they always made sure that nobody wandered to their car by themselves. Which now it doesn't sound so strange, but in the early '70s it was really weird.
I did so many shows. I've been writing about a lot of them, but I'll probably skip -- remembering them. I did Teahouse of the August Moon, The Matchmaker, Auntie Mame, oh gosh. That's why I should have brought my list. But a lot of really good shows, class. The only time I didn't like what I did was when I let the kids pick the show, and they picked -- they wanted to do a mystery. Well, I didn't know any mysteries that were for high school. And I realized that if you're going to spend six weeks preparing a play, you work just as hard for a good play as you work for a bad play, so why bother with bad plays. And I learned that lesson pretty well. And I don't know, the last show I did at that school wasn't a good show, wasn't a good script.

But in '76, the town decided to move the school out to the hinterlands, basically, which was on the far west end of Tulsa. And Central had been a localized, centralized school so that people from all different economic levels, all ethnic areas, everything was funneled into that school. The oldest and the richest part of town was in it, and what they called the "river rats", which were the kids that I taught at the junior high, were in it.

And then of course we had drawn -- bused in a lot of black students, and very few of them lived in that area, although a lot of families moved into the area after that because that gave them the opportunity. So they built this brand new building, went to the trouble of talking to all the teachers, and "What do you want?" and of course the people who designed it didn't listen to any of us.
It was a nice looking building. It was air-conditioned, which meant I was in a large classroom with no windows, although three sides of my classroom were on open air, but we wanted the air-conditioning to work efficiently. But when the air-conditioning went out, it was a big problem.

The character of the school changed. I did some plays, but -- and the theater was pretty nice. But I just kind of lost interest. I lost my enthusiasm. And so by the class of 1980 when they graduated, I left. And I went back into advertising. Whoopee! I found out that after all those years of teaching, working in an office and pushing a copy machine button was not exactly my idea.

And then I worked for an artist who had a national business, and she went around the world teaching and all that kind of thing, and we had a parting of the ways. And then I worked for a friend of mine, who was also an artist and did the same kind of thing and helped him back when doing videotapes of a class, and selling them was really new. Nobody thought of doing that. And I kind of worked as a secretary and typed up all of his lessons and stuff.

But I got rather tired of that, and I started teaching at the junior college as part-time, and then I got an opportunity to move to Arkansas. I had fallen in love with Eureka Springs. And of course my son all this time was growing up, but I won't even talk because we had a lot of problems. He had a lot of problems. But when I came to Arkansas, I was by myself, I put him in a technical school, where he wanted to go. He was, you know, out of high school. Well, he was out: He didn't graduate. But I was free. I could move.
And I loved Eureka Springs. I lived there. I taught in Berryville, which is a town of about 1600 to the east of Eureka. And then I wanted to try the little small town -- I mean, little. And I started working at Kingston, which is nestled in some hills. It's a darling little village. And we had 300 students from kindergarten to senior.

And I found out that you teach a different subject, a different class, a different book every single hour. I didn't count on that. And I was all of a sudden -- well, at the other school, too, I was doing yearbooks, too, which I found very nice, but it still wasn't my field. And so I did two years in Berryville, three years in Kingston, and then I went to another town, Huntsville, which is closer to Fayetteville. And I taught there for six years.

And during that time that I was at Huntsville, my son died, my father died, and my mother had had a heart attack. So I just quit the whole thing and went back to Tulsa and took care of her. And then after she died in 2000, I was -- I was on Social Security, but I had a teacher's pension, and I had the opportunity to not do anything.

And so then I wanted to live in Fayetteville. I had had a home in Huntsville, but there was no way in the world I wanted to spend the rest of my years there. So I sold it and moved here to Fayetteville and spent about four years in depression, sitting on my recliner watching television.

And the only thing that brought me out of my situation emotionally was getting into quilting because I had envisioned retirement to be a time to go back to the theater, to work in community theater and all those things. However, I had discovered in the meantime I couldn't
memorize anymore. There was no way. I was in a show and had to quit it. I found out I
couldn't drive at night. I was very fearful of driving at night, and the community theater was in
Rogers, which is a good little drive to do at night. And so I didn't have my outlet. But quilting
gave it to me because I'd always sewed and done artistic things.

And then eventually a friend -- another friend, a very good friend, died, and I was very
upset so I had to find someplace to go find solace. And I had always been a spiritual seeker in
one way, whatever direction. And I walked into the Unitarian Church just simply because I had
been to events there. And I found a home, a church home that I'd never had before. I swear I
would never even say the word "church".

And they are unique. They welcome everybody of every belief, every everything,
including atheists. And before long I was Chairman of the Sunday Services Committee. I was
back directing again because Unitarian ministers take a lot of time off and they go around to
other places and do things, and they have big meetings and everything. And of course I've never
been in on any of that, so other churches probably do that, too.

But this church began as -- well, they even called it a fellowship rather than church. It
began as a bunch of college teachers who wanted something for their children, but they didn't
want them indoctrinated into the standard Christianity. And so they started little just discussion
groups. And then it grew from there, and they affiliated with Unitarian.
And they have a beautiful building. I can't remember who designed it, but it is really nice. It's small. We have about 180 people who are members. And that makes it possible to know everybody, and I really like that. So that's where I am now.

In the meantime -- I've got to put this one in -- I hurt my arm and I couldn't sew, and therefore I had been thinking about memoir. And I had always been writing "the book" and I had about four unfinished books that I dragged around with me. But I never had the stamina to complete one. And this woman I found out was teaching memoir, and she was teaching writing, you know, 15 minutes or just take one little tiny memory that you have and write it down. And I now have a book about two inches thick of typed -- or, not typed -- printed material. In the meantime, I managed to get the motivation to write a book, which hasn't even been edited, so that's out because I got this other idea, and this will tie it all up.

In the process of writing my little remembrances, or vignettes, I decided that one of the ways I wanted to do it is go back and relive a lot of the plays that I had directed and experiences that I've had in the theater and times that I was in a show and times I directed. And eventually I kind of put together a pretty good fund of things. And I thought, "What am I going to do with this?"

And then I discovered that a student of mine who'd graduated Central in 1972 had written a book. It was his doctoral. And he was going to school at Duke, and I think one of his teachers was John Hope Franklin, who may have inspired him or may not have. I haven't talked with him yet. But he like lifted the lid on the big secret in Tulsa, and that is that there was one of the worst
race riots in the country right there in Tulsa. And a small -- it wasn't a township separate, but it
was the other side of the tracks.

And the African-Americans had built a complete community -- banks, hotels, lawyers,
newspapers, lots of business. And it was called Greenwood -- is called Greenwood. And at
some point, some young black guy got caught, maybe, in an elevator with a girl -- a white girl
who was running the elevator. And that was like in the morning, and by that evening, they were
planning to lynch the boy. And the newspaper was a big part of that, and my dad worked for that
newspaper later.

But it brought the whites down with -- they had been -- Tulsa was a sundown town,
where, you know, you'd better get yourself out of here before the sun goes down. That was --
there's a whole lot of research and writing about that kind of thing that happened between -- oh,
basically between the end of the Civil War and the end of World War I.

In World War I, they took black soldiers. They taught them how to use a gun, and when
it was over, they let them take the gun home. And so the black community had men who knew
how to use things and took their guns with them down to the City Hall because they were going
to save this young boy.

And there is no proof anywhere as to who fired the first shot, which side, but it ended up
with the white group being much larger, chasing everybody else back across the tracks and
following -- instead of just being happy then, they followed them -- they ended up burning the
entire town of Greenwood, which included I think about 600 buildings, homes and regular
buildings, a church that had just finally gotten built. It was classy. And what people they could find that didn't manage to escape or be killed, they rounded up and put them in what we would call concentration camps. And they were just rounding them all up for their protection. There were truckloads of bodies being carried out of the area, so that most people don't even know what happened to relatives.

What I'm saying this about is that I was teaching the grandchildren and great grandchildren of the people who survived, and even those who died. And nobody talked about it. Nobody knew anything about it. It was totally a big -- it was this big shameful secret. The Tulsa Riot is not even included in most of the books about those kinds of things that were going on in the '20s. Most books, even the History of Civil Rights, has a lot of things, like the little town of Elaine, Arkansas, was very well-publicized and studied. But most of the books had nothing about -- because they didn't know about Tulsa.

The newspaper completely erased anything. When Scott did his research, he found that the pages of the newspaper that caused the riot to happen had been ripped out. They didn't have any record in Oklahoma City, which was the capital. But fortunately The New York Times had picked up on it at the time, and somebody had gotten a copy to them. And they did make it public, but it was all squashed very quickly. But it meant something in the records that Scott could investigate.

He graduated in '72, went to college. And at some place during his working and different things, he had heard a bunch of guys talking about this. So he decided for his doctoral to
investigate this. And he put about two years into it. He quit school and came back to Tulsa and interviewed and interviewed and interviewed. And he produced a very thin volume, which this library I don't think has a copy of. I probably will give them one as soon as I've finished using it.

But he did a very good job. It's not -- it's very much an academic book. But since that time, there have been many academic books, many just nonfiction, a number of fiction books. And I went to a class with a woman who had written one of the fiction books, If We Must Die. It was a young adult book, and it was talking about from the students' and the teachers' point of view in the black Township of Greenwood. Her name is Pat Carr. And she gave me the opportunity of just realizing that I could write about this period of time as something besides memoir.

And I'm still rocking back and forth as to whether it's going to be totally nonfiction or what they call creative nonfiction, where you change the names, you change a lot of it, but it's still based on history. And I think that's what I will do. And I'm also trying to decide whether it's first person or third person voice. And since I've had some of the students -- not even the real students -- taking over and talking to me while I was writing, that's probably what I'll do.

And that's where I am now. I never thought I could get it in that short a time. I haven't rambled as much as I thought I would. [Laughs] My students used to say that they loved having me for a class because they could usually get me off-topic. And the only thing that amazed them was that I could get back on eventually. Can't do that anymore, as everyone does.
I'm 70, and I've gone through a lot of situations of everybody that lives to be 70 has gone through. I love people. I've done a lot of working with people, most of it through the theater. Most of my friends were in theater.

I just recently lost a friend who had been my friend since the first day of college. We had both graduated from different high schools in Tulsa, and we kept touch with each other the whole way through. He was living in New York when I got there, and of course I left and he stayed. And then his goal was to retire at the age of 40. And his parents had died, so he came back to Tulsa and took over their house. And so we got to be in the same town for a long time. And then I moved to Arkansas, but my family is in Tulsa. I have a brother there, so I still went back a lot.

But I just lost him last month, and eventually the number of people you lose define your life. So that's what I'm going through now, why I'm having trouble. He retired at 40. That's when he came back. No, I'm not going to -- I've got them in my purse. I never know when I'm going to need them, but it did affect my voice. He had worked for Eastern Airlines, and when he retired, I think he did some odd jobs of various kinds in offices, and he decided that it was too boring and just went ahead and found great joy in his home and his lawn. He had one of those small cottage homes that were built after World War II, but he loved it, and he kept it up beautifully.
And he was very much a single person who was happy with that situation and didn't want it any other way. We had talked at one point, you know, "Maybe we've known each other that long, we ought to." And we were, "No, we'd hate each other because we're such opposites."

But there was a lot of camaraderie. And he taught me so many things. He was very much into mysticism and astrology and a number of other things, and just was more my mentor than my best friend in the same age. And so it was almost as bad as losing -- well, the only time I got affected more was when I lost my son. And he was there at the memorial and all these kinds of things. And, you know, he's been there for practically everything that happened in my life.

I've written about him, too. I didn't until this happened. It was cancer. And he fought it for six years, and I didn't know. I thought they had gotten it six years ago, and that everything was fine. And he didn't tell me until last fall that the cancer had come back, but I found out later when I was over there helping take care of him that his friends there had gotten him through a lot of other things, that it never really went away.

But I was glad to be there at the end. That made a lot of difference to me, and makes writing my book even more important because it brought to me the sense that you aren't guaranteed any years, but when you get up to 70, it's even less likely. So I've been working on that. And I go -- the same woman that I took the first class with, she still has a group that we've been together for a while and we write and talk and read each other, the things we've written. And I study with a number of other people here in town, just to get different viewpoints.
I don't know how to say what -- well, nobody knows what's going to happen, but I envision that if I can get this book written and get it sold that it will tell a story that nobody else can tell because I saw the experience in Central from different eyes.

And I've contacted a number of my students that I had then. I got on Classmates for the Class of '72, and everybody's going "What?" But some of my favorite students got in touch with me, and that was -- One woman called me from Detroit, Michigan, and she had been one of the first black students that I had really made friends with. It was the first year I was at Central. And it was such a big surprise, and she had found something that said that I was in Arkansas, and she got busy and went through all the books and Googled or whatever, and found out where I was and called me.

And she went into teaching. She teaches mentally challenged -- I don't know what the term is now. They change it constantly. But she's working with problem children in Detroit. She has been teaching ever since she got out of college, and she credited me with the fact that she went into teaching. And she started telling me all these things I had done for her. I didn't remember any of them, but I had already written about her, so obviously she had made an impression on me. And so many of those students are -- that's the reason I had to write about it because it was so important to me. And I'm hoping that we get to have a sort of reunion this summer, but I haven't been able to contact as many as I had hoped.

But in the meantime, I'm just happy writing. But I could visualize being on Oprah. [Laughs] And if I ever get it written, it's one that she would probably want. Of course by the
time I get it done, she may not be on television anymore because I've got a couple of friends, I said, "Look, if I pop before this thing gets finished, make sure it gets someplace like the archives here at the library here or preferably the library in Tulsa." But it's a fascinating thing just to do the writing. Some days I'm so busy doing errands with people, and some days I'm slipping back into the depression thing, which has been recent. I don't know how to say how much time because there isn't -- sometimes I get up in the middle of the night and write and just -- it's spontaneous.

The one that I wrote the year before was somewhat based on people I knew, but it was totally automatic writing. And that, I look at it as being -- because I didn't know. This was a mystery, and I had no idea how it was going to come out, and I had to write to find out what happened next.

This one has an element of that in it. I talked about the students taking over. I had students -- I will show them in this writing and I'll have a student in mind, but they take over in first person, and all you-know-what breaks loose. And I am a little bit hesitant to put thoughts in the minds of these students when I don't know what was going on in their minds.

I don't know how many of them personally, especially the African-American students, how much they knew. From what I gather from the writings that I have read, most of that community kept it a secret, too. This young woman who called me from Detroit said she didn't know anything about it until Scott printed his book. And then he did a program on the History
Channel, and that -- he published in '81, something like that. I can't really remember. But he did this History Channel thing in the late '80s and people heard about it.

But over here in Arkansas, I hadn't heard. I didn't really find out about it until about four or five years ago, and it didn't really soak in as to what meaning it had to me until I realized -- I started doing the math and counting the years, and I'm going, "I had their grandkids and great grandkids." And I've contacted some of them, and as a matter of fact there is a Unitarian Church in Tulsa that is biracial. The building has been the center for practically all of the activist meetings because they have had -- they want reparations. They're not going to get them, but at least they have a park and a street named from John Hope Franklin. And his father had been a lawyer in Tulsa at that time that it hit. And I think he was like 6 years old or something.

There are so many things. On several trips to Tulsa I have visited the library branch -- libraries again -- that houses most of the African-American memories and books and research material and all that. But this church I have gone to has been a meeting place. For just about every activity of any sort, you'd find it listed on various committees and they met, and this was the address.

And I have finally had a chance to go and visit. I had heard the minster speak at another thing, and I was just -- I was blown over by him. It was just so great. And any time I get to Tulsa, I will be attending their church because they were very gracious to me, they were wonderful. Surprisingly there was nobody in there that I had a connection to, but I'm sure that they probably found somebody somewhere.
The woman who directed the Black Community Theater right after I graduated --

[Laughs] I graduated -- after I quit at Central is still doing it. It's one of the top amateur theaters in the country, I think. Theater North is what it's called. And I did a version of The Glass Menagerie with them, and we took it to State. We didn't win anything, but they were wonderful. And some of the actors were former students, and some of them were -- I was introduced another way.

And the woman who was in charge of the theater was the mother of one of my students. And I had a wonderful time with them. Then I did a variety show for them. Then I moved to Arkansas and lost track. And so I'm in the process of reestablishing that because her theater is still going, and it's still producing. And the secretary at the Unitarian Church there has won a national best actress award for a one-woman show, and she's worked with Theater North, too.

And it's just -- even though I didn't have anything to do with it, I take great pride in knowing that. And to have made a connection like that when I just went to the church during the daytime to see if it was open and to talk to them, and there she was. And she was talking -- she on the phone and she was talking about theater and Theater North. And so I said, "What do you know about Theater North?" She says, "What do you want to know?" So it was -- when things come together, you know you're on the right track, at least that's what I think.

What can I say that I didn't say? I don't want to get into individuals any more than I have. I would just say that everybody in my life has had meaning, and I've known a lot of different people.
And then they would hear all these stories about -- you know, because I stood up for civil rights. I stood up for everything in that school. And it was very difficult.

One of the pivotal moments was my first year. No, I don't -- yes, it was. It was Clinton's first inauguration when Maya Angelou did the poem. And one of my -- I had all the kids, we had just gotten television sets in the classroom, and we were all sitting there watching the -- And when Maya Angelou got the microphone, one of my students stood up, pantomimed pulling the trigger of a gun and shooting her. And when I complained and sent him to the office, nothing was done. Of course the students in Huntsville and Kingston and Berryville, the schools were all white. And I was told very quickly that if I saw anyone who appeared to have some African-American blood, that I wasn't to say anything, they were probably Indian, which is denying the whole fact that the Indians also had slaves when they came on the Trail of Tears. And I had asked a close friend, who still teaches at Huntsville, and I said, "You know, what gives? They've never had any black families in this county?" And she says, "Well, they had one, but they burned them out."

And the Ku Klux Klan is active. The center for the Ku Klux Klan is Harrison, Arkansas. And the power that they have is great, but it's also -- they hate everybody. I mean, I'm doing the "they" thing, which I don't like to. But I probably narrowly escaped being fired because they had probably gotten enough information on me from various ways that they could find things that I did wrong. And teachers had been fired for reasons that are totally unconnected. So they always
find something, I did something. A parent reported that I had cussed him out. And fortunately he
had somebody else in the car, the other person denied it. And the principal when I complained,
he says, "This is insubordination." Well, that principal is now superintendent. No, he isn't.
They relieved him of his job just a couple of weeks ago, but not for anything like that. I think it
had to do with money. But I found a totally different culture from what I had been used to. And
I don't think it's true of like Fayetteville and Springdale and Rogers. I know there are difficulties,
edpecially I have a couple of friends, two women who have a daughter, and she went through all
sorts of problems at Fayetteville High School, and they eventually ended up home schooling her.
So there are still problems. There is a young man -- one of the women who is very active in
PFLAG had her son -- I don't -- I think he was beaten. I don't think anything else happened to
him, but there's been a lot of that, even here in Fayetteville, which is reasonably cultured.
Fayetteville -- I mean, Springdale is a lot less. Rogers I don't know that much about. But this
whole corridor of northwest Arkansas is fighting the eastern counties, who are very very much
white.

When I was in Eureka Springs and they decided to have Martin Luther King Day be an
official holiday, the bank didn't close. So a number of hippie friends and others got out and
protested and marched. And the owner of the bank said, "Why should we? We don't have any
blacks here," totally ignoring the people that were working in the kitchens, working in, you
know, all the hotels and everything. But I guess he thought they didn't exist.
And that's typical, even for a tourist town like Eureka. He thought, I guess, that all of the black people who showed up there were tourists.

And so even a town that is very much -- it's two towns. You have the one that is all connected with the Passion Play, which is one of the major Passion Plays in the country. And then you have this other group who are artists and hippies and -- well, we don't have hippies now, but you do, and especially in this part of the country, and people who had not quit their beliefs and who hadn't left them.

One of the things that the school in Huntsville called me was a witch. And they were right. [Laughs] And that I dealt in all of those things that have to do with -- that they weren't Christian. And they were right. From the time I interviewed at Berryville, I was asked what church I went to. And the principal in Berryville those first two years would see me I the hall, and he'd say, "When are you going to come to our church? It's not very far from where you live." Of course by that time I'd moved to Eureka, so I didn't stay in Berryville living there very long.

And it's assumed that you have to be Christian, and not just Christian, which I grew up and still have great respect for, you had to be their form of Christianity, and it's the idea that everybody has to believe the same way. And that's why I was totally -- and this is getting very specific -- I was totally horrified when Huckabee did as well as he did in the polls and in the primaries because his goal when he was governor of the state was to make the whole state a theocracy. And to a great extent, this state had been Democrat for years, and unfortunately went
Republican early on, and then Huckabee got in. All of that happened after Clinton was governor, and it's just amazing to me that it could have gone that direction.

I have family history in this state. I haven't proven it, but on my father's side, his two grandparents, grandfathers, fought in the Civil War, one for the South and one for the North. And one of the major battlegrounds was Pea Ridge, which is just north of here. And supposedly they were each in that battle. I've also -- the family story is that the paternal grandfather was in Fort Smith and was a U.S. Marshal for [deleted], who was called "the hanging Judge Parker". He was in charge of not only Arkansas, but all of Indian Territory, which became Oklahoma.

But since the Marshal Museum has been situated in Fort Smith, I decided to check it out. And there was nobody by that name anywhere. There was a city clerk in one of the little towns near Fort Smith, but that's all. And so, you know, like most families, you find out that the family stories are not necessarily true.

[paragraph deleted]

I had a young man come to speak when was at the junior high. He was a radio deejay. He was very popular, and I wanted kids to see that there are ways that they could earn a living in this field.

BK: Mm-hm.

DORIS: And the principal heard about him and marched up, looked in the window, saw the hair -- it was a Beatles style -- and called me out into the hall and said, "You have to send him home." And I said, "I won't." I said, "He's already in there. You're going to emphasize that
whole thing if you do that." "Well, don't you ever invite anybody else here, and this is the only class he's going to." And, you know, hatred, hypocrisy are just rampant everywhere. You can find examples everywhere. But I think I was more sensitive to them than most.

[paragraph deleted]

In the meantime, there were a lot of freedoms because that was in '73 when he was there. So a lot of things changed between '73 and '80, and yet they didn't. I get over here to Arkansas, and I'm back in the '70s as far as attitudes. This is a college town, so it's somewhat of a separation from the rest. But the further south you go in Arkansas, the further the -- when you get to a larger African-American population, which southeast Arkansas is in the Delta, you find fewer whites, and you find whites who are very very very bigoted. Northern Arkansas is basically white, and southern Arkansas is basically black.

Now, I'm making a vast assumption, and you can't make assumptions. There are always separations. But any time people hate other people, it doesn't matter what they're doing it for. It causes pain. It causes discrimination. And it just causes the students to be less able to deal with their world. And I find it absolutely marvelous that we have two candidates for president, and one is a woman and one of them is black. And so either way -- and of course the Republican is old. [Laughs] So I'm very careful in worrying about what he's going to choose or who he's going to choose for his running mate because if for some reason he chooses Huckabee, oh gosh! Because that person could end up president very easily. But there is also the problem of
assassination if either Hillary or Barack get the nomination or become president. I don't think they would do it --

I was very much aware of John F. Kennedy, and I was still in New York. And the day that he was shot I had just been to the doctor, or I guess I'd been to the doctor the day before and found out I was pregnant. So I was walking around in a daze, and had taken the day off from work and didn't even know what was going on. And I really -- you know, those couple of days really meant too much to me in '63.

And one of the things that I could offer these students that I taught was remembering the day Kennedy -- or JFK was shot, the day Bob Kennedy was shot, the day that Martin Luther King was shot, and all of these other events that are like history to them. And I remember sitting in my classrooms discussing Roots when they ran it the first time and talking about it. I had mixed classes. That was in Tulsa. And it was fascinating to see how much the kids tried to make it work.

I can remember in the one -- probably the second or the third year that I was teaching at Central. Of course in theater, you wear makeup. And I had said -- you know, told them the reason you had makeup on stage is because of the bright lights and you have to have -- the guys have to have some color added and, you know, emphasize the eyebrows if they aren't dark and all these things. And then I would usually say just lining your eyes is enough to a black student. And -- not the girls because they all wanted the other stuff, but the guys always resisted.
And one time we got into this discussion of just what color is your skin based on what you needed to do in the way of makeup for the stage. And what was really enlightening to them -- we had a young man who was an exchange student from the Philippines. And they said, "Well, what about Robert? Does he have to wear makeup?" I said, "Well, it's kind of half and half." I said, "We're going to wait and see. At dress rehearsal, I'll see whether we can see his face or not."

And they were going, "But he's not black." I said, "There are a lot of people who are dark that don't have to wear makeup on stage." And that kind of gave them a different outlook. I said, "After all, do you know anybody that has white skin?" And very few people who -- of course we don't even use the term "black" anymore, basically, but we do. And there are very few who could even be classified as black or red or yellow or any of the other colors they come up with to define race. And they still do that.

So I guess that has been one of the themes of my life, even though I didn't realize it until I started writing and realizing also times that I pampered [sic] to whatever society was wanting me to do when I was teaching. And you do that. I had asked for Central High School to teach at when the woman who was there was -- she was being moved up to be Chairman of the Fine Arts for all of Tulsa. And I had been in all of the preparatory classes and learning how to make this work. And when she was leaving, the principal asked her, "Well, do you know anybody to replace you?" And she's, "Yeah, I do. And she's done all the preparation for it."
And he only was there for two more years, and then a man who had been my high school English teacher became principal there. But as a drama teacher, as somebody who is out of the general mix, I always gave problems to principals because I remember that the one that had been my high school teacher had to deal with the time that I was doing Auntie Mame, and the girl playing Mame was one of the very sweet girls, quiet in the classroom, nobody knew. And teachers would come up and say, "How did you get her to do that?"

But she has a line coming down the stairs at the very beginning of the show, and she says, "Life is a banquet, and most poor sons of bitches are starving to death." And the night before the show, he had a teacher who had listened in on a rehearsal, and she had complained. And he said, "You've got to get her to change that. She can't say it."

In the same play, my son was playing one of the little kids and had a line, "My sister is a B-I-T-C-H," and he had to say -- the same thing they did in the movie: "It begins with B and it ends with H," and you could get away with that. But I had given him a different word entirely, and when he -- he had learned the lines at home, and he came up to do it, and he gave the line as I had taught him to. And the students all went, "Oh, Miss [deleted] that's not the line." As soon as he found out what the word was, there was no way in the world of changing him.

He was in a lot of our shows, and a lot of my babysitters were my students at various times, usually at school. And they never complained. They liked it. He was -- they were the only ones who had enough energy to hold onto him. But he was in a lot of the shows. He played in The Music Man, and when they were assigning the instruments for the boys in the band, they
all decided that [deleted] should get the tuba, because [deleted] took after me, and he was
definitely tubby. So [deleted] was Tubby the Tuba.

And he just -- you know, whenever I needed a character that was young, I always tried to
get little brothers and sisters. And when we were assigning the role in Mame, I said, "Well, I
don't know who we're going to get," because we didn't seem to have anybody. And they all
looked at me and said, "Well, you know who should play the role." And they said [deleted]
should because the kid was a firecracker. [Laughs]

Second Interview: Library Story

BK: All right. So today we're talking about public libraries, and by the public library I
mean any of the services you might receive through the library as well as all of the content in the
library—the books, CDs, videos, and more—that you might use in the building or at home, in
your car, at work, or anywhere. I also mean any interactions you might have with people at the
library—whether library staff members, people you may meet, or friends you might run into—as
well as experiences attending classes or programs. Finally, I also mean to include any
experiences you might have online through the library, or by accessing the library from your
home or work computer. Okay?

DORIS: Oh, okay.

BK: Please tell me your experiences using the public library throughout your life, and
reflect on those experiences. Start wherever you like. Please take the time you need. I’ll listen
first, I won’t interrupt, and I’ll just take some notes for afterwards.

DORIS: Okay. I've been giving it some thought. I'm not sure that I actually remember
everything, but it may come -- I may grasp them as I talk about something else. As I said to you
yesterday, I remember going to the old library in Tulsa. There was one branch out by my house that I, when I got old enough to take a bus into town, I went to this old brick library. It was ... It was downtown. And it was daunting to me because I was pretty young, and even up into high school and college, I would go down there sometimes. And to get into the stacks, you had to go up these rickety little steep stairs to get to about -- I think it had three floors above it.

But it was fascinating to me because it was a totally different world. I don't know that I checked out that many things. You could find me sitting in the aisles quite a bit. But I really -- I just have fond memories of it. I don't know that -- I can remember going to the desk and asking for such and such because I learned the card catalogue and the Dewey Decimal System and all that then, although I didn't know what each number meant, I knew where to go to find it.

I know this isn't public, but I used the libraries in the school I was in and mostly did any research at the public library when I was in high school. But I was pretty busy because I was rehearsing shows at night and all this kind of stuff.

When I got to college, University of Tulsa, I became very familiar with McFarlin Library, which has now tremendous collections. And primarily I was very familiar with the 800s because it was all the literature and drama and things like that. I loved that particular library because they had big tables in this room with these great big windows, and it was very glamorous almost. Plus the fact I didn't have any place at home to study, and I was working, so I just stopped in the library for an hour or so in between things.
I probably checked out a lot during that time, and I had to do a bunch of research papers. That was the only place I could research anything. I think I may have gone down to the Tulsa library sometimes if I couldn't find it on campus.

For a couple of years after graduating from college, I don't guess I used the library that much. I moved to Oklahoma City and worked and had fun and did all that kind of thing you do in your early twenties. But when I ended up in New York City, I thought, "Oh, the first thing I want to do is go see the library," because I had seen pictures and heard so much about this magnificent library.

I was lost, but -- and I didn't have that much time to get very familiar with it, but whenever I had the opportunity I would stop by. Because I always walked everywhere, and, you know, if I had enough time, I walked. I didn't take public transportation. And that made it possible for me to stop in. I don't know that I ever went to any branches in New York. I lived on Manhattan for about six months and then moved out to Flushing, and then moved to Queens right under the Triborough Bridge. And I didn't have much opportunity to use the libraries there.

But when I came back to Tulsa, I had a lot of reason to because I was working on my Master's, trying to get my teaching certificate, and was spending as much time as I could. I had a baby, so I couldn't spend a lot, but probably spent more than I needed to, mainly at that point to check out books that were fun to read, that I squeezed in in the late evenings.

I kind of tend to do research and to read fiction, and not always the classics. I wasn't a great -- you know, half the time somebody said it was a classic, and I turned it off. Since then
I've been catching up on a bunch, but I think that's the arrogance of youth: you know, "Those things can't be interesting."

During my years of teaching I of course used whatever library we had in the schools, and, especially when I was in junior high, I often took the students on a field trip to go down to the public library. By that time, they had a new library, and it was -- it is stunning. And it had evolved. I haven't been in it lately. I've tried to go there a couple of weeks ago when I was in Tulsa, and they're doing some kind of reconstruction downtown. And there was no way to get into the public library except park three or four blocks away and walk it, which I can't do. So I didn't go there.

But I have had wonderful experiences in one of the branches called Rudisill, which is in Greenwood, that I talked about yesterday. Basically the black township. And this library houses practically all of the material and artifacts about the African-American history in the area. And it is fascinating. A lot of them are research, or reference only, so I keep going back. This is where my student spent a lot of time when he was researching for his book. And just meeting with the people, it was -- They have one little corner of the library that is called the African-American Resource Room. There are nice comfortable chairs, and there are tables and computers and all this kind of stuff in there. It's not closed off. It's just one section, and it's right by the checkout desk so they don't usually have a problem, I don't think, with kids getting in there and tearing anything up.
Now, I'm well aware that the internet has kind of jumped in there. I do a lot of research on the internet for facts. Also, if I'm trying to remember a song, I can get the lyrics. If I'm trying to remember when something appeared on Broadway or when it was in print or something, I can find that. And it's really handy.

I spent three months without an internet because my computer was having troubles, and then I just -- I figured it out in about a week that I could come down here to the library. So for about three months I haunted the little computer room back here and could check my e-mail, could do the research I wanted to, place to print it out right there. And I hadn't realized that particular thing. I had just used all the catalogues out here and did all my research and trying to find out what was there from my computer at home. And it kind of broadened it because that way I didn't have to do the research, print it out, and bring it down here. I could just do it all here and go and find the book.

I remember the old library here. Of course it was not nearly as spacious. I don't know that I used it that much. For one thing, I wasn't living in Fayetteville then; I was living in Huntsville. And what was called a library in Huntsville was a small room on the other side of the Community Center. It was all in one building. And basically it was about the size of a bookmobile and had mostly romances and mysteries and, you know, things for the elderly ladies to check out. I don't know whether the men had anything that was much of interest or not. They probably were not very big consumers. Those who really wanted to find a variety of books came into Fayetteville or went up to Harrison or Eureka Springs.
The library in Eureka Springs is incredible. It's one of the original Carnegie libraries. It's -- I can't remember how many years it's been in existence, and I think in the same building. It's a stone building, and when I lived there in the middle '80s, they still had only accessible by a lot of steps. And they have since put in an elevator that you approach from the outside. And I haven't used that, but if I ever go there, I'll have to. [Laughs] But they had a very good library. I think any library I've gone to as had very friendly people, very helpful people from way back in my first days in Tulsa when I was a kid, when I didn't know what I was doing, and I got help. Sometimes I think I pestered them to death, but they were always very nice to me.

The people at the original one here in Fayetteville, I think I mentioned that they had to get me upstairs with the express -- I still can't think of the name for it, but it's what they brought all the books up on and all that kind of thing, anything heavy. And somebody had to leave their post to operate the elevator for me to go up and down. And I always felt a little bit self-conscious about that, but they said, "No," because they were very friendly, very nice.

I'm good friends with a woman who used to work for the public library, and she's now with the university. And she is -- she was very efficient. She was a part of Snapdragon, which was a women's theater group. It doesn't exist anymore, but it was pretty active for a number of years.

I'm trying to think of -- The library there when I started home schooling a couple of kids for my friends, we went to the library often. They had been brought up with books, no question.
They'd never had any schooling besides home schooling from the beginning. And so the library was very important for them.

And I got to know some of the youth. They were definitely youth, they weren't kids. But I got to know that library, the juvenile section. And I had never paid much attention to it since I was young, because I couldn't ever get my son interested in books of any sort unless it had to do with car racing. That's how I got him finally to read.

But these kids -- well, there in college now and they're brilliant and doing well and all that, but I saw the library from a different viewpoint.

And let's see. I came here in 2000. I'm not sure what year. I think this was 2004 when they opened. '4 or '5, I'm not sure. So I became familiar with the old one very quickly, and I'd gone there even when I was living in Huntsville. I think I was very impressed by the large selection of books that they had, besides little picture books for younger kids. And I know that increasingly people are publishing young adult fiction, just all sorts of things, and lots more educational material that is interesting. And most families wouldn't have an access to that many books.

I see they've got a whole bunch of kids down here in the Walker Room, and I don't know what they're doing, but parents and little kids -- I came on the elevator with a little kid who came up to about my waistline. And it's just a whole conference down there. I guess it's a story time. I don't know what they were doing because it didn't seem there were any screens set up, and they
were -- all the chairs were gone. They were sitting around in circles. So I'll have to check and see what that was.

But they have programs like that here. From the day they opened they have emphasized different programs, different lectures, discussion groups. I think the first thing I came here with when it first opened, and I was -- it was a discussion on The Da Vinci Code, which I was very interested in because, gee, you know, a modern fiction that talks about the goddess and the chance that, gee wiz, there were some women in there somewhere. And so I went expecting this very fabulous discussion and another friend went with me.

First of all, it was hard to get to because the elevator wasn't working that day, and I had to go up two flights to get to it, but I was determined. But the discussion was primarily on whether Jesus could have had a child, and they didn't seem concerned with the book at all. It was all the argument against it. And it was disappointing to me. When we finally added our little words to it, people just went, "Hm!" And then they go right back to where they were. It gave me some insight on people.

But that wouldn't have happened if the library hadn't scheduled it. There wouldn't be an opportunity. They have days I see a bunch of kids in the Walker Room who have gathered to do the card games, you know, not the kind of card games I used to talk about, but these -- oh, shoot, what do -- role playing. And all different kinds. They just all have a place to get together and play together. They do a lot of that in the summer, for sure. They have a lot of reading programs
for kids that they can, you know, list all the books they read, which goes over well with their teachers, I'm sure, when they go back.

The juvenile -- no, the children's section downstairs is just magnificent. I was absolutely amazed when I saw the murals. Before -- somehow or other I'd gotten in here before it opened and saw that they did the four elements, basically. And each section of the children's stuff is, like everything with earth, everything with fire, everything with water, everything with air. And they're actually teaching the kids. They have little nooks. They have it color-coded. The chairs even have little symbols on them for each of those. And I don't know how much they're actually teaching them of what they have put there, but I'm sure somebody is. And I thought, you know, that was really forward-thinking because they could have put famous writers or something like that. But this is geared, bright colors, it's geared to the kids.

And once in a while I go down there and get a book because there'll be something that I want to see what a younger attitude is. I go over to the young adult section quite often because -- or, you know, I get the catalogue and then I go. But often there are books, even though I'm not teaching anymore, I want to see what the kids are reading, too. And I wouldn't have all these accesses. Even with the internet, you can't do things like that. You can't get a book -- well, I guess you can now if you have an MP3 player or something like that, but I don't.

I checked out something on their Playaway, which is the now version of -- there's a book on a whatever, digital something. And I've tried two different times, and I can't make the things work [Laughs] I'm just not -- I manage a computer just fine, but if something goes wrong, I have
to call for help. The Playaway is just a little, smaller than a cigarette pack. It's about like that.

And you have to put a battery in it. And you can buy some earbuds they call them. I used to call them earphones, but they're just little tiny things that go in your ear. But once -- I think they sell them for like a dollar and a half or $2. And if you hold on to them, then, you know, you don't have to expend that anymore.

They've got a very wide selection of books that are available. Most of them are classic or -- I've got checked out right now Life of Zora Neale Hurston. And it's fascinating. And of course we have -- I went through this library with videos, and then books on CD, and now you can go to the internet and download it. I don't know how to do that. I don't even know whether my computer will do it because it's about eight years old now.

But they have all of these things available, and the Idea that you could download a whole book. I've watched what Amazon is doing. I don't know what they're doing, if it's going to affect libraries or not. But the kindle, I think they call it, and you can get a whole book on it.

Personally, I like touching the books. I like turning the pages. I like to lie down and read, have it with me when I go to a restaurant. I've got two books in here just because I was meeting some friends this morning and didn't know whether they would be late. And I couldn't decide whether I wanted to read one or the other, so I brought both. [Laughs]

But the things, it's just constantly they come up with new things. The idea of a coffee house where you can get food and everything else being in a library? That just floored me when I realized that our local Arsaga's coffee house is a perfect place. And they do -- groups can come
in and do performances. You can have meetings. They've got computer hookups. They have a little patio outside when the weather is nice. And it's just one more thing. The libraries add these two levels of parking. Like yesterday it was raining and I didn't have to get in the rain to come in. And the elevators for me are major. That's not libraries themselves, but it is their services.

I don't know much about any branches here. I don't know that there are any branches in Fayetteville. I know a lot of friends go to the university library, but I'm pretty much cut off by it because the only parking that has any access to the campus is so far off campus that I can't walk to it. And even when I get there, most of the buildings have big flights of stairs and all that. And that's disappointing. I can't even take any classes over there. Now, if I had a wheelchair and all that kind of stuff, I probably could, but I'm not there yet. And for your information, the university gives free classes to anyone over the age of 60.

Of course you have to buy the books and that costs more than I used to pay for a class. And I was going to do that. I thought, "Wow! I could get myself another Master's or something." But I realized I couldn't get to the classes, and there really wasn't anything I was interested in. I wanted to go to Textile Design, but they were so limited in their number of classes and so many students, that if you're going to get the free ones, you have to be in a class that is already -- when they've already closed down the classes and it's not full. So if the class is full, you don't get to take it. Of course they're all audit. I don't know what they would have done if I actually wanted to get another degree. But the fact that things are there is important.
I don't remember whether I ever did visit the university library, but I certainly have used libraries, especially since I retried. It's given me the opportunity to try out books that I hear about or see about on television. And sometimes I get -- I want to put myself on the list for Barbara Walters' new autobiography, and if the library doesn't have it, I'm sure it already has a long list waiting for it. This is what happens sometimes.

But often I'll get a book here, especially if it has something to do with what I'm writing. And this has too much for me to take notes on. And then I proceed to go to the local bookstore or Amazon or something and get a copy of it because I like to write in the margins and underline and put lots of little Post-Its different places and stuff, especially the things that are pertinent to my writing.

And the director of the writing group that I go to on Monday presented a couple of books that -- she works for Barnes & Noble, and she gets all these books and brings them to show us. And there were two books she brought that were perfect for what I was doing. And so I came down here to the library, and they were both here, and I was very happy, and I got them checked out. And so it all kind of works together.

I don't have the money to go buy every book I would like to read. I try to find the money to buy books that I think I'm going to use a lot, and that's more often research material rather than fiction, because if you just wait long enough you can get a paperback if nothing else.

And we have a marvelous used bookstore here. It's old, and it's been around for a long time. Sometimes it's hard to find things, but it's like a treasure hunt. And they've been around,
oh, as long as I've been in Arkansas, I think, and probably a good deal of time before that. I have never asked them when they started, but I know when they started, they just had the little front piece and, you know, very small. And then as the building behind them emptied of different businesses, they just expanded. And now you go upstairs and downstairs and around corners. I haven't been in there in a couple years, but I'm sure it's still the same way.

And they also are -- were, I don't know whether they still are -- a good place to sell your old books. It used to be they'd take anything, especially if you just wanted to rack up credits for getting new books. But sometimes when I got desperate, when I was -- when I first came back to Fayetteville and didn't really have Social Security yet, money was a premium.

I'd carried books all over the country, and so I would go through -- and at one point, I went through and got rid of a lot of my theater books. I'm finished with theater. I'll never use them again. And I find myself now going, "Why? Why did I let that go?" I had a copy of An Actor Prepares by Stanislavski with notes all through it. I'm sure he couldn't have gotten much money for it. And now I checked it out from the library the other day because I wanted to reference it to write, for my writing. But you just can't carry everything with you, and when there's a library, you can find it. And if they don't have it here, I can do the inter-library loan. And it's -- the only thing I regret is that a lot of my research material at Rudisill Library in Tulsa is reference only, so I have to go there to see it. But I understand why.

BK: Mm-hm.
DORIS: And they don't do inter-library loans on those. I went on a science fiction kick for a long time. Got started with Marion Zimmer Bradley and went on from there and Isaac Asimov. And I was late coming to Orson Scott Card, but I like his. Robert Heinlein, oh my gosh! So many different writers. Some later ones, Octavia Butler and a few like that.

And then I just all of a sudden decided I wanted to read something else. And all my friends were reading mysteries. So I asked somebody. I said, "Okay, suggest one." And they suggested James Patterson. Okay, I read that one. Well, I was hooked. And then I started, you know, kind of branching out and finding out things. And I really liked the mysteries. I don't like romance. It's just -- I mean, I like a good -- a well-written book that has romantic parts in it, even some spicy parts. But I don't like Georgette Heyer and all that ilk.

However, one of the biggest in the business is Nora Roberts. She also happens to write as PD James -- no, PD Robb.

BK: JD Robb.

DORIS: JD Robb. I'm getting PD something else. And those are set 2050, '60, whatever it is. So it's a science fiction, but it's also a cop thing. She has this cop who has married this man who owns most of the universe or something, and they solve mysteries and solve crimes. They're mystery crime. And one time she wrote a book called something about "when". I can't remember the title. But it was written by Nora Roberts and JD Robb. And so she had a story that Nora Roberts wrote of a mystery that was set up that was never solved. And then many years later, something came up. It was like a cold case thing. And JD Robb's character comes in
and sees it and finally solves it. And I thought that was really interesting. And she often puts out books that she edits that have maybe one short story by her and a number of others. And that's kind of fun. And it also introduce me to writers that I haven't tried before.

For a long time, I'd say, "Nora Roberts! You've got to be kidding! I'm not going to read her." But she came out with a trilogy about witches, and I went -- couldn't understand that one. And I enjoyed them. So it's kind of the material. I was putting down mysteries because I thought they weren't good writing, in the same way that my college professor was against soap operas because it wasn't good writing. And I wish I could have written them. Oh, if wishes were -- what is it?

BK: Horses?

DORIS: I don't know. Is that it? If wishes were horses Anyway, I'd be a queen, prince, whatever, if they were.

In Greenwood, some of the things that I thought they had in their archives, they didn't. I thought that somewhere I had read that all of the interviews that Scott had done were recorded, and he had left all of his things there at the library. And I really wanted to read the recordings.

I discovered a book written by one of the women -- I don't know whether she was actually a child during the riot, but maybe she was because she was very elderly. And I can't pull her name right now. But she did a lot of interviewing back before anybody really was talking about this, and she eventually wrote a book. I think the first version of it was probably just a manuscript that she gave to several people, and then it became one of the main things that Scott
used, according to the material I've gotten. I had looked forward to seeing those, but I'm going to have to figure around, find out where actually they were because I thought they were at Rudisill.

But they do have just about every book that's been written on the subject. They go into detail. They have the books that had great popularity. James Hirsch wrote a book on it. There are several fiction books that have come out recently. There's a book called Black Wall Street, and I can't remember the author of it. There are a number of books that I found at one of the other Tulsa libraries, because I was there without a car, and I had to go to the one that was close.

And so all of the libraries in Tulsa have most of the major books on the race riot. There are teacher packets for studying and to learn it. They've really done a good job when they finally admitted as a whole that this happened. And of course just opening up the libraries to show the population of Tulsa now and to try to get a balance as to -- because the kids today don't have any idea. They really don't, unless they have people in their family or they came from another part of the country because the South is the South. And there are places where we've made no strides, but even where things have changed, there's still a lot of culture that is based on separation. And of course everywhere they are.

But I heard the results of the elections, or the primaries yesterday, and I'm like, "Okay, we may have --" And of course I'm torn because I would like a woman, and I would like a black, and gee wiz, we don't get both of them. But it's been exciting, if nothing else. And when I started teaching in the '70s, it's like, "Huh?" No woman would be anything in the government. And certainly no African-American was going to get any kind of -- well, a few did in the
carpetbagger period, and then they pretty much disappeared. But they weren't Southern African-Americans. They came from the North and came down, most of them. It's just there are ways that the country has progressed so tremendously and then there are ways that we're still set in the old ways.

But I think a good part of acceptance and learning has to do with the libraries because if you want to know something -- you have to want to know it first -- but if you want to know something, you can find it at the library. You may have to do some searching. You may have to do an inter-library loan, who knows? But you have access. And now you have access from your home. Turn on the computer, you have the whole library catalogue right in front of you. I can renew books, which I did this morning. It told me I couldn't renew one of them.

I had had to wait a long time, and bingo! I didn't get around to reading it, and now I've got to return it. I think it was The New Earth, and I just found other things I wanted to read. I check out a lot of books. I think this morning I turned in about six, and it told me I still had 23 checked out. But a lot of them are things that I want to use as research, or books that I want to read, but I will get involved in something else and won't get to. I make a process of printing. Oh, every couple of weeks I'll print out all the books I have checked out so that -- then I go back and circle the ones I didn't get to read, so I've got a record and I can come back and get them. I'm a little whacko, but -- [Laughs]

One of the things that I find enjoyable, I come down probably twice a week, sometimes more often. And I've gotten to where people know me, and like the second in command in the
library, [deleted] is a member of the Unitarian Church. I don't often see her because she's busy other places, but a number of the people who work here and who are volunteers I've gotten to know. And sometimes someone that I know that works here says, "Oh, wait a minute, wait a minute!" will come out and they'll have a book and say, "It just came back in. I know you'll love it." It didn't even make it back into the stacks.

And it's just the pleasantness. I've gone through a course training on genealogy, and I was very interested in it. How to use the genealogy section, which is just amazing what they have. At the old library it was a separate building, and I just never bothered to go there. But my friend who has grown up in this area, and the one I would recommend, wanted to take the class because she'd done a lot of genealogy of her own, but she wanted to take some actual classes and get some clues and things like that. And we took that workshop, and I've been back up a couple of times, but I just didn't stay with it long enough. But I know that if I find the time I can come up here and get help because there are several people who just work that department. And so I can get some questions answered and stuff.

During the process, I've discovered that -- I think I talked about it -- that some of the family stories were not true. There were no records. And these are legal things, and there are no records of them. And it's rather amusing to me that I can, you know, "Oh, here's a book on [deleted], and it doesn't mention anybody named [deleted], except somebody that's known as [deleted], and it was [deleted]. And he started out as a lieutenant, I think, and was demoted
because they caught him playing cards with his enlisted men. This was during the Civil War.

And this is the one that supposedly had been in the battle at Pea Ridge.

And he may have. There's no record. My dad said there's a record of Pea Ridge for one or the other of the great grandfathers and I haven't gone up there to find out. But when I've checked in, there's a [deleted] somewhere because there's [deleted] in Lowell, and there's a director of the theater in [deleted]. That's my maiden name.

And I still have -- I've exhausted the library, and I'm going to have to do primary research. And I haven't done that yet. But I know where to go, and I know how -- I've gotten my start by getting what I can from the library. I need to know more about all of the on-line services and things like that that I can use. And I just haven't done it.

But as far as my typical time coming here is I come to the library. If I have books to check in, I check them in. I usually have something waiting for me on hold, so I go back and get it and take one of my bags and I head upstairs. And I'll go to the computers first, usually just the ones in the out-study room because all I need is a catalogue search.

And I'll just come up with a subject or an author or something, and I'll just run it through everything I can find and write down the little numbers. Right now I've been looking for copies of plays that I directed because in writing about this, you're having a rehearsal and you need to have some of the lines. Of course I'll run into copyright problems, but I'll worry about that if I ever publish. But, yeah, if the copyrights are still in effect. Each one is different and I will check into it. Samuel French I know is very, very diligent in keeping things out of just general writing.
But they also say, you know, "with written permission" so I think probably I will do that. But in
the meantime, I'm getting the scripts.

Recently I'm trying to organize at home, and I found some of my old scripts. I found a
copy of Raisin in the Sun, which was the last show I did at Central, and it had all my stage
directions written in it. And just recently the re-played the Sidney Poitier version, and then they
did a new one of Sean P. Diddy Combs, and Phylicia Rashad, and Ruby Dee was in both of
them, I think. I'm not sure. But it just -- it was amazing to me. And all the lines that were so
familiar, and that's what kind of got me, "Oh! I could go to the library and get these," the ones
that I don't still have copies of, even if I have to do loans to get some of them. And that's going
to be a help.

I just discovered a book about William Inge -- I have his collected works, and I found a
one-act play that I used a lot with my students called The Happy Journey from Trenton to
Camden. And they're this family and they're in a car, it's all pantomime, black stage, except for
chairs, and the kids get to bounce up and down in this old jalopy. And it's just a really funny
one. And I used it a lot, and I thought, "I'll never find a copy of that." And there it was, right
here in this library.

I directed Matchmaker by Thornton Wilder. Bingo! There's a copy. And I just keep
finding these things. And I just -- I don't say I live here, but I come here very often. And in the
pats, probably since I've retired, I've made more use of the library than I did when I was
teaching, except maybe the school libraries. I'm hooked into the library at least every couple of
days, you know, checking what books, looking for things. I often, instead of coming up here and going directly to the library -- to the computers, if I've been organized, which is not too often, I will already have a list of things that I had located at home and just come down to find them. I very often find things at home and hit the button for a hold. Or sometimes, especially when I wasn't feeling well, I would do that just so all I had to do was come in and get them and didn't have to go looking for them.

Usually the website shows the activities that are going on. I get Exclamation, or the earlier version, the monthly thing. Usually I pick it up, I don't get it at home. I prefer hard copy to anything. I'm sorry. I can hold on to hard copy. If there's something on the internet that I want I make a copy of it because that's -- I'm geared that way. And I love using it I definitely want to get up here and start using the material they have on genealogy that's only available through there. I think I probably can get some of it if I'm signed up with something and I know who to use a program. But yet, I may never learn it.

I was very amused to find Pat Carr said that anything prior to 1980 is historical. And at first I thought, "What?" And she kind of grinned and said, "The Information Age." Everything changed. It's taken a while for those changes to happen, but if you 're reading a novel, if they don't talk about their cell phone and their CDs and their DVDs, and digital this and all the GPS and all those things, you know how far back it went. You can pretty much just -- or I was reading one the other day that had a later copyright date, but she's talking about her mobile phone. People don't call them mobile phones anymore.
BK: Are there any books that you can remember which really made a difference in your life?

DORIS: Stranger in a Strange Land by Robert Heinlein. I don't know whether I found them in the library, but Ruth Montgomery had a bunch of books. They weren't fiction, they were nonfiction, but all about reincarnation and various kinds of spiritual things. My most precious book of all time is Illusions by Richard Bach, and at various times in my life I've handed it out and don't get it back, and sometimes I'll come down to the library and read it. I quote from it quite often.

Going back, well of course Black Beauty and Kid Nat and all -- when I was in grade school, Albert Terhune's books about collies, because we had a collie. Writers. Well of course Marion Zimmer Bradley's, all of her series, but the Avalon ones I was really -- I was already a fan. In paperback I have every book she wrote. And I've made a real, you know, job of holding out when people say, "You don't need to keep those."

But when I ended up retired and was bored and really at that time I wasn't physically able to get down to the library, so I had somebody look around my garage and found a box of those Marion Zimmer Bradley, and I put them in chronological order because she didn't write them that way, and I read from the earliest arrival on that planet all the way to her end. And that was a wonderful experience! It put everything together.

Modern writers, books, specific. I just finished reading a book called Electricity, and it's about this young girl with epilepsy. My son had epilepsy. And as I was reading it, I'm going,
"My gosh! Why didn't I know to ask these questions? If I had known, hearing it from a person who was experiencing it, if I had known that, I could have reached my son so much more easily. Maybe. But I wish I had known."

And it's a fascinating book because every now and then you've got a page that just has jags on it, a few letters and all sorts of lines going each way, and it's representing a seizure. And then separating a bunch of places, you start to -- you just got one pill, then a couple of pages later, you've got two pills. You know, sometimes they use asterisks, and that's a way.

So by then end of the book, or toward the end, it's got two different kinds of pills, bladadadada. And then when she decides, "That's it. I'm not going to take that stuff anymore," there are no more pills. There are still symbols of seizures, but there were no more pills, and she was in her mind doing better. I think it's a brand new one I think I turned it in today. No, I'm taking it to the book club Monday. I don't remember who it's by. It was one of those, it was sitting there on the New Titles stack. And I was intrigued by the cover because it didn't have anything to do with that. It's the torso of a woman in a gold spangled dress, no head, and the skirt is very, very short, and you just get about halfway down the thigh in the picture. So it intrigued me enough to pick the book up. People make covers for books for reasons.

And when I discovered it was epilepsy, I immediately checked it out. And it was quite good, very, very informative, and moved me a lot. So just having the new books, new titles. I always look at them. And for those, I usually depend on intuition or an intriguing book cover or
something to draw me. And I've discovered lots of things that way. And I hadn't really even thought about that, but that is true. I've lost track of what the question was.

BK: I was asking about books that --

DORIS: Oh, the books, yeah.

BK: -- made a difference in your life.

DORIS: Yeah. I have a real hard time pulling things out. Well, there are a lot of plays. I like Shakespeare, but I'm not a big Shakespeare fan. I did it in college and taught it in schools. Shakespeare is written to be performed, and a good portion of Shakespeare was improvised anyway, and he just kind of wrote it down. He made a scenario. Now, this is my professor's theory. I find it fascinating to read books about the time period that include Shakespeare and the actors and so on. And I did read one one time -- I can't remember the title of it -- that was very good. It was set in the tavern that they all gathered at.

Other books. Gosh, there have been so many. And the ones I've read recently are the least accessible to my memory. Ones I read in college I can remember. Maybe it would be easier to go by writers. [Laughs] Well, now see if I'd been prepared, I'd go, "Oh, he's going to ask me about books. I need to look for this." But I do say one thing: If I find a writer I like, I go berserk and read everything they've written. And I saw a quotation one time. I think it was for Stranger in a Strange Land. And somebody said, "The only thing about reading Stranger in a Strange Land is if this is your first time of reading it, when you finish it, you'll go, 'I can never have the experience again. I can reread it, but I can never read it for the first time.'" And I
thought, you know, there are a lot of books that fall into that category, and a lot of others, you go, "Well, I read it, that's fine."

BK: Where were you when you first read Stranger in a Strange Land?

DORIS: I was teaching in the '70s in Tulsa at Central. I think I was -- that had to be the early times because I was teaching senior English in the summer school. And I think I discovered it when I had the kids -- probably in the school library -- no, the school libraries weren't open. But I was sitting somewhere where a bunch of kids were in the library getting stuff, and I just came across it. And that was when I had --

Oh, another important book, which really doesn't sound like it. A bunch of books by a man named Dennis Wheatley, who was a British writer, and he was writing about people who had combatted the Nazis and Hitler by going on astral planes, and they all knew each other from previous lives. This was stuff I'd never heard of before, and I found it very interesting.

Just recently I discovered a book, I haven't found a copy of it yet, but a woman who has written about Carl Jung, and she's talking about his work with the Allies in using unusual ways of combating the Nazis. And I'm thinking, "Okay, I wonder if there's a connection." So now I have another project to do. And it's quite possible because he did dabble in a lot of different things, and I'm in a group that studies him, not that I've been studying that hard, but this group's been going for like 20 years. I just recently got in it.

But the world of books, I could live as long as I could still read. If I lose my mind -- I mean, even if I can't see, there are all sorts of ways I can listen to things. But if my mind goes,
I'm going to be very unhappy. Of course like everybody says, if you do get Alzheimer's you don't know. But still, that's even terrible to me, to not know. And that's how serious books are to me.

I don't watch TV unless it's a very important program. I listen to television. I either sew or I skim through books or sometimes out of pure boredom I'll play a little game of Tetras on a little small one that I have, just to keep me busy so that I can pick up. And I never watch a program that I didn't pre-record and zap through the commercials. Thank goodness for DVRs, because I think it's -- I got a video player, or recorder, in the early -- no, mid '80s when they were very unusual because I wanted to see shows that were on when I wasn't at home. And it was such a miracle to me to be able to do that.

I'm so happy to see this library putting in a program of those who are home-bound being able to get their books because you don't always have somebody that can come and pick them up for you. And they've always been very willing that way, if you write a note or something.
APPENDIX E

TRANSCRIPTS OF MARY’S INTERVIEWS
First Interview: Life Story

BRIAN KENNEY (BK): So I just have one statement to read, and it's over to you.

MARY: That's all right.

BK: I would like you to tell me your life story, all the events and experiences which were important to you. Start wherever you like. Please take as much time as you need. I'll listen. I'll try not to interrupt, unless you ask me to. And I might make some notes for afterwards.

MARY: Okay. It's kind of weird talking about my life story. It's not very interesting.

Okay. I was born in Alabama on Auburn campus. I don't remember that of course, and so was my younger brother. We moved to Arkansas when I was 2. By the time I was 4, I think I had -- 4 1/2 I had three younger brothers and sisters, which was a lot of fun. I loved it. But grew up in Fort Smith, which is about 70 miles south of here and a little bit larger and a whole lot duller.

But we lived sort of out in the country, and that was good. It was fun. We always ran around getting incredibly grubby looking because we were out in the woods all the time. And we went to Catholic schools, all of us. Actually I started out in Catholic schools and my mother took me out because she didn't like the nun when I was in first grade because the nun didn't like my artwork. She didn't appreciate it. No, she didn't appreciate it at all. I took her something, and she said, "You're wasting your time doing that." And so my mother sat outside the window and listened and didn't like what she heard. So she put me -- I think she put me in a public school for about two years, and then back to Catholic schools.
And, you know, there were so many of us that it made an exciting, you know, fun kind of growing up. It was a lot of fun. My mother was -- but it is an important part of my life, so I can't leave it out -- very involved with books, read to us a lot. We all read, except for my brother, [deleted], who had learning disabilities, but, you know, he could hear all the stories, you know, that we would tell. And it was a really important part of our life. I loved it, and read things I didn't even understand, you know. I read all of Shakespeare when I was in the eighth grade, and I realized later I didn't understand most of it, but by golly, I read it and had fun doing it.

Went to Catholic girls school in Fort Smith. It was sort of half town people and half boarding students, which is great because I met people from a lot of places. It was a real innocent childhood, actually. I remember when I was in either -- I think I was in the eleventh grade, and we were getting ready for prom, and we were at the school at night making decorations. And a nun came in and said, "I have to tell you that we've expelled this young woman from South America." And she was smoking. Well, we said, "Why? Why, Sister?" And she said, "She was smoking, and it wasn't cigarettes." And we were so innocent that we were saying, "What do you think it was? Cigars? A pipe?" [Laughter] I mean, true innocence compared to kids today.

And then after that I went to the University of Arkansas, and just -- kind of because that's what you did if you lived in Fort Smith, Arkansas, and stayed for about a year and a half. And then I dropped out, and I went to Chicago, where my sister was living, Patty, and stayed with
her. And that was a real adventure and a real eye-opening experience, the big city, you know? So it was fun, but, you know, it was very different. I thoroughly enjoyed it. I think she was working. I got a job. It was a very boring job, but the people there were fun, you know, I met a lot of interesting people. I worked for World Book Encyclopedia. It was incredibly boring what we did. It was like factory work sort of. But there were some really wonderful people there that I became friends with, a couple of people. And it was good. Then that was the '60s, all the craziness and -- it was probably '67 or '68 probably. I'm terrible. I have no memory. My husband was my memory. I discovered I didn't know anything. "When did that happen?" He'd tell me. Now I'm like, "When did that happen?" There's no answer. But I stayed there about a year. But it was good, you know. It was just a whole new world, which was great, you know, and exposure to a lot of things I'd never seen or heard of.

And I came back to the university, still wasn't very interested in it. You know, I was a very resistant student. I wanted to read what I wanted to read and not what they wanted me to read. And so then -- I just can't think of any overwhelming events.

I started out in education, but I don't remember ever taking an education course. And then I was just sort of roaming around and taking those basic courses: I loved Western Civilization, I loved my English classes. There was a professor here that taught a Shakespeare class that was great, really good, kind of famous for that, at least around here, and probably other places, too. And that was when Ben Kempel was here in the English Department. He was a
phenomenal teacher and very interesting guy, who was somewhat related to my husband, I found out later.

But, you know, it was just typical college stuff: boyfriends, party, have a wonderful time, do crazy things. I remember one weekend we drove to Chicago, you know, for a weekend. We were just sitting in the car on Friday night, and somebody said, "You know we ought to go someplace." And I said, "Well, I have a sister in Chicago." And off we went. It's probably, you know, 12, 14 hours maybe, and we stayed about three hours, I visited my sister, and we turned around and went home, went to classes on Monday.

Well, didn't you do things like that? I did. You know, just anything that pops into your brain, you do. I really had no direction at all except, you know, just having a good time. I saw it in my son, too. I went to school and I went every day, but it was the social aspect of it that I liked and, oh, yeah, you have to put the school part, too. I wasn't a very good student because I only wanted to do the things I wanted to do.

Let's see, after that, I'm trying to remember what I did. I came back here. I didn't stay very long. And that's -- I'm trying to remember. I think that was when my parents -- they weren't really divorced or separated, but my mother went to graduate school in Philadelphia, and I went up and spent the summer with her. And that was a lot of fun. I met other people who were very involved in the anti-war movement. And I was involved in that here, so that must have been like '68. I guess I went earlier to Chicago. She went to school and got -- she was already a teacher, I think, but she got a Master's in teaching children with learning disabilities how to read,
because of my brother [deleted] had really profound learning disabilities. And, you know, I remember after that I moved to New York with [deleted], my sister. But I remember [deleted] calling me and telling me he read a book. He'd never read a whole book before. He read Of Mice and Men. And I can remember just crying on the phone because I was so happy for him that he could read a book. And he was happy, too. And he said then, "I just remember every night sitting at the dinner table and everybody was talking about what they were reading, and I hadn't read anything." You know, he had other great qualities with people. He knew everybody in town. And he had these really good friends, like these really old ladies, and he'd become friends with them and talk to them all the time. So he had other skills, certainly, people skills that were very good. But just school was torture for him.

And after I moved to New York, I lived with my sister. And I started working at this place called The Fashion Group that put on like industry-wide shows. It was a nonprofit organization, not like the one I work for now. It was more affluent people. We weren't working with poor people. We were working with rich people. But it was fun. It was good. It was another different world, you know, the fashion world, I didn't know anything about.

But it was fun. You know, you did the shows and everything's different all the time, which I loved, you know. That's why I love my job now. It was changing, changing, changing all the time. And that was very interesting.

I can't even remember the sequence of how I got – [deleted] went to Italy, and I don't know what I did after that. I did something for a while. I think I was -- I think I might have
come back here. I can't remember. And then I ended up in Italy. I told you I had a bad memory. I'm a terrible person to talk about my life. I can just remember sort of where I went.

And another new world. And it was great, you know. I wasn't very good at languages, but I kind of learned some Italian. Not very much. It was great. It was lots of fun. Again, I don't really think I saw much of Italy. I realized that years later, that I was much more involved with my social life than going -- you know, I knew all of Florence, where we were living. But I was taking a train through Italy, you know, 10 or 12 years ago, and I thought, "Damn, why didn't I do this before?" And I didn't -- you know, I just played, having fun.

I worked a little bit, and it was great. I had a crazy job being a -- it was kind of like being a paparazzi. I rode this motorcycle around, and the guy I worked for had contacts with different restaurants. And you'd go and you'd take everybody's picture. And then you'd go back to the studio and he'd develop them real fast. Then you'd take them back and you'd sell them to these people. Oh, it was really interesting. It was fascinating because the difference in cultures, who would accept having their pictures taken and who would buy them and who wouldn't. And Americans were terrible. They always wanted to look better than they did. I mean, I could take a really good picture of them, they did not want -- you know, they never thought they looked good. The Japanese could be holding their hands over their faces saying, "No, no!" and they'd buy the picture. And so we kind of all just learned who to take the most pictures of, who would buy them.
And it was good because I only worked a few hours a day, and I could make as much as, you know, working in a store or something like that. So it was a lot of fun, riding a little motorcycle all over Florence at night. It was great. I think we did the lunch from like maybe 12 to 1:30 and dinner from 7 until 10, something like that, and that was it. So that was good, and I met a lot of good people there from all over the world. I was also taking some classes at the University of Florence, mostly learning Italian. And it was great because there were people in there that were from everywhere, and so that was a lot of fun, you know, meeting people.

I had a friend that was Japanese. She was actually half Japanese and half Italian, which was a little strange. And she was very wonderful. Her father had an Italian restaurant -- he was the Italian one -- in Kyoto. And he took her over there, and he found a pensione. He wanted to make sure she was locked up, you know. And he got the woman there to agree she couldn't go out at night or anything else. So of course her boyfriend was the woman's son, who was there all the time. [Laughter] You know, try and stop hormones. I thought, "Oh God, if this guy only knew." They were together all the time.

She was fun. And I had a good friend -- several good friends from England, and a crazy woman from New Zealand. Everybody from New Zealand was fun and crazy. And that was a real adventure, you know, just the university itself and these ancient, ancient buildings with no heat and like 20-foot ceilings, little faded frescoes on the walls. And we could eat there for almost nothing in the student mess. I think it was like 40 cents or something. And it was a full meal with wine and everything.
It's good being a student there. You get transportation cards, and there are certain restaurants around the town where you can eat for almost nothing besides the university. So it was well worth it going there. That was a lot of fun, you know. It was just terrific fun. I had a strange Italian boyfriend, who worked at a department store, I think. But I did love it. You know, I could get up real early in the morning and I'd ride that little motorcycle up through the hills outside of Florence by myself, and I loved that. It was beautiful. And the people I worked for, I became friends with -- The guy was kind of a strange guy, [deleted]. But his wife and I became friends, and that was nice. She was an older Italian woman.

And I had another boyfriend that -- I didn't know this until [deleted] told me about 10 years ago -- was in the Red Brigade. But I didn't speak enough Italian to know it. [Laughter] We were in a car years and years later, and she said, "Oh, that boyfriend you had that was in the Red Brigade --" "What! [Laughs] I didn't know that." He was from Sicily and an architecture student. Kind of an interesting guy. I can't remember the sequence of these people at all this time.

And then I came home. I lived in New York for a short time and then came back, went back to the University of Arkansas. I can't believe I went there -- I must have -- I think I added one time to it, but I still didn't graduate. Then I went to work for a guy that ran a smoke house, and I worked in the office in Farmington, which is right outside of town. Again, it was a good experience because there were all these young people who worked there, and I'm still friends with some of them. One's a lawyer now. Several of them are lawyers. And I'm trying to think
what the other guy -- I was good friends with him, and somebody, another -- a mutual friend saw him last weekend. I can't remember what he does now, but we had a wonderful time. It was just another crazy place to work.

And [deleted], the guy that owns it, he and his wife are still friends of mine. And they -- I think I was -- I don't know whether I started out working part-time, but at the beginning I think I worked in the office in the morning, and then I helped [deleted] take care of the kids in the afternoon because they had all these foster kids. And so I loved that. So it was good. I worked there for years. And they opened a store in town on Dixon Street, which is still there, and I managed that until I had babies.

And then I met my husband. But I already knew my husband, because we grew up in the same town. He was from Fort Smith, too.

BK: Oh, really? So did you know him as a child?

MARY: Well, kind of but not really because we always went to Catholic schools, so no, not really. But we knew a lot of the same people. [deleted] was one that we both knew. And my sister-in-law sent some photographs about 15 years ago that she had of my husband, and there was a photograph of [deleted] like fifth or sixth birthday, and we were both in the picture, both my husband, [deleted] and I. And our parents knew each other. And then he knew my brother when they were like teenagers, but I don't remember. He'd be -- he said, "Oh, you'd always come in the room and ignore us. You'd look in the door, and then you'd slam the door," because they were both sitting there playing guitar. My brother trying, and [deleted] actually was good. But
he also went to prep school in Virginia, so he was gone essentially for four years during high school.

But we re-met up here. And we were together ever since. We lived together for two years before we got married. And then we got married in '75, and he was a musician. And when I met him, he was making a living as a musician. Well, bless his heart. That all ended not long before the babies were born [Laughs] as it sometimes does. But I think in his heart -- I know in his heart he was always a musician. You know, that -- he worked for the City of Fayetteville, but that was to make a living, but not to -- you know, it meant a paycheck to him. He was good at what he did, but it was always music.

BK: That was his passion.

MARY: Oh, yeah. And I've never had a passion. My sister [deleted] says she's the same way. We can do a lot of things pretty well, but we have no real talent, you know? Which is really okay, you know, it's kind of all right to be that way, I guess. But some people in the family have overriding talents. Like, [deleted] has some talents like for languages or other things. My brother [deleted] is a musician, and my brother [deleted] is a really good artist. But [deleted] and I, we're okay at a lot of stuff, but just not -- There isn't anything in my life like that, where I go, "Oh, you know, I live to do such and such." I don't.

You know, I'm good at looking at a budget, seeing some kind of flaw immediately. I can look at something and if -- I mean, my fiscal people are wonderful, but I can see when a budget's off and say, "Hey, why is this looking like this?" And nine times out of ten, they'll say, "Oh my
gosh! I didn't charge for this," or "I didn't bill for this particular thing in this quarter." And so I'm okay at doing that, I'm pretty good at it. And I'm pretty good at a lot of different parts of it, which is why I can do it. But I think even -- it might be a deficit to be really good at one part because if you can't do all those different things -- and they're very varied things. And part of it is I get bored really easily, and so this kind of organization is good because, you know, I can be looking at plans for a building in the morning. I can be dealing with infant issues in the afternoon, you know, and in between do all kinds of other things. So it's so varied that I never lose interest in it because we do so many different things. So it's really an ideal job for me.

MARY: But, you know, I'm just sort of at least until recently a fairly contented person. I always liked every job I had, except for the one in Chicago, which was pretty boring. I mean, it was incredibly boring. But I liked the people there. But every other job I've had I've been fairly happy with it. You know, just going along doing whatever I had to do. And there were parts of it, you know, like any job -- there are parts of my job now that I despise. You do them because you have to, but I was always fairly contented doing it, and a lot of it -- in parts of the job, and a lot of it was the people that I was with, you know.

But I never felt like, "Oh, no! I have to find another job! I just hate this job!" I really never felt that way, except that World Book thing because it was just awful. And it didn't play on any of my strings, you know, because it was just much too sitting in one place, and I have to move around. And so that was -- it just wasn't good, but it was a way of making a living. So that's why I can do my job, I think, is those very things, you know. I'm good at managing
people, and that's a huge key, you know, because I can't do it myself. They've got to do it. But it took me a long time after I took over -- which was a long time ago -- but it took me a really long time to get the managerial staff just the way I wanted, and it's -- right now. It could change tomorrow, of course. But right now, it's pretty good. And so everybody can do their jobs -- you know, or most of them can do most parts of their jobs. [Laughs] Which it will always be like that. It's just the way it is. But I do try and hire people who if they're working directly with me who have strengths that aren't my strengths. I never try to hire somebody like myself because I know I'll have some huge deficits. I mean, I love starting new things, but the details of carrying it out, somebody else is going to have to do it.

Yeah, and so, you know, that's important, the starting of it I'm just wild about. And I have to -- it took me a while to learn not to do it too often, you know, because it would kill me. So that I have to be real careful about. And, you know, you do learn over time because some of them -- sort of I put myself on a diet, a starting new program diet.

And I've already learned not to let anybody talk me into anything recently because we're in such a -- we're doing a lot of things. Nothing's real new. We have some things that are fairly new. But we have a huge project going on, the building of a new building, which takes raising the money for it and actually planning for the operation once it's built, and then also just the plans. And that's almost over with now. But the details of the planning of the building itself. And I had a board member who wanted to start this whole new thing. And I had enough sense to
say, "No, we can't." He said, "Oh, but we've got to, we've got to." And I said, "Then I'll quit."

And he apologized the next month. He said, "I wasn't thinking."

We have a facility in Fayetteville that is a [deleted]. They start at 18 months, and then
the oldest ones are sometimes 5. We occasionally keep them if they're not especially
developmentally able to go on to a kindergarten. We have one I think this year that we're going
to keep another year because he's just not ready to go to kindergarten and to function in a larger
classroom environment. And so that's the new building.

We have a site in Springdale, which is where my office is, and it's just north of where we
are in the middle of Springdale. It's on the edge, but it gives us access then, transportation-wise,
to serve children in the next county, Benton County. And they don't have anything like that.
And so we're going to increase the capacity by about 300 percent, I think, I don't know. We're
going from 22 children to an eventual 72 children in the building, and serve infants, which is
something I -- both the program manager and me have wanted to do for years. So that will be
good.

But it's a huge project, and we didn't really plan on raising $6 million during a recession.
[Laughs] We're doing fine. We're getting sort of close to half. But the last half is going to be
really hard because of the money situation in the community. But I think it's still doable. It may
take us a little longer than what our plan was. But anyway, I'm going back to my children. I
haven't done my children yet, which is pretty important.
So anyway, [deleted] and I had twins in '76, twin boys who were premature. It was very scary for us. I had to quit working, which I had sort of planned to do, you know, anyway, at some time, not quite that early, but it became obvious probably two and a half months before they were born that it wasn't going well. They were trying to be born then. I had this minor operation, closed up my cervix so they couldn't escape, you know, which worked. It kept them for another month or so, which -- they were born six weeks early.

They were fairly small, but they were very healthy. They wouldn't have been that small if they had been a single baby, but they were each about 3-11. And so I had these two little tiny babies. We took them home from the hospital when one was 4 pounds and one was just shy of 4 pounds. So they were very, very little. But, you know, they were pretty healthy. They ate well, and -- every two hours. Oh! It was just brutal at the beginning. Clyde did what he could, but, you know, I was breastfeeding them so it was just all night, every night. I don't think I've ever been so tired in my life, plus they had colic. So I can remember walking a crying baby and waking up when my knee hit the ground. [Laughter] But, you know, I really think it's about the same. I need a Kleenex.

BK: You know, I should have some and I don't. I don't think so. We should stop.

MARY: Shut it off.

[Cut]

MARY: -- my favorite subject, babies. [Laughter] Anyway, they were wonderful babies. I was so happy. I couldn't believe -- we were so shocked to have twins because we didn't know
we were having them until the first one was born, and he said, "Oh, there's another one." My poor husband lost all the feeling in his fingers and toes for like three days. He was in shock.

[Laughter]

But, you know, that was before ultrasound. And actually they had an ultrasound machine in Tulsa, and they were going to -- if I'd gone to term they would have gone over and used it or done amniocentesis or something to see if they were ready to be born, if their lungs were ready, but we never got that far. Like I said, they were born about six weeks early, which really it's not that bad.

I mean, as I say, they were pretty healthy. They stayed in the hospital two weeks. And they were in the hospital in Rogers because they didn't have enough room in the Springdale Hospital, where they were born. I used to feel sorry for them being born in Springdale, but now I've grown very fond of it since I've been working up there. But I just had a wonderful time with them, but as I say, it was just so exhausting at first. We were both like zombies. And of course [deleted] was working during the day.

And we always had a good time. They were a lot of fun. They were really wild little boys. They're not very wild now. They were these beautiful blond wild children, and just tons of fun. And I stayed home with them until they were about 9. I worked part-time for a friend when they went to school, go after they started school and get off right before I picked them up.

But it was good, you know. You've been to my house, you know, that neighborhood was full of little kids and most of them boys, so they just ran around from house to house in a pack.
It was great. I miss it so much. Sometimes I think, well, just one day maybe they'd all come back. But that was really wonderful.

You know, thinking about the things that are important, [deleted], my husband, was an alcoholic, and I didn't know it, of course, because I never notice the things I should notice, I think when I meet people. I either like them or don't, and then that's that. And so I didn't really realize how much he drank when we got married, but I should have, looking back on it. I didn't. And it was really kind of scary how much it became -- how much he started drinking.

And then by the time it was just -- it had gotten horrible, and he got hepatitis, I thought because he had cleaned out the basement, and we knew that it was like a 100-year flood in the basement of our house. Oh, it was just horrible. The whole neighborhood was just solid water. Anyway, we were letting our children walk on the street because they thought it was so great to walk in water before we discovered all the manhole covers had been taken off. It was so dangerous: If they'd fallen in one, I don't know if we could have fished them out.

But, because then all the sewers were overflowing, too. And he cleaned up the basement, and he got hepatitis really bad. [rest of paragraph deleted]

[paragraph deleted]

He [husband] lived in a family in Fort Smith that had all servants, and people -- you know, somebody lived in the house taking care of their kids, so he didn't know anything about kids. He was always kind of bewildered by them. But he was very sweet, and they love him
dearly. And he did a lot with them, or a lot compared to my father, who wasn't there very much. Of course he was supporting eight people, which isn't very easy.

But he did a lot. He went to every single baseball game, which was awful because they weren't any good. And so -- but he was very faithful. I went for a while, and then I was like, "I'm staying home. I've got stuff to do." So bless him for sticking it out. Every game. And then the football games. I'd go to the football games because they were much more exciting. And I went to some of them, you know. They were more fun. All my friends were there, and so I could talk to other people during the game. But he did really well, considering he had a very strange family.

I actually adored his mother, but she was a terrible mother. I mean, she really was. But I liked her. She was a lot of fun. She was hilarious, very smart and very funny and very unusual. Just a real princess. But she just wasn't cut out to be a mother. She was just absent all the time. But just beautiful.

Anyway, so that's what we did for the next whatever years is raise kids, you know. And then I was also working at EOA, where I work now. I started out there in a youth program. It was fun. It was getting teenagers jobs. And some of them had already dropped out of school and some were still in school. And it was really fun because I like the age. You know, they're bizarre. Well, I can remember my assistant -- what did she? She liked the boys a lot, and I liked them both, but I could get along with the girls. She couldn't stand the girls. But I had a lot of fun with them. But they would tell me these things that were so horrible, and I'd just be laughing
and saying, "I am so glad I'm not your mother! This is so appalling!" But it was, it was a lot of fun. And it was one of the best programs I think we've ever done because we did have a long enough time with them to really do some really good stuff.

And I'm also; I'm a very realistic person. I don't expect, you know, to spend ten minutes with somebody or three days and they change their lives forever. But, you know, all you can do is say, "Here are some opportunities." And if they take advantage of them, that's a good thing. If they don't, they don't.

But we did see some really good stuff happen to kids. And there were some that I'm so grateful that I knew. There were some remarkable people. They were young, but they were wonderful. And so that part was really good. And of course there were some that were just absolute pains, constantly. But that comes with the age and also with their experiences in life. But it was a lot of fun, and I loved it.

And then the funding for that just went away not long after I became director. That was pretty smart, I guess. I didn't really know that when I became director of the agency. And about that time, probably my kids in 1990, how old would they be? They were still in junior high. Oh, fun time. [Laughs] But, you know, it's just those years are a bore of work and children. A lot of fun stuff, though.

The group of children that they were friends with, most of their parents were friends of ours and it was good. Even when they were horrible, they were funny and clever and fun. One that the parents are really good friends and the father's a writer and the mother's a teacher. And
they lived just around the corner. And I loved [deleted]. He was just a bizarre child, and he still is. He's just very clever.

And I can remember getting so mad at him one day because they kept -- they were all going in my room when I wasn't there. Like, they got home from school before I got home from work, and I said, "You guys, you've got to stay out of my room! You cannot keep going in there." And [deleted] says, "Oh, no. Does that mean the end of underwear basketball games?" [Laughter] How could you not just laugh? I mean, it isn't something they were doing, but he just came up with these wonderful things.

Another time -- I have photographs of this. They were about 9 years old, and this was another [deleted] and [deleted] and [deleted] adventure. It was like one of those things where you could put things out on the curb and they come around and they get everybody's junk and take it away. It was Neighborhood Pickup or something. Well, they found an upright vacuum cleaner, and they dressed it up. They were down in the basement, and they put clothes on it and a hat, and they were walking around with it. Then they found two more. So they all walked through the whole neighborhood with these three vacuum cleaners dressed up like men.

And everybody loved it. Everybody was calling me saying, "Have you seen them? Have you seen your kids and [deleted]?" [Laughter] "Yes." It was great. It was stuff like that that I just loved, you know, these crazy things with kids. I miss it so much. I'm hoping I'll have a grandchild some day. But I'm going to be so old by then I won't be able to enjoy the vacuum cleaner -- [Laughter]
We did a lot of, you know, putting hundreds of kids in the car -- I did, not my husband. He wasn't a camping person. But a lot of kids in the car and going to the parks nearby, you know, like Devil's Den, which is a state park that has caves and things. And that was a big adventure. It was just fun.

And then high school was boring for them and me, too. I was so glad when they got out of high school. And I don't know. My life's so boring. But, you know, you just go to work, you come home, you do stuff, you do the kids stuff, then they grow up and go to college. And they pretty much lived with us through college, which was fine with us. We always got along well with them, and we had an apartment in the basement, which I've sort of pulled it out right now. But [deleted] lived down there, and [deleted] didn't care. He lived upstairs. He just didn't care if he lived with his parents most of the time. Occasionally people would go away, you know, get an apartment for a while, and then they come back, you know, and that sort of thing. But most of the time they did live with us, and as I say, it was fine. We got along well with them, still do, thank goodness.

And then we didn't have any kids. And I can remember we used to say, "Oh my God, when they leave, what are we going to talk about? Will we have anything to talk about?" We did. It was fine. It was wonderful in a way, you know, to have an adult relationship. And they were off by then and doing their thing. And it was good and lots of fun.

We could -- we lived in some ways real separate lives. Each of us let the other one do what they wanted to do, you know, and that worked out well for us. We were both very very
independent people. And of course [deleted] 's music was a huge part, and I'm tone deaf.

[Laughs] And I don't even listen to music. But I loved his music, so I had a concert every single night. He practiced every night and it was great. And I still -- I'll hear a song that he does and I'll -- "Oh, that's not as good as the way he did it." So then we just did that. We didn't do much. [deleted] hated to travel, too. That's how different we were. And finally I got him to go to see his father. He had a house in Florida, and we visited him there. We actually took the kids to the house his dad had in Port Aransas in Texas, and we did take them down there several times to that.

But I had a hard time getting him to travel anywhere. He hated to fly. So I got him to fly to Florida. That was great. Then we drove up the coast and went to visit a friend of his in Charleston. And actually that guy came for a visit last weekend. That was very nice of him. And he loved it, but he would never fly again. And after September 11th, he said, "That's it! I'm never flying again." I thought, "Well, this is such an excuse. You hate it. Now you have a real excuse." "I'll get blown up!"

And the sad thing is the summer before he died we went out to -- well, his nephew was getting married in Colorado, someone -- we're very fond of this young man. And so we were going to go, and [deleted] said, "Well, we'll drive." And I was like, "No. Well, you can drive. I'll fly." That's it. I'm not driving across Kansas. And then I thought, "Well, I don't want him to drive all by himself." So, okay. We had a wonderful time.
And so we went to Denver, where they were getting married, and did that thing. And then we drove through southern Colorado. And we did everything we wanted to. I'm so happy because I wasn't cheap for once in my life. I'm a very cheap person. And we just did everything we wanted to. He loved trains, and so we went on the Royal Gorge Railroad. Have you ever been on that? It's really beautiful. It's a little town called -- it's spelled Cañon City. They call it Canyon City. And it's outside of Pueblo, I think I think that's where we spent the night. We spent the night at -- no, it was smaller than that. I can't remember the town. It's a nice little town, had a really nice old section and a canal going through the middle of it. You could walk the canal up and down, we did that.

And then we went out to this little Cañon City, and you get on this train, and it's 12 miles. You go 12 miles into the gorge frontwards, and then they back up for 12 miles. It was really spectacular. It was so beautiful. And it takes hours. And you can have lunch on the train. And they have a -- you can pay more and be in the observation car. I'm not sure that we were. We had a huge curving window so we could see everything.

My husband worked for the city, and he worked in -- he started out doing maps and plats in the water and sewer department. And he's taking all these photographs of this sewer line, or water line that was defunct. But it was made out of wood, so it was fascinating to him that there was a water line made out of wood. But it was just absolutely beautiful. And you go right along a river. And so what you can do on that trip is you can go 12 miles in, and then you can get out and get in a canoe and come back in a canoe. But we didn't do that. We stayed on the train the
whole time. It was really spectacular. Then we drove down to Taos and went to Taos, Pueblo and stuff, you know. And then we went to Santa Fe, which he loved. He'd never been to Santa Fe. It's really nice. We stayed almost -- Well, it was sort of funny. One time years and years ago my sister [deleted] and I -- she was living in California, and we met at Albuquerque and then took the children -- I had the kids with me because [deleted] wouldn't drive across Texas, either.

It took two days to drive across Texas. It was awful. But we went to this hotel, and in Santa Fe that a friend of [deleted]'s had recommended. And it was horrible. It was so dirty. I had already given them my credit card, and then when I looked at the room, I said, "Oh no, I'm not staying here." The kids were very embarrassed that I'd walk out. And I said, "Would you rather sleep in dirt than -- or be embarrassed?" They said, "We'd rather sleep in dirt. [Laughter] So we camped some of the time.

But I got on the internet to make reservations for this trip that we were going on, and that had been renovated like about five years after [deleted] and I had this experience. So I made reservations there, and it was beautiful. It was wonderful. So we stayed quite a while in Santa Fe, and we walked around and we ate good food. The food's good if you know -- kind of research where to go. And I'd had an employee actually who had been out there earlier and spotted some good restaurants. It's just beautiful.

We also went to a -- there's a really wonderful, I think it's a national park near Santa Fe that the children and I had gone to that I love called Bandelier. And it's not as big as the Anasazi
places, but it's like that. And so we went up to that. It was wonderful, and we took thousands of photographs. It's so boring to look at them all, but they're pretty good. A lot of them are good.

And then we came home. But what was so sad about it is like driving back, I was driving, and I have a tendency to want to just drive straight through some place and not stop. And we got as far as Oklahoma City, and [deleted] said, "Do you realize it's only 3 1/2 hours to home?" I said, "Yeah, let's not stop. Let's just go." And then right when we were coming up Route 40 to Fayetteville, he said, "Hey, you know, we could just get up early in the morning. If we left at 6, we could have dinner in Santa Fe." I was, "Yes! Let's do that." And he -- "Yeah, we'll do it."

So right when he decided to travel, he got sick. So that was too bad because it had taken me all those years to try and convince him travel's good, it's fun. Because I still was trying to get him to Europe, because I really knew he loves food so much, that once he had the food, he'd love it. And he loved art and architecture, a perfect place for him. But I never got him to Europe, and so that's why I always went with other people. And it was good. I loved going, but I missed him so much after -- I could stay 11 days, that was all I could take, or I'd miss him too much. And so I guess that's -- the children being born and then raising those is a huge event in my life, and then Clyde's death of course is horrifying and, you know, has changed everything.

I still don't have a future. You know, I haven't been able to imagine a future because we had an imagined future, and then it's gone. And it was so scary when he passed away. You know, he was diagnosed and he died 10 1/2 weeks later. And so it was just this flurry of hospital
visits and chemotherapy and scary stuff all the time. And I still haven't recovered from that at all. And I know that. But eventually I know I will imagine a future for myself without him, but, you know, when you're with somebody for 36 years, and you always think you will be and you think you'll grow old with that person, and then all of a sudden that's just -- snap! It's just --

So I kind of feel right now my life's on hold kind of. And I'm better now, but nothing has the same kind of joy, you know. And I think it was really good that not long after he died I went to Europe with [deleted]. And I enjoyed it thoroughly but it was -- everything is sort of -- the top is sort of taken off of everything.

But it's getting better. I can now -- there were times I could just barely get through a day of work. But now, you know, that's pretty good, and I love it again. At first I just didn't care very much at all for about six months. It was like I was doing the motions, which I don't remember anything about. My boys will say, "Well, such and such." "What are you talking about? Why are we doing this this way?" "You told us to," and I have no memory of that. It's like, "You shouldn't have listened to me!" But I have no memory of about six months. It just goes on.

And it's a good -- you know, I really understand it's a part of being human. You know, those joyous times are a part and these horrifying -- but you'd just as soon not have the horrifying part until you're so old you don't know what's going on. I would have preferred that. Yeah, it's just -- and it's partly just the horror of it, you know, this -- you know, we're fat dumb and happy one morning, and he says, "Well, you know, the doctor, he didn't know. He doesn't know what's
wrong with my stomach and wants me to do a CAT scan." And then that afternoon I get home from work, and he said, "Well, he wants me to go to the hospital and have more tests." And we're still just like, "Well, good. You know," saying, "we're finally going to find out what it is." A couple hours later the guy walks in and tells us the very grim diagnosis.

And I didn't even know how grim it was until I got on the computer that night. And it's just horrible. It's like 100 times that week being punched in the stomach, you know, over and over. It was just -- everything just got worse and worse and worse, you know? It was like, "You have pancreatic cancer. You have a huge tumor on your kidney. Oh, yeah, and you've got liver cancer. Oh, yeah, and you've got lung cancer." I mean, it was just one thing after another. It was horrible.

And I guess some part of me may have known that he was going to die, but I couldn't believe it, you know? He was much more calm than I am -- I was. And I think everybody is, you know. Like if you cut yourself really badly, you're usually calmer than somebody who really loves you is about it. Or that's the way I was with the kids, you know, or whatever.

But I kept saying, "Are you scared?" And he'd say, "No. I'm not scared. It's very odd, but I'm really not scared." And I'd say, "Well, I'm terrified out of my mind you're going away." Just absolute terror for ten weeks. And even at the very end -- and I could always tell, you know, when doctors would look at me, they would be thinking, "She's being very unrealistic." And I knew that, but I was like, "Too bad, buddy. I'm doing the best I can here," you know. [Laughs]
So that's been the -- probably the hugest part of my life or the one thing that, you know, I somehow can't get around or make better or anything. And it's just going to be a long time. It really is, and so I'm just still sort of in a fog. And that's the way it is. But I do know I can rebuild my life, but it won't be what I imagined. And I guess you go through a grief, and then maybe you let -- you finally let that go. I don't know.

That's my whole boring life, except the last part wasn't boring. It was just horrifying, like a horror movie or something to me. I don't know what it was -- it was horrible for the children, too. You know, they were just devastated. And that was also so hard for me as a mother to see them suffering so much, you know, because you hate it when your kids suffer. And they would be in such pain to lose him. That was really really bad.

And they were great, you know. They tried to be realistic and were very sweet and wonderful. I was happy they were there, but I wasn't happy about any of the rest of it. I was happy that I could take care of them, and that was all. But that was even painful because -- you know, he'd always loved to eat, you know, no matter what kind of horrible meal. When you cook, it can be okay most of the time, and then sometimes it's just awful. When you're doing it every night and you're doing it just as fast as you can just to get everybody fed. And he would never complain. He'd eat anything I made. And then toward the end I was just trying everything, over and over, you know, this, this, this, and he couldn't eat anything. Oh, man, I'm glad I never nagged him about how fat he was. [Laughter] His father used to say to me, he'd say, "Why don't you make him lose weight?" My father-in-law's wife smokes. I'd say, "Why don't
you make Sharon quit smoking?" and that would shut him up. I said, "You can't make an adult
do anything they don't want to do."

That's my life. But, you know, I don't know, I guess my childhood -- my young
adulthood, I don't really think about that much, until I got married, or met [deleted] and then --
My childhood I think about a lot because I remembered it being a lot of fun. I had a really good
time, you know. I liked babies, I liked little kids, so it was good. It was a lot of fun. And it was -
- we did some really interesting things.

We used to put on plays, and [deleted] was always the director. Can't you see it?

[Laughter] But she was really good because she was very creative, you know. And we did these
bizarre plays, and especially in Florida, for all our relatives. And that was kind of -- there was a
TV there some of the time. In Florida there was a TV. At home we got one when we were
pretty young, and then it broke and mommy just never had it fixed until we were in high school.
So we did a lot of stuff like that. And [deleted] was so creative, so she did a lot of stuff like that,
directing plays and making us bizarre stuffed animals.

I don't know what happened to it, but I had kept one of them. I may still have it in the
closet some place. But they were very odd. I mean, she designed them herself. They weren't the
standard little bunnies and -- in fact, they had tentacles and things. But they were great. But it
was -- that was a lot of -- you know, that many kids, we had a good time. You know, we fought
like cats and dogs and thought we were always the one that wasn't favored as much as the rest.
You know, "Oh, they're so mean to me!" But that's just being a kid. "You'll be happy when I'm dead," that kind of stuff. [Laughter] But they all do that, I'm discovering.

Second Interview: Library Story

BK: Ok, let me read you my statement. By the public library I mean any of the services you might receive through the library as well as all of the content in the library—the books, CDs, videos, and more—that you might use in the building or at home, in your car, at work, or anywhere. I also mean any interactions you might have with people at the library—whether library staff members, people you may meet, or friends you might run into—as well as experiences attending classes or programs. Finally, I also mean to include any experiences you might have online through the library, or by accessing the library from your home or work computer. Okay?

MARY: All right.

BK: Please tell me your experiences using the public library throughout your life, and reflect on those experiences. Start wherever you like. Please take the time you need. I'll listen first, I won't interrupt, and I'll just take some notes for afterwards.

MARY: Okay. Hmm. Well, I can remember, when the library was in another location, I used to go there more often for non-library kind of things because there was a meeting room there. But in this library, I just come to get books. I don't do anything else. I don't have coffee. Don't do any of the -- and I may someday do some of the other events. I get the notice and read about it. But I did go to a play here, which was fun, with some friends. It was a University of Arkansas student-written production. Don't remember a thing about it, but it was fun, you know.
But I really don't use this library for anything but walk in, get something, walk out. And that's all.

But, you know, as a child, we had where we grew up one of the old -- we called it the -- what did we call it? -- the [kar-NAY-gee] --library, instead of Carnegie. It was a [kar-NAY-gee] library. And it was one of those old red brick buildings. I think they all kind of looked the same built in that era. And we spent a lot of time there. One time they had -- this is my favorite library experience, I mean, at least -- not book-wise. But they had this Archeological Society that met at the library, and my brother and I -- I couldn't have been more than like 8 or 9, and was 18 months younger -- decided we wanted to join, but there weren't any other kids. And my mother let us. We had a wonderful time. Everybody tolerated us. They'd take us out on digs, and we'd sit through the meetings. We just loved it. We thought it was wonderful, and we did that for a long time. We probably lost interest, you know, but that was a lot of fun.

But I think about it because it's bizarre. I don't think people would let their children do that now. You know, just, "Oh, okay. I'll drop you off, and you're with these adults we don't know who may take you out in the woods some place." But it was good. We had a great time, and we were interested in the subject. And so it was fun. And we always got books out, you know. We had books in the house, too, but we were big readers.

And then because I wasn't working when the kids were young, we were there -- and it was three blocks from our house, you know, we were there all the time, spent a lot of time in the library and taking them. And I think we even did some of the story time things, because I was
free during the day. It made a big difference. That was good. That was fun. They always wanted to read what I read, which they couldn't of course.

But one thing that was really neat. I loved the experience, and of course they have no memory of any of this. My husband and I had gone to see the Tutankhamen exhibit that was going around in probably '74, maybe? '75, '74 in Kansas City. And we'd gotten books, and they'd seen the books, and they wanted to learn more about it. And I said, "Okay, I'll look up something." And I got Carter's book. So I was reading it, and I'd tell them about it. And they said, "No, no. Read us the book." So I read the entire book to them. And they sat there as 5- or 6-year-olds, and I got through the book. But then in the end of it, there's an autopsy. Well, they wanted me to read that, so I was sitting there with Grey's Anatomy, you know, saying, "Oh, that means such and such." [Laughs] But it was fun. And I always got them a lot of books. And they don't read at all now, neither one of them. Well, Aaron is more of a reader than Josh, but they don't read, which I find just really amazing because my husband and I both read a lot.

But lately I've been on a history jag, the last couple of years, so that's mostly what I've read here. Or novels that my friends lend to me. I've got a lot of writer friends who buy everything, or read everything. And so they -- I've been on a World War II Churchill jag, and that's mostly what I've been reading. I always use, you know, cookbooks and things like that.

But I really haven't read a whole lot of novels even lately. My concentration is still really bad. I had to give up Churchill, too. That was pretty dry. I wanted to move ahead to September 1939 when the action started. [Laughs] Horrifying, but it's like, "Okay."
But what I love about libraries is you can take risks. You know, if you're going to buy a book, you're going to be pretty sure you want to read that book. And the library, you can just wander around, and if something catches your eye, and if I go home with a huge stack every time, you can give it a shot. You may hate it, and it may be something wonderful. And it could be on any subject, you know. "Oh, all right. I don't know anything about that." You try it out.

That's I think one of the best things that there's that element of being able just to jump off at any spot you want to stop at. And you can stay there a while if you like it, but you can get back on and just go on and do something else. And that's what I really love about libraries is there's so much here that you can just browse around and pull anything down. And then you can go to the specifics for specific needs, like a cookbook or -- again, you don't want to buy a cookbook that's on some bizarre thing, but you want one recipe. And you use it, bring it back, and move on.

BK: Can you tell me about any books that made a real difference in your life?

MARY: That's hard to say. The biggest difference. When I was a kid, I loved The Secret Garden I love that book, and I read it to my children, and they loved it, too. And I remember that one a lot. I read a lot. I wish I could remember. I think it goes in one ear, out the other after a while, or at least for me it does.

But I told you yesterday I read all of Shakespeare when I was in the eighth grade. Well, I'm still reading it every week with a group of friends. And it's just fun. We're lousy at doing it and we don't care, but the good thing is to go together. If anybody cared, it would be a terrible
experience, but nobody cares how bad we are at actually doing the reading part of it. But that just is so pleasurable, and it always is. And we've read everything, and the things that people never read, which -- it turned out really good because when I was in New York the last time that I -- we went to see Cymbeline, which I've never liked. I mean, it's just hard to read. And yet on stage, it was great. I understood it because you could associate all the characters moving around with human entities. And so then it made sense. And so when I got back, we read it again, and I could tell everybody who everybody was for once. It was fun.

And that's just something fun we do because 20 years ago we were sitting around one summer and being bored and decided to do it. And then we just kept it up. It's kind of pathetic because sometimes we don't remember them, which is really bad [Laughs] considering we probably read all of them at least ten times, or at least the major ones.

I'm trying to think of books. God, there are so many. I was telling you about the Marshallese – people, I was reading a book recently that they had in the book club section. And it's something and I Fall Down. And it's about a, I guess Laotian maybe family in California that has an ill child. And it's this social worker, I guess, or some kind of medical person, maybe a nurse, trying to get them to get the right kind of medical treatment for her and that big between the family, what they wanted. They wanted the best for their child. It wasn't necessarily what the nurse thought was best. And I'm told a lot of people are struggling with the Marshallese:. Read that book. It's a different culture, but it's the same thing we're trying to do: Force people into our little categories and -- But it was done really, really well because -- and it all turned out
horrible. The child died eventually, but she was an extraordinarily ill child, anyway, and
probably would have or very possibly would have died.

But the woman managed to write it without condemning them for what they couldn't do
and what they wouldn't do, which, you know, sometimes is the same thing, sometimes it isn't.
But that was really interesting, and I could really see how we were always trying to fit people
into a Western thought pattern, and it's impossible for them to do that. And I enjoyed that a lot.
That wasn't fiction.

I read a lot of junk, just escape reading, especially right now while I'm not -- my
concentration isn't real good. Some of them are really good, and some of them aren't. Like I can't
get through Agatha Christie at all. However, I read her autobiography, and I loved it. I loved
everything about it. I loved her descriptions of Victorian England when she was a child, you
know, the intricate descriptions of Christmas and, you know, seeing this bright person, and we
still use this phrase, my friends and I, because she and her sisters -- her sisters were really trying
to find her a husband. I think they were older and married. And so they started playing this
game at parties called Agatha's Husband. And they pick out the two most horrible-looking men
in the room, and they'd say, "Okay, Agatha, you've got to choose that one or that one. Which
one do you choose?" And they started referring to very unattractive people, men, as, "Oh, he's a
real Agatha's husband," because he'd be a candidate for the game.

And then, you know, she was just a fascinating woman, and her books are just not very
interesting to me at all. But, you know, a woman that was abandoned by her husband at a time
when that was a really bad thing to happen, and how she truly forged a life for herself and her child out of nothing after that.

And then the best part is she traveled all through -- her second husband was an archeologist, a lot younger than she was -- and traveling all through the East and especially what's now Iraq. And that's really interesting stories. I love that book. We decided to have a book club at work, and I suggested that, and they all hated it, and so we didn't have our book club anymore. [Laughter] Well, I wouldn't read what they wanted me to read, and they couldn't read what I wanted them to read. So we stopped. I read Atonement at that time, and I said, "Let's try that." So now I'm saying, "You go see the movie. You'll like it probably."

Gosh, I wish I could remember more books. And I'm famous for not remembering very well and having to reread things. You know, I have some things at home out now. So Faulkner I read over and over again. I enjoy it. I like the Southern writers a lot. I think it captures something about the South that's probably gone now, and probably it's a good thing it is. But I enjoy that a lot. I still read a lot of the classic things over and over, or every 10 years, you know, or every 15, that kind of stuff.

Lately, about a year or two ago, I decided I wanted to try and find a history of the Middle East not written by a Westerner. And that was impossible. I couldn't find anything.

So then I had seen this guy on television. It was a -- I think he might live in Spain, and I'm not sure which country he's from, but he's -- the name is Iziz[sp?], so -- and he had written -- and they're kind of -- I won't say they're -- they're kind of historical novels. They're not great
works, you know, but they're good and they're interesting about, you know, the -- not really the
Spanish Conquest, but when the Moors were actually -- or what they called Moors were driven
out of Spain. And, you know, the Crusades. But at least it's from a slightly different perspective.

BK: Mm-hm.

MARY: But I never did find any kind of history that wasn't written by a Western person,
so I boinked out on that one.

And sometimes I just will wander around. But I'm usually -- I usually don't do just
complete wandering around. I'll look up something. I'll have a name or a subject and start there.
But as I say, that's the best thing, you know, to just go up and down.

The weirdest thing about it now, though, because I have to wear glasses to read, it's hard
to do that. It's much harder because if you have to lean way down and you have glasses, they're
always falling off. And I've noticed that it's not as comfortable as an experience as it used to be,
just because I'm so blind without glasses on. And then there's the one time I went without my
glasses, and somebody else had to pick out all my books for me, which was good. It turned out
great. I can't remember what any of them were.

But I don't stay very long because I never had time. I'm always coming at night, and it's
usually after I've walked the dog and fed myself, and so now it's just a rush in, rush out kind of
thing. Get as much as I can hold and go home. I bet I haven't been here in -- well, I haven't been
here in a very long time right now just because of my -- just being busy and so much to do at
home, clearing out stuff and that kind of stuff. And also not being able to concentrate, which I
really don't want to get into, but I've had some real severe health problems that have not been good.

But I look forward to a time when I really have time to spend, you know. But you know what it's like. You're busy on weekends. And so I go in the evening. It really is a get in, get out kind of thing anymore.

I don't even -- I always read. I've never not read. I'm trying to think what I did. I must have gone to the library because I certainly couldn't have afforded to [buy] books. And I can remember even in Italy, there was -- you could go to the embassy. And I don't know if you could check them out. I think I had to stay there and read them out of the library. But I'd do that, just sit in the embassy library and read.

I don't think you could check them out, and that was a definite problem. There was one book, I must have read it five times, and I never wanted to see it again. It was -- oh, what was it? It's a famous book. It's about the Northwest and a logging family. Is it called Sometimes a Great Notion? I don't know. Whatever it was, that was the only book I owned at one time. But I would fill in with other things I'd buy or borrow. I thought, "If I have to read this book one more time, I'll scream. I'm sick of it."

And then, you know, in the early parts of children, I guess I did read a little bit ... in that time. You know, when they were infants, there was no way I had time. But as soon as they could get -- I could start reading to them, then I started using the library more. But I really from
the time -- if I was in school, I'd use the school library. But in those in between times, I don't think I did very much. I can't remember.

I think I -- I can vaguely remember going to the New York City library, the big one with the lions downtown, or midtown -- I don't know where it is anymore -- when I lived there. But I didn't go very much. You know, that was a time, again, this social life kind of thing.

But all the rest of my life, I've read a lot. Probably too much. Maybe I'd remember some if I didn't plow through them at breakneck speed, have to get to the end, you know. And I don't like it if anybody tells me anything about a book. I don't want to know anything. I don't even want -- I'll cover up the back because they tell too much, and I don't want to see it until I can read the whole book. I want to go through it from a beginning, to the middle, to the end, that's it. But that's why I don't like to read things on the backs or the -- Now, if it's an unknown book, I have to read something just to see if I'm going to hate this. Because I've gotten home with things I just despise. Oh, I don't like to know. And I hate it when people talk about it. I don't want them to talk about movies, either. I want to have the whole experience myself. I don't want somebody's overlay. Although I've read reviews and then gone out and gotten the book, or said, "Well, maybe I won't read that." But somehow that doesn't bother me as much as somebody just talking and telling me about it.

If I've read something really good lately, I would know that. But I haven't been reading hardly anything just lately because I'm too tired by the end of the day. I can't even get through the New Yorker, which I used to, every Friday night that's what I did. I'd read the entire New
Yorker. But that was mostly because I was tired and didn't want to see another person, I didn't want to talk on the phone. And then very often my husband would go to a house concert for music on Friday nights, and I didn't go to those usually because the chairs gave me a backache. [Laughs] And so I'd just sit there by myself, happy, just reading. And even finish it in a few hours, you know. Fiction first, unless it's some fascinating subject. But I don't even get there. I have stacks I haven't finished now. So I'm probably -- but I used to not do that. I just fall asleep too easily now.

But I'm trying to think of what -- I feel terrible. I thought about this this morning. I don't remember the name of anything I've read or anything about them right now. I tend to like the English writers better because you can usually get a book -- I'm always in danger with books by American writers that they'll be child victims, and I don't want to read it. I leave it at work, and I just don't want to have to read about that. And you have a better chance of that not happening with them, although it does. Peter Robinson, I like. He's one of my favorites. I'll read everything he writes, and I don't usually pay enough attention to know. What else? There's another one, English guy, that does the Lynley series. Who is that? I can't remember his name. And it's on PBS. Oh, the strange this is I don't like to watch mysteries. I don't like movies or TV. Oh, I'll watch the PBS show sometimes, but not very much. But I'd rather read than watch them on TV or in a movie theater.

I can remember the name of that other one. I'll probably find it on the shelf. I sort of know where to go. [Laughs]
I listened to one book on tape because I was traveling. And I probably would like that. It's a good way to fill the time when you're just driving. I drive to Little Rock, or used to, a lot, and it's a boring drive. I've done it a thousand times. So it does really pass the time, but I've only done it once. And I haven't -- I don't think -- I'm trying to think where I got that book. I think I got it at Hastings or one of those places. I've never checked one out here. I've only checked out CDs. I do read magazines sometimes, you know, because they'll be things I'd never get a subscription to, and I just down and read. Maybe I would, but I wouldn't ever get to read it enough to justify it. So I don't use anything, but the book part, and the magazine part occasionally. I spend a lot of time in the car which I -- I wouldn't do it, you know, going to work and back. That's valuable kind of quiet time to think. But if I went on long -- a three-hour trip, three hours there, three hours back in one day, I'd probably do that more often. But I usually can't find anything I haven't already read, because it's mostly -- it's hard to find something that's real interesting. But as I said, I've only done it once, and it wasn't a very good book.

I do read quite a few biographies. I do like those a lot. I tried to read Mountbatten, but, man, that was boring after he grew up. I just couldn't get through it. And it's strange, though, because it was one of the few I really couldn't get through. But I do like those. I liked Eleanor Franklin, that was a lot of fun. I haven't read that in a million years, and I sold it, so I'm probably going to have to come here to get it if I wanted to read it again. Yeah, a biography might be good on tape. I don't remember ever seeing them. But I really haven't looked here, and I didn't see
any. I looked a little bit one time because I was going to take a trip, but I didn't find anything I was that interested in.
APPENDIX F

TRANSCRIPTS OF MADELINE’S INTERVIEWS
First Interview: Life Story

MADELINE: [in progress] Okay, let's see. I'm one of those people who has a very early first memory and kind of a broad, pretty specific way of remembering things. And my first memory, I was only 18 months old, which people say you can't have them that early. But when you date the house where we were and the fact that it's not something somebody could tell me, was I remember peeling wallpaper off the wall, and my mom coming in and spanking me. That has to date to about 18 months.

I think I was remembering and thinking about my life probably from pretty early. I'm a faculty brat. Both my parents taught at the university -- well, my father taught at the university and my mother went to school, but she was always too shy to actually teach. He taught theater, and so my first memories are in -- I think they were at Pacific Lutheran where he was teaching when I was starting to remember things. And my mother was taking graduate studies in philosophy at that time. And then he was teaching while she went to school.

And he used to take me to classes with him. She was pretty busy those first years. And he would brag that I was extremely well-behaved and that he could take me to class and he could lecture and I would never say a word, which is true because it was kind of rather [?] he did what he said. We had a lot of fun as long as I was really well-behaved, but he was extremely strict if you weren't well-behaved.

So I went to classes with him and I went to rehearsals with him, and learned to read, holding the script for all the actors in the plays and correcting their lines, which I'm sure they
appreciated. And while we were still in Oregon, I had a little brother, and he didn't get along very well with my dad. He was kind of a tender soul, and my dad wanted more of a robust son.

So I kind of had to be the tomboy robust fighter of the family, so I had to take care of my little brother a lot. And he is 18 months younger than I am. His name's Spike, so he and I were very close. And he's not very verbal, so I kind of had all the verbal skills. He was very musical. He had all musical skills, although of course as it turns out when families typify you that way, probably I had musical skills I could have developed, and he turned out to be pretty good verbally himself.

Then we moved to Eugene, Oregon, and my dad went to get his dissertation and my mom typed people's thesis for -- while she put him through school. And we lived in married student housing there, which were old, World War II, you know, like, what do they call those?

BRIAN KENNEY (BK): Barracks?

MADELINE: Barracks, yeah. They were terrible. And I went to first grade there -- kindergarten and first grade there. And my mom typed long hours into the night, and she was an absolute perfectionist, so this was before computers or even IBM Selectrics, so every mistake, you know, had to be taken out by hand or the whole page retyped. And she has some mental illness problems, anyway, so she became extremely obsessive about having every page perfect, you know, so that her desk was always surrounded with piles of discards, you know, that we could draw on.
And I still spent a lot of time with my dad when he was in doing his assistant teaching or stuff like that, so I would go with him to all his rehearsals and sit in the audience and watch or read a book or something and, you know, learned how to put stage makeup on and go back and play with the costumes, you know, and play rummy with the cast in the green room. And it was pretty fun. It was good.

But at that point in my life, I also I think started to get afraid, which they say is typical around the time that you're about 6, you start understanding that there are bad things in the world and you're not very clear on where they are.

Let's see. I was born in '56, so this would be like '60, 1960. And, you know, the nurse murders, the nurses were murdered in there, and all those pictures were in Life magazine around that time. And I read an essay once about that period called "Hitler in the Basement" because I had heard all these TV programs talking about that Hitler was on the large, and that, you know, like all of his henchmen -- he had escaped somewhere, and was his body really burned, you know. And I wasn't really quite sure who Hitler was, but, you know, I definitely associated him with pictures that you see on TV of the Holocaust and this stuff.

You know, so I thought that was pretty scary, but I was definitely sure that he was really smart and that he would not have gone to South America, where everybody else went, that he would go someplace where no one would look for him, which was obviously in our school basement. So I thought Hitler was living in our school basement, you know, and that the janitors were like bringing him grilled cheese sandwiches at lunchtime and stuff. So I was very careful
never to go into the school basement and not to let any of my friends go in the school basement, either.

And I probably spent a lot of time trying to overhear my parents’ conversations, you know, because I'm sure they were not aware that I was listening or, you know, as aware of stuff as I was, so I would try to gather all the information about Hitler that I could.

And about that time, I started to get kind of obsessive-compulsive, so I think there are a lot of -- more stresses now in my life when I look back at that time than I realized at the time. I think with my mom being a perfectionist, and, you know, she later became severely mentally ill, and she was kind of going into it at that time, and my dad's pretty much a full-fledged narcissist, so I think there was a lot of pressure on me to be really perfect, and that feeling like you would not -- you would just disappear if you weren't really perfect.

So I started doing those things like not stepping on the cracks, you know, religiously and daring myself to do things because my dad didn't like people who were afraid. If you could dare yourself to do things, then you wouldn't be afraid, you know. So I would dare myself to do the things that I was really afraid of doing.

And one time I almost dared myself to jump into the ocean off a cliff into this churning, big devil's churn. And they were watching my brother, who had a bad habit of walking off the backs of trains and towers and stuff. So they were watching him, and I was standing on the edge of the cliff, thinking I -- you know, okay, if I dare myself, I'll have to do it. And I was coming very close to making that dare before they, you know, yelled me back from the cliff. So, you
know, in retrospect, I don't know exactly what that means, but I think that probably shows that there was quite a bit of stress going on, that either I wasn't aware, have, I was somehow internalizing, you know?

And then my mom got pregnant with my third brother, who's like seven years younger than me, and we moved -- my dad got done with graduate school and we moved to a little town in Oregon, where he had his first teaching job. But he didn't have his dissertation done.

And that year is when I started really reading a lot. I was way ahead of all the other kids in reading. And in my first grade class, I would get in trouble for reading ahead in the reader, and she was very mean about it, so you just had to sit there while everybody else would read their paragraph, you know, and then you'd come to your paragraph, which I would read perfectly, rapidly, and with expression. Then my turn was over, and it was everybody else's turn to stumble through it.

But she wouldn't let me read ahead. It just absolutely drove me crazy. I still don't like to be read to very much, I think probably from that. I just hate it. Although once in a while I find somebody that can read to me.

But in the second grade class, it was a student teaching school that went with the university, so the teachers were really, really good. And so they immediately put me in my own reading group where I actually was by myself, and I could read anything I wanted to as long as I did book reports on them.
That was just fabulous, so I just read the dickens out of that whole year: I read, read, read, read, read, read. And by favorite book that year was Peter Pan. And Peter Pan, you know, is actually much more difficult to read if you read the original versions, and -- that was second grade. And, you know, it's kind of written -- it's got a lot about the husband and wife's relationship in there, and it's pretty -- it's actually -- You know, I've read it later. It's written in that Victorian tone.

BK: Mm-hm.

MADELINE: It's kind of hard to read. But I read it about four times that year, and, you know, left my window open and everything. I was really, really into it. But I was bad at math, and I actually think that's not one of those things that they just say it is, a girl thing. I think I actually am bad at math. I think right now I would have had a really hard time in high school when they make you go all the way through Algebra II, because really I just can't do it. I can think the logic through, I'm very good at the logic, but just all the symbols don't have much point to me, and I'm always wondering why you want to know what X is. I mean, if there's a really good reason to know what X is, I'm sure I can find a way to figure it out. But it would take a lot of time, and it's not really worth it. [Laughs] You know, I just couldn't quite get it.

And my grandfather, my mothers' father, had a sheep farm, and so my first bad experience with this math was they asked me in my first grade class how many sheep was many sheep and how many sheep was few sheep. And they had the little boxes with four sheep and two sheep. And I said they were obviously both few sheep because we had thousands of sheep.
And that was wrong, and they marked me wrong, and even when they knew why I said it, they still marked me wrong. That was kind of the beginning of the end for me in math.

I think I am a more relative thinker, and I like to put facts together and make something out of them. So the kinds of thinking, like physics, where you see something and then you try to figure out how it works by taking it apart, I'm just not that -- I just can't do that very well. My physics teacher actually once said that to me. He said, "I think you're not so good at the --" Is that the deductive or the inductive?

BK: I don't know. Is it stalactites or the other one?

MADELINE: Exactly. But I'm not so good at the one where you take something apart.

BK: Deductive.

MADELINE: Deductive reasoning. But I'm really good at the other kind, and I'm really good at synthesis. I mean, I'm really, really -- I think I have like a genius for synthesis. I can just take things from all over and put them together and write about them easily and then explain them to other people easily. And, you know, when I'm teaching, I can find an example that comes right out of the students' lives, just a perfect analogy, you know. And so I'm really good at that part, but the other part I'm really bad in.

And that year in second grade, my mom tried to commit suicide, and I was home for that -- when she did that. So I don't -- and that's interesting because that's the only thing I don't remember practically in my whole life. And I don't remember it. So -- but I know I was there. And she was pregnant with my third brother, so they kept her in the hospital until he was born.
And he's always been a little off, probably because of all the drugs that they gave her during that time. He's kind of -- he's very smart, but he's almost memory retarded in that he can't adapt at all. He can't do anything new. And he's still working as a cook at the same job he's had since he was 17. He just can't -- even when you get the application and find a job that's taking -- you know, he just can't. You know, there's just something that doesn't quite notch there.

And then we moved to Nevada, and we were in Reno until I was in eighth grade, I think in eighth grade, so from third grade through eighth grade. And during that time, I really spent a lot of time with my dad. He was -- still hadn't written his dissertation, and my mom was still typing theses and being driven completely bananas by them. And I took a lot of care of my littlest brother. My mom was sick a lot during that -- those first couple years we were there.

But my dad had to direct five plays a year, which no one really has to do that anymore. Usually now they expect two, and if you have to do three they consider that a pretty heavy load, along with the teaching load. But he had to direct all the plays at the University of Nevada for like eight years. So I was there. I was there for -- not on school nights most of the time, but every other possible night, and some school nights if they were going to get off early or if he thought he could make me go to sleep, you know, on a pile of costumes or something.

And that was the best thing. That was the best thing in my life was being in the -- going to the plays and memorizing all the lines and making friends with all the cast, and, you know, being everybody's little pet, and eating turkey sandwiches and painting, you know, the sets. And
that was a lot of fun. That, and I read. I read and read and read and read and read and read and read.

And I never really had any really close friends during that time. I would try to make friends. I would have some friends, but usually they weren't interested in the same things that I was interested in, and they would always want to know why I wanted to read instead of coming outside and playing, and going outside and playing was kind of like math. It was like, "And what are we doing? So, why?"

And by the time that I'd started finding the company of the kids my age more interesting, they had started becoming really snotty. So, you know, like sixth or seventh grade. So then I was really an outcast. And up to that point I had been really beautiful. I'd been this like beautiful Hitler Youth child with blond braids and, you know, big blue eyes.

And they -- so in sixth grade they pulled out all my teeth. My grandmother made me cut my hair. She hated vanity, and she thought long hair was a temptation into vanity. And they pulled out like eight teeth on the sides of my mouth, you know, and I -- plus my face broke out, and I went from being pretty popular and happy to being not popular at all and completely miserable and completely displaced.

And it really displaced me from my father's affections, too, because he really didn't have any interest in a child that wasn't pretty. My mother was drop dead gorgeous. She looks like -- oh, who was that movie star with the red hair? Played Gilda. Rita Hayworth. She looks like Rita Hayworth, only with black hair down below her waist, really pale, pale white skin.
So getting ugly was really a turning point in my life where I had to somehow like develop new skills, which I probably never recovered from. I always -- they keep telling you when you wear braces that when you get the braces off that you'll be beautiful, and so, you know, I bought that hook, line and sinker. And they started those braces in -- on my seventh birthday they put inch-long needles in my mouth that tore my tongue up every time I swallowed, so blood would just come running out my mouth. And I didn't have them removed until I was 17. So I was really thinking, you know, "When I get these braces off, I am going to be hot."

Of course when I got my braces off I looked just exactly like I'd looked before only without braces. And that was definitely a disappointment. I thought I was going to look like Ingrid Bergman. I wasn't expecting Rita Hayworth, but I thought I'd look like Ingrid Bergman. But I didn't. So I kind of spent those teenage years waiting for those braces to come off.

And I went to college in Boise State, where we had moved. My dad took a year off to get his dissertation done and borrowed money from my mom's parents to do that. So when he got done, he became the head of the theater department in Boise, and we moved there. So I went to junior high and the first two years of high school there. And then I graduated early because I hated high school and the friends that I had made were all a year older than me, so when they graduated, I graduated also.

And started out as a theater major because I thought I was going to be an actress. Really never had any doubt about that, although not being pretty was the first like strike against that because I did not visualize myself as a character actress, at least to start with. But in the theater
department I couldn't get any scholarships and my parents didn't have any money to pay for college, so scholarships were really important, and we made just too much to get grants.

So I really didn't believe that I wouldn't be able to get any scholarships. I was sure that after a year or so I would prove myself, and my dad would have to give me a scholarship or that there were plenty of scholarships that he wasn't in charge of giving. And there was one big scholarship where it was voted on by the whole staff. And I figured if I could get that scholarship, then that would work. And then I did get that scholarship, and he still didn't give it to me even after everyone else had voted on it. So, as he said, it would look bad.

So I changed my major to history, where I got lots of scholarships and graduated in history and minor in teaching. And I did my student teaching, and I worked at the state Historical Society, where I did oral history for several years, really big grant to finance 50 oral history workshops across the state. Right after graduation. And my boss and I gave those workshops over two years. And I'd gotten married them, but it only lasted a year. So I'd been living with my boyfriend from about the time that I was 19, I started living with him when I was 20. I think we got married when we were about 21.

But we only stayed married a year because he was a musician and as it turned out, he was not faithful, which I probably knew in some part of myself all that time, but finally you kind of go, "Okay, you're still going to not be faithful?" You know, you -- "Yeah, okay, right. [Laughter] Okay. Well, I think this is not going to work out." And we might have worked it out if it could work both ways somehow, but, no, it didn't -- it wasn't going to work both ways.
He was very old-fashioned and possessive when it came to me. He even bought me pink polyester dresses to wear, you know, and wanted me to be a homemaker, which I'm like a really lousy homemaker. It's just about as bad as math. So he was always really disappointed in me. But for him, I kind of represented this lace curtain, intellectual, you know. He wasn't very verbal, and he was very, very talented. His father had a lot of money, but he had grown up with his mother, and she had had a hard, hard scrapple existence in Arkansas, actually. He was from Arkansas. And so I think he saw me as kind of a way of moving into a more -- better social class or something.

So, let's see. So during all this time, from the time that I was say 12 I was exhausted all the time. Absolutely, indescribably exhausted, which probably had something to do with why I didn't want to play outside, and things like that, also. Just physically absolutely exhausted a lot of the time. And things that I would do, I would have energy to do them, but afterwards I would be wiped out where everybody else was ready to go do something else. So like -- and I worked really hard. I worked my way through school most of the time. I worked at Circle K. I was in plays. I was an honor student, you know, I ran some seminars.

Then after we got married, I immediately -- you know, I didn't take any break after school, even though I'd been doing summer school and student teaching and all of that. Immediately -- because he had a heavy pot habit that I needed to support. So I needed to immediately go to work to support that. And by the time I'd spent two years at the Historical Society and had gotten divorced, I was just absolutely wiped out, dead tired.
I'd had some pretty bad, like, spastic colon type of problems that nobody could put their finger on. And then I got pneumonia and missed six weeks of work. They saved my job for me, but I'd had to move home because I wasn't getting paid. And it took -- and even after I got well, it took me another month and a half to recover from that, where I was still like sweating when I would walk up the stairs and, you know, be panting. I was really sick, and I was really, really tired.

And it was always a hard dichotomy because I'm a pretty energetic spirited person, and people perceive me as being energetic, and I get a lot done, or I had always gotten a lot done, so nobody really believes you when you say you're tired. And in a way, you don't even believe yourself. You just think you're making it up, or you just don't have what other people have.

I remember coming home from Circle K and my feet hurting so bad that I would sit and watch Johnny Carson, put my feet in ice water and just weep, just weep they were hurting so bad. And I was 18, and I remember thinking, "Oh the poor women who at 45, 55, 65, they're waitressing. I mean, how bad must their feet hurt if my feet hurt this bad, and I'm 18. I mean, that's just awful." Then I'd get really depressed and, you know, cry into my ice water. You know, and then I would think of all the other people who were suffering, you know. So one of my problems has always been if I'm suffering, I have a really good imagination, and I can imagine, you know, people in gulags and concentration camps and, you know.

And my husband that I'm married to now, is an archeologist, and he was working at the Historical Society. And he had like a second-level command job there. He was a state historic
preservation officer, which in Idaho means you make like 28,000 or something. It's -- you don't make anything if you work in Idaho, and which of course I was making like 13,000 or something.

And I met him, and he had been divorced about five years, and he had two kids. And he seemed like the perfect person to have a family with. And it took a while to talk him into it because he thought he'd already had his kids. He was 35 and I was like -- he was 33 and I was 23. But he was -- he looked kind of like my dad, but he was like my dad with a good personality instead of kind of a mean and nasty personality.

He was smart, and he had his dissertation, and he was infinitely kind and infinitely patient. Really happy and fun and very loyal, and he was still hankering after the wife that had divorced him, had left him. I don't think he ever would have got a divorce. I don't think it just ever would have occurred to him to get a divorce. I seem to come from a long line of men who were very, very -- I mean, all my sons are the same way. They're just like -- I'm not saying none of them will get divorced, but you're going to have to pry them off with -- they definitely -- they're kind of one-woman men.

So that seemed like a really good thing. That seemed like a good safe thing, that he would be a safe person to be with. And his mother told him that she thought he should have more kids. So I was absolutely certain that I wanted to have children. I don't know what I was thinking, but I was dead certain.
And as it turned out, I have a genetic disease, and that is why I'm so tired all the time. And I passed my genetic disease on to my children. One of them is so sick that he wasn't able to go to school through most of his school career and had to have the teacher come to the house. The other two are not as sick as that, but they're kind of -- they have the same struggle I did where you just about have enough energy to do what you need to do, but not quite. So if anything goes wrong, you get sick or something, they really have a hard time pulling themselves back together. And because they're really smart, people expect a lot out of them. And because they look normal, there's really no slack ever cut for them. So that's been hard, and I'm not sure I would have had kids if I would have known that I had that genetic disease.

We lived in Idaho until my youngest son was 4, and he's the one who's so sick. And at that -- about the time we moved and my oldest son was in third grade, I knew something was wrong with him. I just knew because he's an absolutely honest child, and often he would say he was too sick to go to school. And I remembered what that was like to be too sick to go to school, and I believed him.

So I'd take him in for blood tests and stuff, and you could see -- I mean, his face was pale. He had big circles under his eyes. But every test turned out negative, and they would just say he was being lazy or that school was making him nervous or, you know, it was psychological. And I knew there was something wrong with him, but I just couldn't find it.

So I was worried and working on that when we moved here. And he continued to have quite a few problems through sixth and seventh grade to the point where we took him to
Children's. They couldn't find anything wrong with him. And finally a doctor sent him to a psychiatrist saying that with our family history of mental illness that probably his problems were mental.

And the psychologist was -- psychiatrist was great. You know, he talked to Vance for several sessions, and then he was kind of like, "Well, I think he had a little ADD, but not the kind with behavior problems. I think he's sick. He's got some kind of a disease. He's got something wrong with him. He's not mentally ill."

And then he tried to explain to the doctors that people who are so mentally ill that they come up with a disease that will help them escape from their life, that's not like a little, small aberration. That's a big kind of mental illness. And it's not really easy to overlook, and he said that Vance was very well-adjusted, very honest, trying really hard, and, you know, the school should work with him. And of course the school was like, "Well --"

But luckily he got a little better after that, but right around that time Joe started throwing up one spring, and he threw up -- we thought it was the flu. He threw up for about two weeks. Then he quit throwing up because he wasn't eating. And I thought the flu had passed, and my sister-in-law was in town, and she wanted to take him back to Idaho for the summer.

So I sent him back with her, saying, "Just keep him on a light diet, you know, for a week while his stomach settles down because he's not throwing up anymore." And they were doing a vegetarian diet right then, anyway, so he did pretty well for his few weeks with them. But on the
way back to visit us again, they had stopped and eaten fried chicken somewhere, and he immediately started throwing up.

When he got back with us and we were stopping for hamburgers, and we went all the way to California, he threw up three or four times a day. And you know, they tested him for, you know, worms, and they tested him for strange things that live in hot springs. They tested him for everything. And then when we got home, they tested him for everything else. And everything came back normal, or almost normal. And he had been gaining some weight. He'd gone from being a completely normal-looking kid to being definitely on the chubby side, which made no sense to me, and I'd already been kind of worried about because he ate better than any of the other kids. He ate more salads, more vegetables, and he ran around a hundred times more than the other kids, played basketball, baseball, soccer, always with a ball in his hand, literally always running, but he kept getting bigger and bigger. And the doctors just said, "Well, you know, he's going to take a growth spurt soon, and then ..." But now he was getting bloated-looking, and he couldn't eat anything, and they couldn't find anything wrong with him. So that was really, really, really -- I mean, that was just terrible.

So we started praying for something to be wrong with your kid. So we went to Children's like three times. Each time they didn't find anything wrong with him, and each doctor just dismissed us, like, "All right. I'm done with you. We've done the heart stuff. There's nothing wrong with his heart. We've done the brain stuff. There's nothing wrong with his brain. You've been to the psychiatrist. There's nothing wrong with his mental health. We've been through the
upper and lower GI. There's nothing wrong with those. We don't know what to do next." So they sent him home.

Well, when they sent him home, he's lying on the couch. I can tell he's dying. He's lying on the couch dying. He can't go to school. He can't walk. Every time he eats he throws up. And he's nauseated all the time. He's absolutely green all the time. And he was gaining weight. And luckily, our main pediatrician believed us the whole time. Some of the other pediatricians didn't. They actually thought that either he was avoiding school again, and they used Vance as an example, that, you know, his brother had avoided school. Rather than saying there was something wrong with his brother we couldn't identify. Now there's something wrong with him and maybe thinking something genetic. They just thought, "His brother has mental problems, so he probably has mental problems. There's probably something screwy with the family."

But our main pediatrician believed us all the time. He kept looking for new doctors and trying new tests. And we were going to see him about every week. And Joe's own friends started not to believe that he was sick, and their parents would come and take him away with them and try to like rescue him because of whatever we were doing to him that was making him sick and showing that if he was out with normal people he would be normal.

So like they took him to do Gator Golf in 100-degree weather, and then took him and fed him pizza. And then he was so violently ill in the bathroom throwing up his pizza, but he didn't want the mother to know, you know, so he didn't tell her that he was in the bathroom throwing up the pizza, although the son knew. And then when he came home, she, you know, is like "We
can all see there is nothing wrong with Joe, and he should be at school Monday." It was just awful.

And she happened to be the woman that we went to when -- for his last GI series, and she gave him the barium, and he couldn't keep the barium down. He was like retching and holding his hand and -- When she comes back, she's like, "So why can't you get this down?" And he's like, "Because I'm really nauseated." And she's like, "Well, why are you really nauseated?" And he's like, "Well, I don't know." And then she says, "Well, are you hungry?" And he said, "Yes, I'm starving." And he was. He was starving all the time." She said, "You can't be nauseated and hungry?" And I was like, "Well, you can actually. If you remember when you were pregnant, you were nauseated." And she's like, "He's obviously not pregnant."

And then she's like, "Well, what do you want for lunch?" And he said, "I want a taco." She's like, "You're obviously not nauseated. Drink your barium." Just unbelievable. So he and I would just go home like looking at each other just going, "Oh, my God!"

And one day the doctor called and said that he had finally found something abnormal in his tests. And he had a high ammonia level in his blood. He was not digesting protein. And so they immediately took him to this genetic specialist who deals with this strange disease where you don't digest protein. And -- but his ammonia level wasn't high enough to qualify. It was when they took it, but as soon as they quit giving him protein, it went down, and it wasn't high enough to qualify for that disease.
So that doctor gave him a challenge, a protein challenge, where he had to eat three pieces of pizza and they measured the ammonia in his blood, which is very difficult. You have to ice the blood, you know, and it's hard to do. And it was extremely elevated, but not extremely enough to qualify for that disease. But still, he definitely was having trouble with protein. So that geneticist sent us home, too, said, "Well, you don't have that disease, so I can't help you." [Whispers] And we were just like, "Oh!"

So in the meantime, I'd come up with a diet for him. And I had already done this. I'd started feeding him things that didn't make him throw up, like fried potatoes and salad. And when the GI guy had heard about that, he just reamed me out right in front of Joe. "How could you start him on such an unhealthy diet without any doctor telling you what to do?" and everything, you know?

So it turned out, though, I'd put him on exactly the right diet. He sent him to a dietician who tried to find enough ways to get enough calories in him so he could grow, but not so much protein as to make him sick. And he gained more weight because at the end the dietician is like, "Okay, well, that's not enough calories. We're going to have to add in some chips and Cokes." [Laughs] It was just unbelievable.

So finally they started giving him an oral medication that once you've -- you eat what you want and it dissipates the protein once it's in your blood. And it turned out that he didn't need very much of it because after a year or so of getting it down, it builds up very very slowly. So it
probably had taken three years for that little defect to build up, and that's why he had gained
weight over those three years.

And then he went to Mayo, and there they found that he had mitochondrial myopathy and
that I had it, too. And that was just pure luck because they find that through a bone -- no, a
muscle biopsy, but often it doesn't show up. So we were just really lucky that two of us actually
had it show up. And then my third son it didn't show up in.

But they all have to have it because you can get it three ways. You know, you can get it
as a dominant or as a recessive, or you can get it through your mother's mitochondria. If you get
it through a recessive, [deleted] would have had it, too, and he doesn't have it. If you have it as a
dominant, almost everyone who had a dominant form of it has a specifically identifiable, easy,
like they're crippled or they're retarded of they're blind. And then everybody in the family has
exactly the same thing.

But if you get it through your mother's mitochondria, all the children still get it, but they
get it to varying degrees, and they get it in a general way, so that you just don't make enough
ATP is what it basically means, that one of the factories, one of the five factories in your cells
doesn't work well enough to produce ATP, and you don't have any -- enough ATP, and so little
by little things just quit working. And for him, it had been that protein thing, you know, so eyes,
brains, stomachs -- eyes, brains, stomachs, and hearts are dangerous because their cell turnover is
so fast.
So, anyway, so then I spent the next eight years just trying to keep him going. He was really, really sick, and every virus would put him back so far that we were taking one spring to regain grounds, and then when he would have repeated viruses, you know, there were months when he couldn't even get off the couch. We kept trying to let him go to school because he wanted to go to school so bad, but then he would catch something, you know, by October he was -- by November he couldn't go back to school. It was just -- it was terrible. So I spent pretty much all my forties dealing with that. So there we were.

[paragraph deleted]

So that's how we ended up here. And all my three boys are all really great people, so that was good. None of them had a lot of other problems. I guess maybe the one problem was enough. They never had like the drugs and alcohol problems. And they're all really close to us still. My oldest son's a photographer. He's thinking about doing -- going back to school to do mechanical engineering, so he has like the opposite brain of me, except he's very artistic at the same time. He's 25. He took some time off to go work for a newspaper, because those newspaper photojournalist jobs are really hard to get, but he got one in Idaho. And he's very personable, like my husband and not shy and can talk to anybody about anything. But he's also very smart, but people don't really realize it because he's definitely a hands-on more kind of person. He talks about cars more than anything else, so people just kind of assume he's not very smart. But if you actually have a conversation with him about anything -- And he and I are really close. We're very, very close.
And then my second son is extremely high strung and artistic. And he's working on an entomology degree and thinking about entomology graduate school. And maybe pre-med, but his grades aren't quite good enough for that, which is partly because of the disease and because he has a super, super, super high-power girlfriend, and it takes a lot of his energy helping her to be super, super, super high-power. [Laughter] She's graduating in two years, and has one of those huge scholarships that send you all over the world and stuff.

And then my youngest son suddenly -- finally he actually got -- after being denied up to the last denial, he finally got Social Security, and that kind of changed his life, because he had been thinking he'd have to live with us for the rest of his life because he couldn't work. And that let him move out.

And once he had moved out -- we had been hoping that maybe when he quit growing he would be better because that male growth spurt is really, really hard on the body. It takes so much energy, you know, to push out that forehead bone and all that. So when he hit 20, he suddenly had kind of a miraculous slight recovery. I mean, he's still sick, but he's been able to work out and he's been able to go to school. And so far he has straight A's, and he just wrote a 20-page paper yesterday called "My Search for Meaning" for -- this semester he took Thomas Merton, Ethics, History of Nonviolence, and Intensive Arabic.

We're like, "This is your first semester, and we don't know if you're going to be sick all semester. Can you just take one of those classes?" But he got A's in all of them and pushed himself really hard. And he's been doing like physical training, which the doctor said could
work out well because that could replace some of your bad cells with good cells, or it could replace them with more bad cells and you get sicker. So it's a risk. But he tried it, and he has been doing better. And he just got a Critical Languages Scholarship from the State Department to go to Morocco this summer and study Arabic. I'm sure he'll make it. I mean, he's like -- you can imagine. He's just like stubborn as -- just -- [deleted]. So he was talking about Joseph Campbell and Thomas Merton and the Dalai Lama and Gandhi and, you know, quoting from all of these. And it's like, "Good work, [deleted]. Good work. Good work, Mom." And he and I are close because we were like -- we were joined at the hip for that eight years, and that disengagement was kind of hard for a while, but I think we've gotten over that.

So now I'm just kind of at a point where I don't really know who I am or where I'm going to what I want to do. I'm kind of having a giant mid-life crisis, actually, to be perfectly honest. And everybody just wants you to be quiet and settle down and stay the way things are.. Especially all the boys, you know. They're like, "We're busy, Mom, so could you just --" And we live right next to the university, so they spend a lot of time coming in and out of our house at all hours of the day and night. And they would prefer it if, you know, Mom wasn't on the couch sobbing. You know, and then [deleted] has all this newly acquired wisdom, and he's just like, "Can't you just get a grip? Read my paper, Mom." I'm just, "Well, it's not really that easy for me, but I'm glad it's working for you." [Laughter] That and all the advice that I gave you over the years, which I noticed a lot of that was in his paper, too.
Like, one day he came to me and he wanted to know what the meaning of life was. This is this semester. So I'm up in my room, and I've been playing a lot of video games for my mid-life crisis. So I'm up in my room talking to my friends on on-line playing video games. And Joe comes up to the room, and he's like, "I need you to get off the video game." [Laughter] "Honey, I'm rating I can't like just get off. I'm rating." How many times have they said that to me? He's like, "Mom, this is really important. I'm considering suicide again, and I really need to talk to you."

"Guys, I have to go." So I get off then, and I'm like, "What's up? You're not really considering suicide." And he's like, "Well, no, I'm not. But I really need to know what the meaning of life is. And I can't stand it, and I really don't want to live if I don't know what the meaning of life is. And I can't know what the meaning of life is, and no one knows what the meaning of life is. So I can't really live. I don't want to live. What is the point?"

I'm like going, "I don't know. Me, either." [Laughter] "I don't know what the meaning of life is, and I don't want to live, either. And I'm tired, and I'm sick, too." So I pull myself together and throw out a few possibilities, like "What about love?" He's like, "Yeah, but I've never been in love." I'm like, "Yeah, but you will be, and there's lots of people that love you." And he's like, "That is not enough." I'm like, "Okay, um -- okay, here's -- this is all I got, Joe. You're never going to know what the meaning of life is. Nobody knows what the meaning of life is, nobody ever has, and nobody ever will, maybe unless they hit nirvana, so you could work in that direction. But here's what I think. I think Joseph Campbell had it right: If you follow your
bliss, if you follow what your own particular passion is, you get all you're going to get, which is a clue. And now and then, you get a clue, a little piece of the meaning of life.

"And you can't really kill yourself because then you're not going to know the meaning of life because you won't have picked up any of the clues. And the clues are specific to you and your interests and your bliss. So what you have to do is to pursue those interests with all your heart and all your might, and you have to try to stay aware enough so that when a clue falls into your lap, you know it's there. That's it. That's all I've got."

He told me at the time -- well, at the time he said, "Well, Mom, that's the best thing anybody's said yet," but he didn't -- "But it's not really good enough, but I'll think about it." But then when he wrote this paper, I noticed that that was his introduction and his conclusion. He was quoting from Joseph Campbell about -- there's a quote in The Masks of God. And if you look up -- it's in one of this Grail quotes.

BK: Mm-hm.

MADELINE: And it ends with a Grail quote, talking about each person going into the forest and the wind whipping about their soul, and that their path is a winding, knotted skein which may bring you to great grief, but may also bring you to great wisdom. So there you have it.

BK: Okay. [Laughter]

MADELINE: How long did that take?

BK: I don't know. It's just about an hour.
MADELINE: Just about an hour.

Second Interview: Library Story

BK: All right, let me read you a little bit: By the public library I mean any of the services you might receive through the library as well as all of the content in the library—the books, CDs, videos, and more—that you might use in the building or at home, in your car, at work, or anywhere. I also mean any interactions you might have with people at the library—whether library staff members, people you may meet, or friends you might run into—as well as experiences attending classes or programs. Finally, I also mean to include any experiences you might have online through the library, or by accessing the library from your home or work computer. OK?

MADELINE: From this particular library?

BK: Any public library.

MADELINE: Any library you want.

BK: Any library in your history. Here, let me read the second part: Please tell me your experiences using the public library throughout your life, and reflect on those experiences. Start wherever you like. Please take the time you need. I’ll listen first, I won’t interrupt, and I’ll just take some notes for afterwards.

MADELINE: Okay. I was thinking on the way in here that I think the first book I actually read by myself all the way through was a library book, so my parents must have been taking me to the library. I don't remember the title, but it was a book about the universe. It was a picture book about -- I still remember the stars, you know, and I was really really excited, both because I had read the book myself, also because the book came from the library so to me it
seemed like more of an official book than the books that we had at home, which we had lots of books at home, but this was more like a real book because it came from the library, you know, and it had the plastic cover over it and everything.

And thirdly, because I think probably for being 6, I probably knew quite a bit from hanging around the university, but somehow in my humanities-oriented family no one had really ever talked about the universe, so I was kind of like, "Oh, my God! Oh, my God!" [Laughs] Completely -- I didn't know there were like planets and infinity and Just a few little details like that. It was pretty mind-blowing. And I think I tried to talk to my parents about it, and, you know, they didn't get it at all. I remember that was about the same time that I remember -- I think it must have been right before that where I was looking out the window in those apartments we were living in Eugene, and, you know how you see the wind blow the clouds? Well, I thought -- or maybe it was right after I read that book. I thought that I could see the world turning. That's what I thought. I was like, "Mom! Mom! Look! I can see the world turning!"

And you know, she comes and looks out the window. "That's just the wind blowing the clouds."

"Oh. Are you sure?" You might be able to see the -- if the clouds stayed still and the world turned, it would look -- anyway.

So that's probably my first story, but I do not remember the library itself at all. I can remember carrying the library book. And I don't remember learning to read. I think it must have come really fast, where I was -- my parents had been told that they shouldn't teach you to read, that they should let a professional teacher teach you that. So I must have been like really overly
ready to read, so that immediately I -- because I don't remember sounding words out. Big words, but I don't remember like sounding out Chip or dog or Suzy or works like that.

And then I really don't remember any libraries until I'm in about fourth grade, so I guess our school library must be where -- when I got to the school where they let me read anything I want. I definitely must have gotten those books from my school library. And then I read my way through all those green and purple fairy tales and all of those. And then we had a lot of books around the house I think for those first years, and people bought me books, too, I think.

No, that Peter Pan book, my first favorite book, that was a library book, too. So either they were taking me to the library and I don't remember anything but the books, or I was getting them at the school library. But that was definitely a library book, too. That was one of those ones with the tattered covers and they're all felted, you know, from people reading them.

And I think when we moved to -- then we lived in Reno, in Sparks, and I think they must have started discouraging me from reading as many of their books because I know when I was in first grade, I got a hold of one of my dad's books, Sex and the Single Girl, and I was reading Sex and the Single Girl, and my parents, I know they had a big -- they were -- they really didn't believe in censoring, so they went ahead and let me read it, because they were like, "I think anything will go over her head that should doesn't understand." You know, but I think by the time that I had reached fourth grade where I was in Reno, I think they were probably starting to say, "Maybe you should go to the library more often."
And at that point, I could ride my bicycle to the public library. And that was a really big deal because our grade school was brand new, and it was called Agnes Risley Grade School. Agnes Risley was a librarian, and she worked at the library still. She was still there. So every time I went to the library, I would get to talk to Agnes Risley, and I think she was the children's librarian. And she -- I would spend hours at that library, hours and hours and hours and hours. I would ride my bike over there, and they had great big windows and sunlight streaming in, and it was really quiet. And of course nobody asked you why you didn't want to go outside and play. [Laughs] It was obvious.

And she was really good at helping you find books, but not interfering with what you wanted to read, and not pushing you in any certain direction. Because my dad always wanted you to read classic books, and he always wanted you to read books that he'd liked when he was a kid, which I can understand now, having kids. But at the time, I was like, "I really don't want to read Horatio Hornblower." And I didn't really like books about boys very well.

And I've always had a really bad prejudice against classics, probably because that's what he wanted me to read, and I thought they were boring. And I still -- I have no tolerance for boring books. If a classic book can be interesting, great, I'm all for it. If it's boring, I'm sorry. I'm just not interested in it. You know, I've tried lately to, you know, read classics that I know I should read and classics that my kids are reading and they're really moved by, like Dostoyevsky and Anna Karenina, but I just have a hard time with them.
So she didn't push you to do that. She would make suggestions based on what she knew about you, and they were usually pretty good. And I can remember her leading me through the stacks. I can remember coming into the library and I guess she knew who I was. I just assumed then that she did that for everybody, but looking back on it she probably -- and she probably obviously did it for a lot of people, but looking back on it, I think she had taken some special time with me, and she would talk to me.

So she would usually like send me towards a section, and she's like point to a couple of titles, but she wouldn't actually pull the book out for me. So she was like letting me make that decision and thinking that if I pulled the book out -- you know, they say when you're selling something you need to get the person to touch it in order to get them to -- So I think maybe she was very cleverly pointing me --

So she took me to this section of adventure books, which I have tried to find since then and I do not -- I really would like to read them again, but I don't know what the title was or the series was, but it was about these British children, like four of them, and they had all these adventures. And they were always, you know, getting stuck in caves with flashlights, and they would have all the British words, like "biscuits" instead of "cookies", you know, and whatever the British word is for a throw. And what was it the sweaters? They called sweaters "jumpers". And somehow all that, I really, really liked all that. And I think they were written like in the '30s or the '40s because they had that slightly out-of-date --

BK: Mm-hm.
MADELINE: -- which I also really liked, and I still really like. And as I grew older, I really liked reading books that were written in another time period, but weren't classics. No classics! You know, but like mysteries written in the '30s that you would read, so they weren't historical novels about the '30s, but they really took place in the '30s, and the people were wearing things they actually wore in the '30s. So these kids were actually, I think they were in the '30s. And there might have been spies. I think there were spies. And they were really really good books.

What other books did I read? I mean, I can remember going home with literally stacks up to my chin, that I had to try to fit them in my basket of my bike, so that was how many books I could get out at a time. Oh, and they only let you take home five books, but Agnes Risley let me take home as many books as I wanted [Laughs] which was like a special privilege. I get to take home as many books as I can fit in my library basket.

And, you know, I didn't read all of them. I would -- my dad would always say you have to give the book 100 pages, and shorter books, I would give them 50 pages. And then we had a big chair at home that I could curl up in, and I would sit in that chair and read all of them. But I can't remember what other books from the children's side of the library --

Oh, of course all the Nancy Drew books. But I think pretty early on -- so that was fourth grade. I guess you're about 10. Yeah, so pretty soon I think I kind of was past all those, and they were starting to get boring to me. And I think when I was -- no, then when I was 11, she took me to the circulation desk, and at the circulation desk they had paperback books that you could
check out. And they were all stacked with their spines up, and they were gothic novels. And so she said, "So now you're old enough that you can read these books," which was like Victoria Holt, you know, and all those gothic novels.

And I think I read every single one of those that they had on the desk right all the way through. I loved them so much. I mean, they were just that much more complicated to keep my interest. And, you know, now they're completely boring to me, but at 11 they were perfect. They were the best books I ever read. You know, they were just perfect.

They had everything I wanted in a book. They had, you know, adventures and scary stuff and active heroines in beautiful clothes and romance, you know, and they weren't very graphic, which I'm sure is why she let me read those. And I think that's why I've forgotten all the children's books because I think they were already getting kind of boring to me. It was hard to find one that was interesting. And those were just great.

So I read my way through all those. That took probably about a year. And I think she must have brought me some other ones out of the other part of the library, because I'm sure I must have read my way through the ones that were on the counter pretty fast. So I think -- I don't know for sure, but I think she must have had books ready for me when I came in. And I don't remember that particularly, but I can't imagine that that year and a half I didn't get past those books, and I know she didn't let me go in the adult part of the library. So she must have been bringing books out there were okay for me to read. And I'm sure she talked to my dad, too.
I'm pretty sure that she had talked to him about what was okay for me to read. You know, my dad's pretty much like, "Whatever."

So then when I was 12, Agnes Risley one day said, "Today you get to go into the adult part of the library." And she took me physically into the adult part of the library and just -- she took me into like the entrance part of it, and she was just like, "So you can read any book in here that you want." And she was little, you know, she was this very little old gray-haired lady, and not very wild and crazy looking or anything. And, you know, I have no idea what she read or what she was interested in. But that was one of the biggest days of my whole life. That was just -- I didn't know it was coming, and I just remember walking into that part of the library and just being like, "Wow! I can read -- there's books enough here for the whole rest of my life. I can read anything I want in here." That was pretty great.

And I ran into some inappropriate books. You know, I ran into some books with sex in them. But my dad -- my parents didn't really care. And I think they were probably right: Either you understand it or you don't. Plus the public libraries don't -- I mean, I wasn't interested in reading for the sake of finding something that was explicit, so it's not like I was headed straight for Sex and the Single Girl or something. I was still reading adventure novels and historical novels, and so any sex in it was just part of the story and not like part of the plan.

BK: Mm-hm.

MADELINE: So that was probably the biggest library experience. And after that I must have -- oh, and then that same -- about that same year when I was 12, my mom was taking a
class at the Episcopal Church on C.S. Lewis? Was it C.S. Lewis? I think it was C.S. Lewis. And she had left lying around the book Till We Have Faces. Have you ever read that book?

BK: I haven't.

MADELINE: Fabulous book. It's a classic book, but luckily no one told me that. So I picked it up and read it, and loved -- that is such a great book. Still everybody that I know thinks that's a really great book. Pat, that gave you my name, in our writing group, the women in that group are extremely different, but every single one of them -- I think Pat hadn't read it. But everybody else had read it, and they were all like, "Yeah, that is a really great book."

It's the story of Persephone told from the -- no, not Persephone, Psyche, told from the point of view of her sister, who was jealous of her. And so that gave me -- and then later I found out that was a classic book, so that gave me a little more tolerance that maybe some classic books -- I liked A Christmas Carol, but I didn't really like any other Dickens. And my tolerance was so low that in a class if they made us read a book I thought was boring, I would just cheat and just skim it, you know. I just absolutely refused to read a book that I thought was boring. I was just -- I really felt like "I have so little time, and there are so many books, I'm not going to spend my time reading books that are boring." I mean, what is the point of a book? The point of a book is not to bore you. So it's not my problem if he can't keep me interested. That's his problem. It's not my problem. And you should pick books that are interesting. [Laughs]

And luckily by the time I got to like high school, you know, it was the '70s, and they were all about picking interesting books. But a lot of those I thought were boring, too, for the
opposite reason, because I wasn't very interested in -- and I'm still not. I don't really care about reading about, you know, a suburban soccer mom and her inner life. I want to read about things that are different than things that I'm experiencing even though the themes or the ideas are universal. I really have not interest -- and I really think a lot of literary fiction is really self-indulgent.

So I ended up kind of having a beef with the library, too, then for a while because I really had trouble finding books that weren't just extremely self-indulgent. And they just make me sick.

I play a lot of on-line games now. I play World of Warcraft and Lord of the Rings on-line. And I have four -- three kids, and my husband has two kids, so all but one of them are boys. So I have a lot of boys in my life, a lot of teenage boys. And they're all pretty bright. And I have -- one of my friends on-line lives in Kentucky, and he was telling me about he -- and he works in a Ford factory, so he works 12 hours a day in a Ford factory. He's the brightest guy. And never got a chance to go to school. And he was telling me that every year or two he burns a copy of The Catcher in the Rye.

I was just "What! You burn a book?" He's like, "Yeah. Usually I buy them especially to burn them." [Laughs] "You burn --" That was the first thing, was "You burn a book on purpose?" And then I just loved it. It was like I have read so many books that I thought were so self-indulgent that I would like to burn for the same reason that he's burning The Catcher in the Rye. Although I read The Catcher in the Rye, and I thought it was interesting. But I can see
how to this guy growing up in a really tough life, tough neighborhood, lives a tough life, very intelligent, he's like, "To hell with that! Fuck that shit." He burns it. He goes and buys copies. He's burned nine copies of *The Catcher in the Rye*. And I just love that.

So the author I would like to burn that they -- that like defines my beef with the library is John Updike. I would burn John Updike front to back. I don't -- I'm not saying that he should be burned so no one could read him. I'm just personally -- I would burn them and really enjoy it. Somebody I dated I think in college gave me a bunch of John Updike to read. He was thinking I should read some classics, so he gave me all his favorite classics. And they were like Steinbeck, which I liked, I like Steinbeck. And Arthurian stuff, which I liked that. And John Updike, which I was just like -- I read the first one, okay. And then I read the second one. Because he bought them for me, and, you know, it was stack of brand new books, so I really tried to read them. But the second one I remember a house burned down in it. And I remember thinking, "You know, I don't care if everybody in this novel dies in that house fire. In fact, I wish they would all die in a house fire." Then I was like that's probably the time to quit reading that book.

So that time I kind of -- and at that time I was also kind of rebelling against religion and all that kind of stuff, and the library came to be more symbolic of things -- it was less symbolic of this gateway to adventure and more symbolic of all this self-indulgent literary -- So it seemed like it got to be harder and harder to find a book that I wanted to read in the library.

I got better at finding books I wanted to read. And I got married at 23, and my husband introduced me to nonfiction. [Laughs] I'd never read any nonfiction. And at first I -- and he
didn't read any fiction. At first I was kind of like, "I don't think I have any nonfiction I'm interested in reading. I mean, I read enough nonfiction at school getting a history degree. Don't think I want to read nonfiction for fun."

But of course I did, you know, and I found biographies. But, you know, I've never lived in a big city, so all the libraries that I've been in are small -- relatively small libraries, I guess. Like this would be one of the bigger libraries. I mean, if you were in New York, would you have a library that had endless books in it?

BK: Well, that's a whole other conversation. You know, yeah, you could go into a library in New York that would have probably more books, but not necessarily books that would be circulating, not books that you could take home.

MADELINE: Right. So it would be more like at Berkeley, where you have to check in.

BK: It's often a little bit more like that, or -- I find this to be, as a reader, a really great library.

MADELINE: Yeah, it is a good library. So the Boise library was very small, and it was never big enough for me. It felt confining. And then the Boise -- the library at the university where I went at Boise State was, oh, just frustratingly small. And then I worked in the library. I worked my way through school at the university library, mostly in periodicals, which I really loved doing that. And then I found out about inter-library loans, so that was a big door to open, except then you have to read it really fast so that you can get it back. I mean, I do read really fast, but if you're on something really esoteric, it's harder to read it fast. You know, it's one thing
to read a mystery novel fast. It's another thing to read The Oxford Companion to Livy fast, which they didn't have at our local library, and it's like in nine volumes. So that was both exciting and frustrating. So I always had this dream that there would be some ultimate library that --

So let's see, then. So other major library experiences. One would be that my dad wrote his dissertation on traveling theater in Nevada in the 1880s, and so the year that he took off, I traveled with him to do some of his research, and we got to go to Berkeley, and that was one of those libraries that you have to go inside and you have to check in, and you have to have credentials. And I think you didn't go back in the stacks. You had to know what you want and they would bring it out to you. And I couldn't go in, so I had to sit outside the library.

Well -- and this was like '68, so it was pretty cool to be at Berkeley in '68. So I would sit for hours and hours reading on the library steps while my dad was inside, you know, working on his dissertation and reading original sources. So I guess that's not a public library.

I go through spells. And probably that's one of the other big things is I -- so then I decided I was going to write novels. And so I've been trying to do that since I was like 30. And in doing that, I would end up going on these huge kicks where I would read 50 or 100 books on a certain subject, and especially when I was thinking I was going to get my Master's in ancient history. So mostly I probably have used this library to pursue these on various big kicks of reading. Like, I read probably 100 books on the Bronze Age. And there weren't too many of those here, but I did get some through interlibrary loan.
But then the next big thing I've been reading about is World War II, and this library was really good for that. So I've probably read, I've probably read maybe 200 books on that, on the Holocaust and -- I wasn't so interested in battles and tactics because the novel that I'm thinking about was more of a personal novel, but on resistance and spying and diplomacy and biographies and Holocaust memoirs. So I've used this library really heavily for that. And they have a really good selection of all of those things, and they usually get some of the newest stuff coming in.

And then I took [deleted] poetry class here for several years, and I probably will do that again. And that, that was really significant. And they did a really good job I think getting her to teach that. And then I got on a huge kick of -- I produced some pretty good poetry, I think, in her class, and we meet in one of these rooms like this. She has a fall and a spring class, and I think there's maybe ten classes. And she usually picks something like Irish poets, or something like that, and then she does writing exercises in the class, and then you also have take-home writing assignments. And so of course, you know, I can't just write a couple poems off the top of my head. You know, I have to like -- "Oh, this is really interesting. I've never read any poems, I've never read any poetry." So then I have to read literary criticism. Then I have to, you know, I have to read biographies of Ann Akhmatova, and then I have to read [Laughs] -- so, but I got a lot of that stuff here, and I definitely -- that was very significant and it has been really significant.

I mean, and that was very productive, too, because I haven't had anything published, but I haven't tried very hard to. But I did have a poem commissioned in Boise for a play that they were doing about marital love, and it was trying to deal with -- Idaho was trying to pass a law
that would prohibit homosexuals from getting married. So without taking sides because it was an arts-funded, but it was -- the evening was exploring how married and committed love may or may not be limited to the sex of the people involved. And I got asked to write a poem for that.

And one of my good friends from college is a Rhodes Scholar, and he's a movie director now. And he said -- and there was a professional poet there that was there that night and also was asked to write something, who teaches and has been published in England and here. And Mike said my poem was the best writing of the night, so that really made me feel good, and that's definitely through Rebecca and through the work at the library.

And Rebecca is very good about what you kind of need in a library situation about working with different people according to what their interest level was. So for me trying to do all this research and really trying to be serious and trying to think about trope and syllables and stuff, you know, she would direct me in places. And for people who just wanted to write about their cat or something, she would -- and there was no feeling like you were on not equal levels or anything, so --

BK: Mm-hm.

MADELINE: And there are some really good writers in that class. So what else? I've come here for musical programs. I'm probably going to come here for the play-writing class, not to do writing, but they need readers. And being sick, I've been home-bound a lot, so I've been thinking lately about it's really hard to write when you're always at home, especially if you have a zillion teenagers coming through the house. And my teenagers are very -- I mean, all teenagers
pretty much think, you know, if you're over 40 you're superfluous. But aside from that, whatever they're working on, they usually always want to talk about it with me.

So like my youngest son, the one that's been so sick, he just wrote a paper on -- his first paper, because he didn't write any papers in high school, so his very first paper, this semester he was taking I think maybe I told you that, Merton and Ethics. And so his first paper was supposed to be 20-pages, and he came home, like, "I get to write a 20-page paper! I'm going to write it on Thomas Merton and Carl Jung, and the idea of being." And I'm like, "Okay, that's kind of a big chunk to -- a bit chunk you're going to bite off." So we definitely sent him toward the library. He later decided maybe that was slightly too much, and he decided he might have to read Heidegger to do that, he was "Well, maybe not."

But it's hard to write at home because they're always coming through with stuff like that. I mean, they're not coming through with just, "My girlfriend didn't call me back," although we have plenty of those conversations. But they're coming through with "Will you help me with my Arabic vocabulary?" or my one son's a professional photographer, you know, "Will you look at my wedding photos?" So I've been thinking that I wanted to use the library more as a work space and a study space. And I just got a laptop that I can actually carry because I work on a laptop for my editing. I was thinking just sitting on one of the couches, or, you know, the study tables. And this library's really nice for having a lot of light, and that's really important to me in a library, although it sounds stupid. But I really think libraries should have a lot of light in them.

BK: Mm-hm.
MADELINE: And I think especially, you know, kids come in and their first idea of what library is, it shouldn't be all dark and musty. It should be -- it is light, and it should be light, and they should be designed that way.

I do a lot of research on line, a lot, a lot, a lot. And I haven't been able to afford -- I'd like to get one of those subscriptions so that you can read articles on-line. But I haven't done that yet. They have these things where you can read journal articles that you have to subscribe to. And because I'm not officially affiliated with the university, I can't do it through the university. I can sneak in on my husband's JStor account and stuff, but I would riffle through JStore I use Library of Congress. I do a lot of on-line research, tons and tons and tons. And I buy a lot of books from Alibris. And so I have this huge collection of World War II books that I got, you know, for a dollar or two through Alibris. It really is like a miracle. My son just bought six books on Morocco. They were here within three days, all of them, books that we couldn't find in the library, that we couldn't find at Barnes & Noble, that we couldn't afford, you know, from Amazon.

BK: Mm-hm.

MADELINE: And I use a lot of the databases, like names and they have these huge lists of names from medieval Russia and names from, you know, Turkey in the 1600s and lists of everyone -- all those lists of everyone who for every county -- or not county, but whatever they call them in France, for every person that was deported under Vichy, every single person's name and where they came from. I mean, it's pretty incredible what you can get even without any
official standing, which is really exciting. Unfortunately, I think I like doing the research better than I like doing the actual writing. It's like by the time I'm ready to write, I'm like, "Oh, okay, I'm bored with that." I want to go -- I think I just need to be a researcher.

I think that's probably the thing that makes me the happiest. I really like to learn about something new. I like to learn new languages. And I also think -- my dad always said that men are the only ones who are good writers, that women can't be good writers.

There's a couple of exceptions, according to him: Mary Renault would be one exception. But not very many. And I know that kind of stops me from writing. If I'm writing and feel like it's coming out too girly, then I'm really discouraged with it. I just want to stop. And like this book about the French Resistance was coming out way too girly, so I had to stop. I don't know whether to start over, edit, which is funny because then when you look at libraries, though, you know, there's really more women in libraries than there are men, so it doesn't really make too much sense in terms of interaction with books or --

But now I'm working on a fantasy novel, and I think maybe that'll work out better for me. My ideas about cultural -- what's the word? Cultural -- what's it when you go out and conquer another country?

BK: Colonialism?

MADELINE: Colonialism, but there's the im- --

BK: Oh, cultural imperialism?
MADELINE: Yes. That's the word I was looking for. Cultural -- my ideas about cultural imperialism, and it's about -- it's based on this society that is like the ultimate cultural imperialist, and they just go out and collect artifacts. My husband deals a lot with artifacts in museums and theft and NAGPRA and all that. So about this society that goes out and collects all this really great art and artifacts from all these other societies, which they try to keep primitive rather than like letting them develop, for better or for worse, but that they believe you can find the true answers to all truth by blending all the religions and getting all the secrets from all the religions of the world. So the main character has to be a diplomat and an artist and an artisan and a linguist and a storyteller because that's how she gets things done in the villages is by telling stories, you know, and -- Anyway, so I am going to have to do a lot of research for that. [Laughs]

And then what is going to happen is that there's a society -- I've had these dreams about this place that I keep dreaming about, I've dreamed about for about ten years. And it's some kind of a northern place, but it's not Arctic. But anyway, she's going to get this invitation to go to this place for a year because they've had a prophecy that somebody from the emirate needs to come there. And of course they don't give her all the grisly details of the prophecy. But in return, they offer -- trade things for this elixir that they make from cloud berries, which there really are cloud berries.

BK: Really?

MADELINE: Yeah, there's cloud berries in Sweden, and they do make an elixir out of it. So I want to, you know, bring in things that are real that -- and that she can get the trade rights
for her trading company if she spends this year there. And she's not very interested in going there because they don't have any very good art of artifacts that she can bring home. So anyway, so then she gets involved in this prophecy and, et cetera.

BK: What did you do the last time when you came to the library, other than obviously meeting me, which was probably the last time, but -- I mean, what is a trip here like?

MADELINE: Typical library trip? Well, one of the great things about doing that poetry thing was I was here, and I found myself using the library a lot more. And not for the class necessarily using it, but since I'm here, then I would just go ahead and spend another hour or two just looking for books to read and taking home stacks under my chin again.

I'm not very organized. Sometimes I will research a -- like I'll look up Resistance or something in the catalogue, and the computer is so much better. I've always hated the card catalogues. But I'm really, really good at it. That's one thing I'm really, really good at. I can find anything. I can find anything in a card catalogue. I can find anything on-line. I can find anything. I mean, my kids are always just like, "There was nothing on that," you know, and in like five minutes -- They just don't use the right search words, they don't cross their searches, you know, they don't look for synonyms, they don't look for books close to the books that you're -- you know I mean, I am really really really really really good at it. Some way you could make your living off that. So sometimes I'll do that, and I'll just like -- and sometimes I do that from home, since you can log on from home. But for pleasure reading, I mostly just wander through the stacks, and I just kind of -- I think that's the way I've done it since Agnes Risley. You know,
I just look for -- I don't even think I have a system. I don't look for a title. I mean, of course if a title jumps out at you or the color of the spine or something.

But I really try to look at all the titles as I go along. Depending on how big of a hurry I'm in. If I have a lot of time, I just pick a stack and I just go through and I pull a lot of books and I read a few pages in them. You know, I hate it when they don't have a front flap and a back flap.

Used to be it would only be fiction. Probably for fun, it's mostly fiction, although I might wander into the biographies or the Holocaust part because they're personal stories, they're not as, you know, intellectually rigorous as trying to read a big history of something. I try to branch out from my prejudices because the older I get, the harder it is to find any book that I like because you just become more critical. Like, I couldn't read Victoria Holt now, and there's a lot of books like that. But I can't. And I'm like, "What's going to happen when I'm 60 or 70? There'll be nothing left to read."

I want a mystery that's really dark. And if it's too cozy, I'm like -- like the medieval ones are a little not quite violent enough. But they're on the border. And I'm trying to break out of that, and there are some like borderline places. Like have you read the ones that take place -- they take place during the Occupation of France, actually, and they're very dense. And they're not very violent. There's like maybe one violent thing here and there.

It's about a pair, one -- the two are at odds because one of them is a native French guy and one of them is a Vichy, is a Melisse [?] guy. They're really good, and they're not very violent. They're very personal, like they're really in the heads of both characters. And every now and then there's
something violent that happens, but not very often. And it's interesting because they're both
trying to do their -- well, you're not in the head of the Melisse guy as much, but they have
reached an understanding. So it's an interesting idea. Those are pretty good.

And then a lot of times I'll get started on -- you know, I'd love to have a big tome. I'd
pick out every book that's huge, so it would last a long time. But they're usually awful. I don't
know why the longer they are, the more awful they are. So I keep hoping for one that's really,
really long. Like I had high hopes for those Neal Stephenson ones, but I couldn't get through
them.

And then my son -- then I had to read a lot of fantasy because I had to pre-read for my
sons so that they weren't getting too much sex, and as good as the library is, there aren't any
Agnes Risley's around taking your kids through the library and saying, "These books have too
much sex, but you can read all of Robert Jordan," you know? So I had to do that, so I had to
read a lot of books that I wasn't necessarily too interested in before I just let them -- I wasn't
going to quite go with my dad, and especially being boys, you know, that -- Well, I let them go
pretty early, actually, but I didn't let them go until they were like 14. You know, at 12 I wasn't
ready for them to be reading Laurell K. Hamilton or something.

At 14 they went ahead and -- but we had to discuss why sex and violence are so often
mixed and -- I mean, it would be nice if there was more of that going on in the library. It would
be nice if -- I think they kind of miss the adolescents a little bit in publishing and in the library.
Because usually if they're smart enough to really be in the library when they're an adolescent,
they're past the young adult books, although the young adult books are better than they used to be. But they're starting to really want to venture into the rest --

   Well, for instance, my middle son learned to read on Jurassic Park. That's the book he learned to read on. He went from no reading to Jurassic Park. And I think that's pretty typical, especially for boys. They have no interest in the lizard says, "I have a hat," you know. They have no interest in that. They want adventure. And a lot of girls do, too.

   So I had to read him Jurassic Park three times, and the fourth time, I'm like, "You're going to have to read it. Sound out the words, you know." And I think that's one place the library could improve is trying to help those -- if the kid's in the library, he's probably pretty smart already, so I think they tend to put them in categories too much, you know, and not be willing enough to try to help them find stuff that they would be fired up by, like Agnes Risley.

   [Laughs] And I don't think it would be that hard, either.

   Yeah, maybe if they talked to them when they get their library card or when they renew their library card. Or maybe they could have like a Big Brother, Big Sister thing, only have it in the library so that when a kid hits 12 or something they get three sessions with some approved adult in the library who would, you know, kind of help them negotiate their way through different authors and stuff. I think that would be a great idea. It wouldn't have to be staff. It could be volunteers.

   And that would be such a good volunteer project, too, because it wouldn't take that much time. You wouldn't have to commit every week, you know, if you took a couple kids a year,
three meetings, you know, six meetings a year or something. So, yeah, so I wander through the stacks and pull stuff out and read. And I always look at the new fiction table and the new fiction shelves, and that's where I try to push myself to read something that I wouldn't ordinarily read.

BK: Can you think of any books that made a real difference on your life?

MADELINE: I've been thinking about that, actually, I think because of this writing group I'm in, you know. Well, actually I once did a life history in books. I was in some class where we had to present our life history, and I decided to do it with books. It started out with Home for a Bunny, and then Peter Pan. But as an adult -- oh, Arthur Koestler. Have you ever read Arthur Koestler? Oh, my God. His autobiographies are the best books. They're the best books I've ever read, especially the one -- there's a big one that's his most famous. No, there's two. One is about the time that he got -- he was a journalist in Berlin when the Nazis came into power, and he had to flee, and he got invited to go to Russia because he was a big communist. So he was in Russia at this terrible time, and most of it's about his travels through Russia, becoming not a communist. Then he ended up in France in a terrible concentration camp.

He writes in such a poetic way that it doesn't really matter what he's talking about, and he's brutally honest about his faults and his ego. And people have told me that he was very abusive towards women, but it's really hard to believe when you read what he writes. I haven't read his -- and this library did not have a copy of that famous book of his about communists. What is it, Something in Darkness, which I was appalled, just appalled that they didn't have it. But I think I wasn't really as interested in his fiction as in his self-exploration.
For instance, he tells a story about the concentration camp he was in. And it wasn't a Nazi concentration camp. The French put everybody in there that they -- that were strangers, and most of them were anti-Nazi activists who had fled to France, but they put them all away when the war started, thinking that they were from other countries, so they were dangerous. And a lot of the people in there had been actively fighting the Nazis their entire lives.

And he tells a story of this 17-year-old -- no, this 22-year-old boy who was in this camp, and this was his third concentration camp. He's been fighting the Nazis since he was 16. He's been in three concentration camps, and every time he got out, he did it again, which is just incredible. But there's just these little things in there where he has tried to immortalize people that have died -- that he knew so many people that died during those years, and he's just tried to give you a vignette to see this person because no one else remembers them, and they're completely lost. So they're really moving. So that in the recent years [?] was really really moving.

And have you read Alan Furst? Do you like Alan Furst? No. I love Alan Furst, although I don't think his new ones are as good as his early on.

The first two are really, really powerful, and the other ones are not as moving. But those first two are -- really made me want to write like that. Dark Star and I can't remember what the very first one is. And it's interesting to read those two because you can see his writing improve in them. And then he kind of just gets full of himself, I think, later on. And Till We Have Faces, that C.S. Lewis book. I think those -- all those books have something in common, that they seem
to be about one thing, but there's another layer that's much deeper. So I like books that are really active and moving and have a plot. In fiction, I think they need to move and have a plot, and there needs to be some excitement.

[Laughs] Just don't sit around and -- but that doesn't mean you can't have a big, a huge underlayer under there. And it doesn't have to -- and I like the genre fiction, which is interesting, this writing group I'm in, they all of them like genre fiction, too. But really good genre fiction. And then right now I'm reading Tanith Lee, who's a fantasy writer, who's kind of obscure. And she wrote a really good book about the French Revolution, which I haven't read. Her writing isn't quite fulfilled, or at least the ones so far I've read. It looks like she is blossoming, but I don't know if she ever -- but she has a lot of books, so I'm reading those right now. They're very -- she had a young adult book called -- that most people don't let their kids read -- called The Silver Metal Lover, and it's about a girl's first -- an adolescent that falls in love with a robot.
APPENDIX G

TRANSCRIPTS OF JANE’S INTERVIEWS
First Interview: Life Story

BRIAN KENNEY (BK): I'll read one or two sentences, and then you're off and running.

JANE: Okay.

BK: I would like you to tell me your life story, all the events and experiences which were important to you. Start wherever you like. Please take the time you need. I’ll listen first, I won’t interrupt, I’ll just take some notes for afterwards.

JANE: Okay. Well, I suppose I have to start at the very beginning with birth, place, time, date.

BK: Whichever way you would like.

JANE: I was born September 9th, 1957, in [deleted], Arkansas, and I lived in that community, that town, the same house until I left for college. And my parents are still in the house. I grew up, [deleted] is -- at the time I grew up there was a very active, social, small town type, in the South type of a situation to be in.

Then I went to the University of Arkansas here in Fayetteville and got a degree in accounting, and went through the college sorority bit. So it was pretty much sorority and a tough class schedule for me during college. I don't look back on my college days as my fondest days, like most people do. It was a lot of hard work and everything.

Then I worked as an accountant and became a CPA for 15 years, both in public and private, 10 years of that in Little Rock, Arkansas. And then I married at the age of almost 32 and moved with my husband to Syracuse, New York, for him to get a Master's degree in architecture,
and I worked four more years then there. At that time I had my first child and quit working, and I've been a stay-at-home mom, volunteer and strong library user since then.

And we moved here to Fayetteville in '97. We were in Syracuse until '95, and then Tim was sent to teach. He began teaching for Syracuse after getting his Master's, and we spent two years in Florence, Italy, and then moved here, and have been here for 11 years.

Do you want me to address library usage through my life necessarily?

BK: No, we'll go back and do that in the second one.

JANE: So to fill in any blanks in that chronology --

BK: Yes.

JANE: Okay. Let's see. I went through public schools in [deleted], and that was very interesting because I guess integration happened during that time. And I went -- [deleted] High was a huge school, 2,000 students, which in the late '70s that was quite a large school. And racially it was, you know, pretty much 50/50, and tensions were sort of high then. And so that was probably more so than I realized impact -- I don't know, but just a fact really. I didn't feel like it affected me. I'm sure it did, but --

I was a typical student on the tennis team. Gosh, I don't know. You know, I had boyfriends, no one serious, just kind of typical, very typical. Nothing stands out. I had a close circle of friends, and we pretty much stayed out of trouble. And we were good girls and [Laughs] --
[deleted] was very social. We did a lot of social things that now don't even happen: debutantes and, you know, all that. Okay. I have to back up here. I went to SMU for a semester. I was so anxious to get out of [deleted] that I went to SMU as a -- before my freshman year in the summer. I started in the summer, which is kind of -- you know, I've never known anyone else that started college that way. [Laughter] [deleted] was pretty boring, really. I mean, there wasn't anything to do. You couldn't work. The only job I could have had was flipping burgers at Burger King or scooping ice cream at Baskin Robbins. You know, I stuffed envelopes for my good friend's father, who was an insurance agent and made minimum wage and worked for my dad in his law office. But there's just not a lot to do. You know, you can only play so much tennis, and you can only spend so much time at the swimming pool, and you can only get in your car and drag the high school drag so many times.

So I went to SMU and enjoyed my summer there a lot. And went there for my freshman year and was just a fish out of water. So I transferred to the university. During that fall when I was at SMU and doing okay, but not really feeling like I fit in. It was a little high-powered for me coming from -- I was shy and, you know, coming from [deleted], Arkansas, to the big city and the even bigger people with even bigger cars and even bigger budgets and, you know, all this stuff.

And I, you know, came here to visit friends and had a great time, so I, to my mother's great disappointment, told my parents at Thanksgiving I wanted to transfer to the university. And I did that. And I felt like I could have enjoyed SMU, could have felt like I fit in after being there
a couple of three years, you know, I think I could have -- I was sure I could have found my niche and would have been fine until then, but, boy, it sure was a lot more fun up here, and just a lot more of college, you know.

So I transferred, and I think it was a good decision. Who knows? And came here and immediately pledged a sorority, and because I had those sophomore hours, I could move into the sorority house, so that sort of started me down that path, which was fine.

And I majored in accounting because it was what I made an easy A in as a freshman, and I'd always been strong in math. And I liked it. It was a good decision. So that was fine. I was a high B student probably. And I clicked along in that and finished college. In keeping with the trend, I went to summer school every summer because I didn't want to go [Laughs] So I went to William & Mary the first summer for six weeks. And then I went to UALR in Little Rock and worked for the State Legislative Audit, which was -- that was very interesting. And I lived in Little Rock that summer, and then graduated a semester early as a result of all this summer school, and started working in Little Rock.

And at the time I got out of college, you know, with a high B in accounting, that was the first -- sort of the late '70s, it was the first time in history that people didn't just get out of college and have a job. And I didn't have a job. Even with a high B. And it was tough because I had nowhere to go but [deleted], and I've already made it clear that that wasn't where I wanted to live. I didn't -- looking back on it, I don't remember having that resounding thought in my head, but I certainly patterned my life to that end, you know, looking at.
So I had to go to [deleted], and you know, networking at that time. My dad got on the phone and called some friend in Little Rock who worked for the State Board of Accounting, who called some friend who was in the office at the largest firm in Little Rock, who -- it was the start to tax season, and they needed bodies. And so I, even with my high B in accounting, I started working with -- but I think it was probably the female thing, too, you know?

They were still looking for starched white shirts and ties and everything, probably. But he -- you know, I went in -- he sent me up to Little Rock to interview with this man that he had -- I think he had called a friend in Pine Bluff who had called a friend in Little Rock who agreed for me to -- and he visited with me, and said, "I don't know why a pretty, nice, young lady like you doesn't have a job." [Laughs] And he called this guy and got me an interview, and they hired me.

It was kind of funny. I started working for $11,000. But my friends out of college -- my friends in college who most of them majored in education in the sorority started working for 4- and $5,000, so, you know, I didn't really care at that time. But every time somebody new started -- that was when salaries were skyrocketing, too, in accounting, so the salaries were just jumping 1,000, $2,000 with everyone they hired. And they were fair to everyone else. They kept raising -- everybody they'd hired at lower than that, they raised their salaries. I think it was to keep staff, and I mean, I was very lucky. It was a wise decision, I think, you know. So my salary kept going up every year, every semester my salary went up because they were hiring people. So anyhow --
So I continued working and living in Little Rock for the next 10 years, and then met my husband. And we moved to Syracuse at that time. We enjoyed it, though, but we were -- you know, it was a good move for us, you know, good way to start a marriage. You know, and far away from established friends and family and just have each other. And we didn't have a lot of money. You know, I was working, and he was a student, whole new area of the country. It was a good move, good decision. We're still married, so -- And, you know, Syracuse for us -- he's an Arkansan, as well, grew up in Little Rock. If you just take a wheel with spokes, you know, the weekend trips all around Syracuse in any direction you can go for a weekend and see something new. And we did that. We had a great time. We'd drive to Boston and New York City and Philadelphia and Ottawa, Canada, and Montreal, and Finger Lakes, Adirondacks. We learned to ski. We did a lot and enjoyed that. DC even was only eight or nine hours away. We went there.

And so we were there for six years, and three of that he was a student, and three of that he was working, teaching for the school. And it was -- you know, the weather, although Arkansas gets as cold as Syracuse, Syracuse really -- I mean, we can get -- our temperatures are the same. It's just theirs lasts longer and has a lot more snow with it. So we were -- it was different, but we made a good choice on the car we took. His car was a little Nova with front wheel drive, light car. We just kept good tires on it and that just cost us about 100 bucks a set, and, you know, changed the tires every other winter, and we did fine road-wise, travel-wise, and lived real -- rented an apartment real close to the school and had one car until we -- forever, until we got here,
and we were here two or three years before we had two cars. That was a good move, good thing to do.

I was in Little Rock ten years and then we were in Syracuse six, and I was 36. We had a child that was 2 at that time. The school has a study center in Florence, and they -- the school of Syracuse was one of the first universities to establish a campus in Europe. It started -- at that time it had been there 35 years, so it's going on 50 years. So they had a lot of disciplines went there. They sent art history, art majors, history majors, architecture, foreign language students.

They bought a -- it's called the Villa Rosa. They bought an old home that was on the edge of town when it was built, just outside of the -- what was it the -- the Circum Viale, the loop that goes around Florence. It's just on the outside of that. And they are established with apartments that they put students in and homes they place them in. You can choose all that.

So they send faculty over for the most part to teach in their programs there. They don't hire -- well, at least for architecture, they use Syracuse staff and send them over for a year or two or three and have a director of the Florence program. So my husband went as a student, and I stayed because I was working. So I really wanted to go. You know, we said at that time, you know, "We'll just go back," when I didn't go as a student. So then when he was hired, you know, it's our joke that every day he came home, my first question was, "Did you discuss with the dean today how you want to go back to Florence and teach?" And he said, "Yes, Ann, I discussed it with the dean today."
So after three years, they sent him over, and we -- gosh, we packed everything up and put it in storage there in Syracuse and went over with our 2-year-old, and rented an apartment in the center of Florence, three blocks from the train station, a half block from the Mercato Centrale and right on one of the market streets that -- it was a combination. It was right in front of the Mercato, and it was just all the tourist stuff they sell: leather jackets, belts, all the leather, all the tourist trinkets, calendars, and everything.

So that was our front street during the day. It was great. We'd open our windows and have all this white noise of the market, people yelling and music playing and walking. And in the morning they'd set up all the -- you know, the carts they use --

BK: Mm-hm.

JANE: -- the street merchants use, they'd roll those down the cobblestone streets starting about 6 in the morning, and set them up. And then they'd take them down starting about 5, and they'd be gone by 7, and the street opened to traffic about 9. So it was just great. We loved that.

It was -- we just loved it. We traveled a lot. We had a beautiful apartment that was in this 1700s building, but it had been entirely redone by the owner recently so it was modern inside, and gorgeous.

And we had our second son there in the middle of our stay the next summer. And we stayed one more year and moved here. We were ready to get kind of back closer to home. And [deleted], because he'd been a student at Syracuse, he wanted to do something different. Actually we had come here to visit when we were in Syracuse, and just -- I came because I'd
gone to school here and had friends here, with [deleted]. [deleted] was invited here for a lecture. So we knew -- when we came here that weekend, it was Easter weekend, about a month before now, and it was -- spring was here, and Syracuse was still in the middle of their winter. We had started talking about wanting to move a little closer to home, but not home. And this was a good compromise. We just fell in love with this town, the people, the -- everything. But he loved the architecture school there. So we started working on coming here.

But we had Florence already -- we were already going to Florence, and we weren't changing that. So it took a couple years. And I say that, I think right after I visited here we found out he was going to go to Florence. Maybe that was -- we came here in '94. We went to Florence summer of '95. Yeah, so he -- right after visiting here we found out pretty much he was going to teach in Florence, so he continued his talks with the university, with the school of architecture, and we worked it out to come here after Florence.

But it was a great time. It's a beautiful town, a perfect setting for -- he had lived in Europe twice as a student, lived in Italy two different semesters. I had not. So, you know, to arrive there with a 2-year-old, you know, it took some settling in, but it was worth it. After a month or two, we were settled in and just really enjoyed that time.

And then when he was -- let's see. We went back in the spring of '03 for him to teach -- Arkansas has a program in Rome, so we went back to Rome for a spring and took -- by that time our family was three boys because we had a third child here, and so we took all three, and our two older sons in public school, first and third grade. In Rome, adjacent to the Pantheon, and the
playground was on the roof, and they'd look out at the dome of the Pantheon during -- And because we had had those two years, particularly me, in Florence, and [deleted] -- you know, he traveled and took students. He's taken -- he's now been to Italy a lot, Florence, Rome, and all over Italy, traveling with students, so he's pretty, you know, ingrained. But we could hit the ground running that second time because, you know, I knew how to shop, I knew how to buy food, I knew how to cook it, I knew how to -- you know, we knew everything, we knew where we wanted to go, and so we really had a nice time.

It was 5 1/2 months. Got our children in public school, which no one said we could do. I wanted to, for them to have that experience and be immersed in a foreign language. Our oldest child, see, from 2 to 4 was also immersed. And he was in first private nursery school for the mornings, and then he went to a public school starts there at 3, so he went to public school, well, materna they call it, mother school, from 3 to 4. So he was totally immersed.

So in Rome, you know, as soon as I got there, our landlord was getting the apartment ready. And I said, "What school -- did you live here when your children went to school?" And he said, "Yes, I did." "Well, what school did they go to?" So he told me, and -- because I'd already been in the phone book the first morning I arrived finding the public schools because I couldn't locate them from here. And I'd just hit a wall trying to put my children in public school. So I realized, I'm just going to have to get there, find the school and go to it. So we didn't know what we were going to do with our children when we arrived January 8th or 9th.
So I asked the landlord, you know, and he gave me the name of the school and he got the phone book and looked it up for me and gave me the number. So I called and set up an interview. Because I thought, you know, our schools -- there has to be a reciprocity. Our schools had students -- faculty members that come to the university have their students [sic] in our public schools, and our schools open their doors. It's great, it's -- you know, they love it. And I thought it has to -- there's just an unspoken, unwritten reciprocity with public schools.

We called the public school and set up an interview with the principal. So we, you know, really dressed the boys up. We're pretty casual, and we give them -- we never coach them. We coached them, "All right. You're going to go in. You're going to sit down." We took sketchbooks, which they do. I mean, they draw a lot and [deleted] is an architect, you know, sketches, so they are used to having paper to draw on and all this. And so we already had little notebooks for them, so they each had their notebook.

And we took them in. And they were perfect. [Laughs] And met with the principal. And she, you know, the perfect genteel Italian woman, she was very kind and sat down. And the boys immediately settled themselves and started drawing. And she observed them, and visited and chatted with us. And she said that, yes, they could begin, and set it all up. So they got in. And that was huge, as you can imagine. I was very ingrained into -- you know, I could go there and live, but I didn't want to go there and be a nursemaid for three boys and the activity. I didn't know Rome. You know, I had visited there, but I didn't -- I was glad to get to live that five months in -- I didn't know -- you know, it was a city, and you just -- you know, there's a reason
Italian families just have one child. You can't safely take -- you know, when you have children on the street, you -- it's not an easy thing for one person to take three boys through the city. I don't think I would have come back with all three of them. So they needed something to do.

They needed --

And she said -- I remember her saying, "Well, of course," she said. "You are in Italy, and your children are with you, and your children need to be around children. Of course we have a place for them." So I thought that was --

So then we spent that five months and traveled some with his -- with Tim's students. And then came back the middle of May, and our children went to school that last two weeks here, our first and third grader, only to find out that they were of course way behind, so we spent that summer reading and working on math and things. And they were back in -- fit right back in school here. You know, do you have children?

BK: No.

JANE: Well, you get caught up in all the activities of life, and you really don't have a lot of family time together with your family. And there, all five of us were removed from all our activities. The kids, you know, soccer and baseball and basketball, and [deleted] and I's meetings, you know, both him with work and -- you know, and everything, all our meetings, all our -- everything that we busy ourselves doing, which is part of life and you enjoy doing and you wouldn't change it, but for that five months, all that was suspended, and we all ate every meal together, three meals a day, you know.
And on weekends it was just, you know, what train do we want to hop on today and spend three or four hours in this city, or where -- do we want to walk the Abbey Way or do we want to, you know, go up to the Genicula Hill and walk around and visit the gardens there, or, you know, what do we want to do as a family. And so it was just a fantastic time. We all remember it very fondly. We had a great time, you know, just --

We had a great apartment then, too. We were right near Piazza Navona. And we'd walk over to the Castel Sant'Angelo to play. It was, you know, a 15-minute walk away. That was our playground. I mean, we -- so we all remember it quite well, quite a bit of things about it. And we went back to visit Florence, too. And oh my gosh! Florence, I'll never -- the memories -- I may start crying. The memories of my senses when I got to Florence: the brown of the stones, the way they feel on your feet, the way -- the sound of the traffic on the buildings, the light, the food, the way things sound there because the traffic's different. You know, the whole city, there's very little car traffic now in the center. And we spent a week, and it was actually well into our stay in Rome that -- before we visited Florence. And we went right back the next weekend.

It was just astounding. You know, usually memories I think for people are mainly sight memories. But all five of your senses have memories. We just are hit with the -- And most places are not rich enough in that way to awaken those. I mean, at home, you know, you're -- when you go home you have a lot of that, but any other place it's a little bit rare. And Florence was just so rich in all those sensual memories. It sounds like it's out of an R-rated film or
something, but it really was, just the colors the -- or lack of color, really, because it's all brown.

But it's beautiful because everything's stone, you know.

But the food, and visiting. Of course our street was rich with so many sounds and smells and everything where we had lived. But just the whole city. The minute I walked out of the train station and was walking in the street, now in an area I hadn't even lived in very much, before I even got to the part I really knew, it just hit me. I mean, I just couldn't believe it, just -- it was amazing. So we then spent I guess a couple more weekends in Florence after that. We made a point to go there and stay.

And boy, I keep wanting to go back, but I can't get [deleted] to. We've got to raise these kids. It's kind of hard. You know, third grade was pushing it putting them in public school. The first grader did great. The third grader struggled, because they were doing a little more than coloring and cutting paper, like they did in first. You know, third grade's you're studying math and English and writing and all that. And it was a little hard on him.

So they helped him a lot, and he did fine. And we had a lot of breaks from school because we'd pull them out of school when we -- We went on two extended trips with the students in Italy, with the students, [deleted]'s students. And so we'd pull them out for a week to 10 days. So they kind of would go to school and then they'd leave, and then they'd come back and it really didn't matter. But we'll go back. We'll go back for sure, I feel sure. Because [deleted], he's now fluent in Italian, and I can get along. I don't speak it very well. I can understand it most of the time and can read some. And I'm a candidate to learn more.
We moved to Fayetteville in August of '97. It's been 10. We're in our eleventh year, right. We -- I guess at that time we had two children, 4 and 1. And when you have children, they fit you into life, really, because we got here, we bought a house, a great house in the center of town, about a half mile to the north of here, near [deleted], if you might have been in that area.

So we bought that house and started working on it. And Tim started working in the school. And our children, you know, we were raising them, so we met people their age and people at their preschool and met -- you know, got involved with folks at the university in the school of architecture, and just kind of settled in pretty quickly, you know.

Enjoyed it here. It's just a great town. Got your children situated in preschools and just, I don't know, started life. Visited the library a lot. And, you know, I don't know. It wasn't that hard of a move at all. We -- probably the move here was -- it's kind of interesting because we had all our things, remember, stored in Syracuse. So we stored them. We knew that we -- we really thought that we would not be going back to Syracuse because [deleted] was ready to teach somewhere else, because he had gone to school there. Nothing against Syracuse. We liked it there. We just needed to get closer to home because of both our parents and things like that, wanted to be a little bit more in a Southern place. We'd grown up in the South and just kind of missed that.

And so we had our things in storage at a place that was connected with a moving company, one of the big -- great -- anyhow, it doesn't matter. One of the national moving companies. So we had them move our things here. We had bought a Volvo through the
European buying program and had it the last six months, the car I still drive today. And so we had that shipped. That's part of their plan. We drove it to Amsterdam, and they shipped it here.

We flew into JFK, rented a van for one day because we had mountains of stuff with us. Footlockers -- no, we shipped the footlockers, but two children and a lot of luggage. We rented a van. Spent the night. Drove to Newark where our car had arrived, and picked up our car, and piled all in the car, and drove to Syracuse, where our things were, mainly to pick up -- we had a little sailboat we had stored, also. So we had to car-top the sailboat, and plus we wanted to see friends in Syracuse and say our goodbyes. So we spent about a week in Syracuse with friends -- or less, a little bit less. Got the boat, put it on top of the car and started cross country and drove to Arkansas, actually.

The boat made it, oh, yeah. It was strapped to the top of the car. We bought -- gosh, I guess we bought bars for the car. No, we had those. We put those -- got those -- no, we had to buy more because the ones we had wouldn't fit. Anyhow, we bought, you know, what do you -- the car top system-- Yakima bars to put on top of the car for the boat, bought a car-seat for the 1-year-old, and started across the country, and drove here. And the day we arrived, we closed on our house that we had bought, and moved in.

[deleted] had flown on his own in May before we were coming and found the house. And so I had never seen it. And I thought, if you can't trust an architect to pick out your house, who can you trust, you know? So he had found our house. And actually I guess we closed in Italy, and then I guess we just had to go to the real estate agent's office to get the key, actually.
Second Interview: Library Story

BK: Okay, so let me read something. Today we are talking about the public library, and by the public library I mean any of the services you might receive through the library as well as all of the content in the library—the books, CDs, videos, and more—that you might use in the building or at home, in your car, at work, or anywhere. I also mean any interactions you might have with people at the library—whether library staff members, people you may meet, or friends you might run into—as well as experiences attending classes or programs. Finally, I also mean to include any experiences you might have online through the library, or by accessing the library from your home or work computer. OK?

JANE: Mm-hm. Okay.

BK: Please tell me your experiences using the public library throughout your life, and reflect on those experiences. Start wherever you like. Please take the time you need. I’ll listen first, I won’t interrupt, and I’ll just take some notes for afterwards.

JANE: Well, I thought about coming over, it's odd to me, the first time I remember -- I know my mother must have taken me to the little bit more, but the first use of the library I remember was as a teen, as a young teenager. I don't remember going -- I don't remember the children's area or there being children's programs as a child, or even children's books. We had our own books at home, and I know my mother would buy books, whatever the equivalent of Scholastic Books was then. We had a ton of books that she bought somewhere, or, you know, ordered through the school or something. So we always were reading.
But the first real -- the first memory I have of using a library was going in the summers, because remember I had nothing to do in [deleted]. I didn't like my choices. And I would -- my mother would take me, and so I couldn't have been driving yet. So I must have been around 14 and 15. And I would check out about six or eight books. I found all the old English classics, and I would -- I devoured, you know, Irving -- and not even only just English -- 17th century writers, Defoe and -- I probably have my dates all wrong, but -- and Hawthorne and Dickens and that time period, early 1800s, I suppose.

And I read all summer long. I would read all day. And I would finish those four to six books in the two weeks, you know, that they were due, and we'd go back and get a whole nother set. And I did that about two summers.

And prior to that time, you know, I just -- oh, wait, wait, wait, wait, wait, wait! Yeah, now I remember. There was an old building, it might have been a Carnegie -- I'll have to find out. I don't know if it's there anymore, that library that I guess I went to as a young child, but I just don't have a lot of memories of it. So anyhow, there were certainly no children's programs like you have today then.

And so as a young person, I didn't use the library as much as I would think I would have. And I suppose I did a little bit of research there. I didn't use the school library at all. Ever. The libraries at school that I remember, either. I remember not liking the junior high library or the librarian, so I never went there. I don't remember what I didn't like about her, but I didn't like her. [Laughs] I think it was too quiet. I think she was a real -- you know, about the noise and
everything. And I remember the high school library a little bit. I just used it for research, never--
didn't even know it had fiction books.

We had a public library build by Ed Durrell Stone, a community center, which is in
[deleted], designed by Ed Durrell Stone. And you had to walk across a big courtyard to get to it.

It was very nice. And then you entered in the upper level. They changed all that. It was the
police station. They built an art center and the library and the courts in it. It was a whole
complex that was over about, oh, gosh, four city blocks with parking and landscaping. It stood
on a big grassy--still stands, still used today--well, it's only--it would be about 40 years old--
and has these columns and fountains and all this stuff. It was a pretty big deal, really, when I
think about it. And now being married to an architect, you know, he comments on how it's pretty
good stuff for Pine Bluff.

BK: Mm-hm.

JANE: He says everybody's from [deleted]. He doesn't know anybody that still lives
there. [Laughs] Everybody he knows is from there, you know.

So then in college I didn't use the library, either. You know, I had to have gone--needed
it for research, but--Well, no, I really didn't. I was an accounting major. Accountants don't do
research. I didn't use the library in college. I don't ever remember checking out a fiction,
reading for pleasure. I didn't read for pleasure at all until I got out of college. I remember trying
going to the law library to study, thinking I might meet some cute guys. I gave that up.

[Laughter] They were too busy. So in college I didn't use the library other than I had to go there
to study with my sorority. I think we were required for study hall, so I did that. And that's about it. Not a lot.

Then when I got out of college, let me think, when I was working those years. I really don't remember, I didn't read a lot when I was first working. I had to study for the CPA exam for a couple years, three years with that sort of time. I don't -- really compared to my life in the last 10 years in the library, I don't feel very connected. I mean, I was connected with books and with the library very much so with those, you know, novels that saved me those two summers. I remember, I have strong memories of that.

BK: Mm-hm. I think it's typical that people -- typical of everyone in their twenties. I mean, it's true always I think.

JANE: Yeah.

BK: I mean, there are exceptions, of course, but so many other things are going on in people's lives in their twenties.

JANE: Well, that's true, and I think libraries have opened up more with more activities and programming and so forth, really. Because when I had children, when I began my family, that's when I really started connecting with the library because they were -- we lived in Syracuse, and there was a big -- the county library system, the Onondaga County system was real strong, and all the libraries were really close, kind of like here, only Fayetteville's now kind of I think -- it's a different relationship now with all the other libraries.
But I would go. There were different children's programs, different times all over. I mean, I started when my child -- they had one that one particular branch did that started with as soon as they could sit up at six months. And there was a big library table and this older lady taught it. And you'd set the baby on the table and hold him, as soon as your child could sit, that was the criteria, sort of. And she did the same thing every week. It was very repetitious, and went through a kind of a building blocks thing, and the kids could build the blocks and then they took the blocks down, some stacking cup things. And then she did a finger puppet with the same little piggies, three -- this little piggy went to market and finished reading them -- you know, letting the kids hold the book and ... she had books. It was great, you know, the repetition of it. Every week it was the same thing and the kids -- it was really good. And that was fun.

And then I just went on going -- you know, taking my child to the different programs and continued to do that. And got in a book club with women.

BK: When was that?

JANE: Started in Syracuse, and I loved it so much. I was in it about two years before we moved to Florence. And in Florence, I used the school library to check out fiction to read. It kind of started me -- it that the book club started me back reading, you know?

BK: Tell me more about that if you could?

JANE: The book club? It was a --

BK: Was it in a little bit ...
JANE: No, it was friends. Friends and I was -- you know, we'd meet in the evenings once a month. And I was invited to join. That book club was all fiction, and I believe it alternated a classic and then a recent book, a classic, then recent. And I used the library for all those books. I never bought them. I'd go to the library the minute I needed a book and get it. A lot of people bought them, but -- so I really used the library strongly with my book group.

It was fun. We'd talk about 30 minutes about the book, and then we'd spend the next hour just talking. Very enjoyable. We met in homes, not at the library. It wasn't library-related at all, that one. Not at all. And then I was in that for about maybe a year to 18 months, and then we moved.

So the minute I got here, I didn't even know anybody. And I called the one woman I met that was the spouse of colleague of Tim's -- or I met her and I said, "You know, I want to start a book group." And she says, "You know, we've had one. We've tried to get going and it's just -- it's not getting going. And why don't we --" So I picked up with those friends and just called four or five women and said, "If you know somebody who's be interested, come."

And we got eight or ten people, and I had it at my house. And I remember our living room, we were still kind of getting -- we did a lot of work, and I had a tunnel down my living room that culminated with TV. Of all our stuff. We had no -- and so we got the dining room chairs and put them in front of the stuff, and that's where we met. Because we were working on our dining room for a long time, and so we just moved our things around the house. And I bought -- I wasn't even cooking yet, and I bought one of those variety packs of Pepperidge Farm
Tasty Cookies and a half-gallon of ice cream, and we had that. So I patterned it after the same group with -- you have it in some -- you know, you rotate it around and you have dessert and coffee and tea.

That book group has evolved. So it's been going on 11 years now, and it's -- gosh, I think I'm now the only -- there are two people that were original. It was a more diverse group. The first one was all mothers, the one in Syracuse. This one is real diverse, which is both a strength and a weakness. So you want me to elaborate more on that book group here or keep going or --?

BK: Keep going. We can always return to it.

JANE: We try to choose books that are out in paperback with this one. And now the library has the great book group pouches that they do here that's just fantastic.

Oh, and we read a lot of nonfiction in this book group. I would say it's almost evolved to be more nonfiction than fiction. I think it may be also there are so many well-written nonfiction books out there. Maybe I just missed them in my earlier life, but people are really catching on to picking out an event and almost fictionalizing it in a way with the amount of detail they give it. When I think of Devil in the White City is a good example. You know, he's made a fictional -- I mean it's a really stretch for that book I think to be nonfiction with the amount of detail he has about the doctor's life. I mean, there are just so many good nonfiction ones out there, and, you know, The Worst Hard Time. And I think the books I've enjoyed the most with this book group have been the nonfiction. I'm not liking the fiction books they choose. And so that's a nice part of that.
And let's see. So I continued. And I really -- I went on [deleted] -- I'm on the [deleted] Board as a result of [deleted] suggesting that, and I'm on the [deleted] Board, as a result of a lawyer for the [deleted] inviting me to join that. So I guess I did a good job. And you can bet when my five years was up, I did not reapply. [Laughs] No, I'm teasing.

JANE: And I check out all the books I read from it for my book group, or whatever. And I've come to a few of the summer programs. It just seems our summer never -- and the boys come and use the computers, and I check out books now for my first grader a lot. They can walk here.

They started out kind of their first independent foray out of the house without me walking was the two older ones coming together here. I found a map the other day in a raincoat, one of the rain jackets that I drew, you know, and I took them through it, saying, "Now, you know where this is, and then you're going to turn there, and then you --" And they made it. [Laughs] They made it.

They were probably -- this is probably two or three years -- they were like 10 and 8, I think or 11 and 8, probably. Yeah. So they would come for a while and get on the computers and play, you know. And they loved that. And then we've come to a few lectures. We're so busy now. I mean, I think we'll almost -- we don't have a lot of time to use the library, but we've
enjoyed -- I guess we've come pretty much when I think of the different events I've been to in the big meeting room down there, both community and just everything.

BK: Going back to the reading group, both Syracuse and here, can you think of books that made a difference for you?

JANE: In the reading group -- in those -- significant for --

BK: That made a difference in your life.

JANE: Yeah, I can't remember any of the Syracuse books because that was 15 years ago. Yeah, gosh. We read The Diary of a -- what was it? The Madman and the Professor?

BK: Mm-hm.

JANE: About the writing of the OED. That was really interesting. That's not the title of it, but you know the book I'm talking about. And, you know, once again, a nonfiction. I liked The Poisonwood Bible a lot. And, oh! You know, I loved Barbara Kingsolver, The Bean Trees. That was an Onondaga book, Syracuse book club book. I love the variety that a book club gives you in what you read because if I'm not in a book group, I tend to -- and I'm choosing my own books -- it just opens doors to be in a book group that amazed me.

Significant books. Oh, I know a fun book I loved. Oh, The Diary of Little Big Tree? It's a book about the little Cherokee boy raised by his grandparents. I liked that. And then we read a great one about, oh, a woman that -- oh! The Year of Wonder, The Year of Wonders. All that I'm naming are historical nonfiction or historical fiction. I guess I like that. One about a priest that went to the Dakotas in the late 1800s. I forget the name of that, but I really liked it. Oh, The
Red Tent. I loved The Red Tent. Great book for a women's book group to read. That was our best discussion ever.

BK: Why?

JANE: Oh my gosh! Just on a number of reasons. It's just -- I think -- I've recommended it to so many women. I loved the fact that -- well, for one, I felt like that book really explains how a polygamist marriage can work to the benefit of women because the workload is shared. I love the fact that there's this red tent and the camaraderie of women. They -- you know, during the time of the month that they're unclean, then they have to be sequestered in this tent, and everybody outside the tent is thinking, "These poor women. Those poor unclean women have to be in that tent for three days, you know, wasting away. And they're in the tent having meals brought to them, a respite from their hard workload of cooking, you know, three meals a day over a campfire, and moving -- packing up tents and moving tents.

And, you know, imagine how hard a nomadic life would be. So they're getting a break from this in this tent, sitting, having clean straw brought to them, you know, sitting on straw and having food brought in because they can't come out. They can't prepare food. They're unclean. And they would just talk and have a break and a rest and have their woman time, you know, their time with women there. And a total break, like a total vacation every month for three days. I'd love it, you know? And it's such a sort of a dichotomy. We discussed all this and laughed about it. And just the way that it shows how -- I mean, women -- more than ever, I think, women nurture each other. That's a known fact, whether they recognize it or not. And I think women
really lose out that don't work in well. You have to develop that and respond to it and be aware of it. And these women in the red tent were aware of that. It was such a strong part of their life, and, you know, going to the tent when you had your baby there, and you stayed in that tent for six weeks. Lord knows what would happen if you'd gone back to your husband, you know? The babies were born in the tent, and then the woman and the baby stayed in the tent, and they were cared for for six weeks. And, you know, you think about it, it's just a, you know, sexual -- the woman, you can't have sexual relations for -- so she was protected. I mean, that was the way of protecting her. That sort of was the whole point, the woman and the baby, you know, I feel certain. And going there, preparing someone for marriage and all that. There was just a real nurturing. You could see that. And it just was so interesting to me to go back to 2,000 years ago, and it was a real door into how -- into women's lives then, I felt like.

That's probably -- I would say that might be the most significant book I read, I have read, for me personally, and the discussion I had, and the thoughts it provoked, both, you know, in our discussion of the book. And there were only like three or four women that could come that night, and we talked about that book. You know, that's one of -- we always laughed. In my current book group, we talk about the book about 10 or 15 minutes, and then we always seem to digress into other things, which, you know, that's okay. But that book we talked about for two hours, you know. And really had a good discussion. It was a lot of fun. I've recommended it to so many people. So, gosh, I mean, 12 times 10, we've read 120 books. I should have brought a list. One of the --
BK: That's fine.

JANE: -- group members compiled a list. But there have been some real duds there. The Wolf Whistle was the worst dud. [Laughter] Oh, I won't bore you, but one of the women did read it, and she said -- she got there and no one else had read it. She goes, "All right, sit down. Because I'm telling you, I read this goddamn book," and she spent 15 minutes making us sit, telling us the whole detailed story of the whole -- it's about a young black man that wolf whistles at a white woman in the '60s and what happens to him. It's awful. It's just terrible. That's about all I remember. I've blanked it all out. But she took us through the whole book.

Right. And, yeah, sometimes if it's a real dud, you know, the person gets roasted that suggests -- goodheartedly roasted, you know, for it. It's just part of it. It happens to everybody. But everybody also -- every book that's suggested, everybody has to be in agreement. You know, it has to get a vote to be read, too. It's sort of an informal process. But you have to get -- several people have to say, "Well, yeah, let's put this on," and "Yeah, I'm in agreement with that," and "For sure, for sure." And "So everybody's in agreement we want this on the list." And it gets on the list. So it's a group decision of the books that go on the list. Well, at least it was at that time, and we're kind of back to that.

We did have it where if you host, you suggest a book, get a book on the list, but that didn't work. People didn't do it, so -- they didn't want to be the -- So I think looking back on it -- discussing this is making me realize nobody wanted to put a book on the list and then have it be a dud. So I think that's why that method didn't work.
Oh, I'll tell you one book that was unique: Julie and Julia. That book sort of grabbed me. I started -- I got into it late and didn't finish it before book group. I just got about 50, 75 pages into it, so I kept thinking, "Well, I'll put this down. I'm going to quit reading this, but I'm going to read just tonight, and then I'm going to return it." But I kept picking it back up and reading 15, 20 more pages of it, you know, each night, and finally I really turned out loving it, and realized, "Ann, you know, you're going to finish this book. You're not going to end up --" So that was kind of a funny quirky way to -- usually I -- if I get 50 or 75 pages into it and don't want to finish it, I return it. But that one I didn't realize, so it's kind of funny I ended up reading the whole thing. It's a good book.

So, yeah, I do think about -- especially, you know, the book group books and certain books, I suppose. The depth of conversation that you get into about a book, I think maybe helps you wrap yourself around it more and ingrains it in you more maybe, a little bit more, that much more, you know. Some books don't need that. Other books -- so, yeah.

BK: Thanks.

JANE: Well, let me tell you what. Let me think. There was one more thing I was going to tell you because I've recently just started volunteering here. So to wrap up my life in the library, because now all my children are in school so I'm volunteering two -- Well, I've been just reorganizing the nonfiction. I mean, it's in children's, but I think I'm going to start volunteering one day a month with the Reading Road Show, which goes out and reads to preschools, mostly disadvantaged, like Head Start and so forth. Because the other preschools, a lot of the bring the
kids here, but the ones that can't, don't have the resources to do that, now the library's going there. And then I have a 100-pound German shepherd that I just love. I think I'm going to get him trained as a therapy dog and get him in the Sit, Stay, Read program.
APPENDIX H

TRANSCRIPTS OF CAROL’S INTERVIEWS
First Interview: Life Story

BRIAN KENNEY: I'm just going to read one statement --

CAROL: Okay.

BK: -- and then it's all over to you.

CAROL: All right.

BK: What I would like you to do in this interview is to tell me your life story, all the events and experiences which were important to you. Start wherever you like. Please take the time you need. I'll listen first. I won't interrupt. I may just take some notes for afterwards.

CAROL: Okay. I was born at the beginning in September of 1942. My father was serving in World War II at that time. My mother was much younger than my father. I was born when my mother was 16. I am the oldest of eight children. My mother and father both had the equivalence of a ninth grade education.

When my father got out of the Army, he traveled and took his family all over Oklahoma. And he tried farming, he tried a number of different occupations. As I recall, we were not rich in money. We were rich in adventures. And I know, you know, the love of my parents, but we were not well-to-do.

And as I alluded to the fact earlier about A Tree Grows in Brooklyn, my father also had some other alcohol problems that I can't remember the character's name now, but her dad was an Irish singer, as I recall, that because of that by the time I reached high school age, there was no money for college. I was a good student all through school, regardless -- I mean, I don't mean
that in an immodest way, that I loved to learn, I loved to read, and I took advantages of any situation where I could learn or where I could read.

My high school library, there were -- it was in a closet, and I think my senior year in high school, I probably read every book that was in the closet. There were 14 in my graduating class, two of them were cousins and one was later my brother-in-law.

And so when I graduated from high school, I went to work for the telephone company because they had a program where they would pay tuition if it was related to anything that would benefit the telephone company. And so I worked for three years in Oklahoma City and went to school part-time at OCU.

And then during this time, my husband and I had been dating, and he graduated from college. We were married. We moved to another town, Chickasha, Oklahoma And there I continued to work for the telephone company. My husband was a social worker for the Welfare Department in the town where we were living. There was a college in Chickasha. I went to school there part-time.

And then my husband had an opportunity to go to OU in Norman to complete his Master's through the Welfare Department, and they paid his tuition and living expenses. It was two different years. We went first to a -- we went to Norman, and by then had -- I no longer worked for the telephone company. And so I went to school full-time that first year.

And then we moved to Frederick, Oklahoma, because you had to have two years between the first year of his Master's and the second year. And so when we moved there, there was not a
college, and so I had a baby. And then for his second year of his Master's program, we moved back to Norman, Oklahoma, and I went to school again part-time, and we had someone -- our son went to a nursery.

And then, let's see. My husband completed his Master's and we moved to Lawton, Oklahoma. And he was the County Administrator for the Welfare Department. And again I went to school part-time. And after 10 years, I completed a degree in elementary education with 128 hours. I attended four colleges and did not lose a single hour. [Laughter] I thought that was a miracle in itself.

And then we were there for three years, and I taught first grade. And my husband was having to work a lot of evenings as far as community involvement with his job, and we were really wanting to have more family time. And so a position became available in Fayetteville with the VA Hospital.

So we moved to Fayetteville, and he was a clinical social worker at the hospital for 32 years, and then we've been retired six years. At that time, our second child, a daughter, came along, and I stayed at home until she started kindergarten. And I went back to the university to get a reciprocal -- the six hours I needed to get a teaching certificate in Arkansas.

At that time I had really enjoyed my undergraduate courses in children's literature, so I started the six hours that I took in the Instructional Resources Program at the university. And I also at that time was a graduate assistant at the university, during that year.
And so the next year, after I had my certification, I started as an elementary library media specialist in Springdale, which is the town to the north of us. And I was there one year, and then came to Fayetteville and was here 23 years. And during that time, I went ahead and completed my Master's degree, and I considered it the best job in the whole wide world. I loved working with my teachers and with the children.

And they offered a buy-out when my daughter, who had just had twins, told me that she was expecting her third child. They were 9 months old, and she said, "Do you think you're going to take the buy-out and retire this year?" And I said, "Yes, I think so." And she said, "Good, because I'm pregnant." [Laughs]

And so we have thoroughly enjoyed our retirement. We volunteer here at the library with the Head Start Program, and my husband and I go once a month and read to Head Start. We're very involved in our church. We teach young adults and young marrieds. And we go -- we travel when we can. We do disaster relief and go on trips with that. We go once or twice a year to other places to do medical mission work. Last year we went to Ecuador and Honduras. We have been different places in the United States to do things like that.

Our son lives in Bentonville, and he works for Tyson, and our daughter-in-law works for Wal-Mart. They have a little boy who will soon be 4 and are expecting their second child in October, and then we have the three grandchildren in Hot Springs, so that's kind of a nutshell.

BK: Where were you born? I know it was Oklahoma, but --
CAROL: Uh-huh. Fort Sill, which is at Lawton, and my dad was in the service at that time.

BK: And what year did you move to Fayetteville?

CAROL: In 1971. I was pregnant at that time with our daughter, and so I pretty much stayed home until she was 5. So I got to have that time at home, but then also I went back to work. And I don't know, being in the school system I think is a nice way to be able to raise a family if you're going to work.

Second Interview: Library Story

BK: Okay. All right, here's the second question. Well, you know this, but I'll read it to you anyway.

CAROL: Okay.

BK: By ‘the public library’ I mean any of the services you might receive through the library as well as all of the content in the library—the books, CDs, videos, and more—that you might use in the building or at home, in your car, at work, or anywhere. I also mean any interactions you might have with people at the library—whether library staff members, people you may meet, or friends you might run into—as well as experiences attending classes or programs. Finally, I also mean to include any experiences you might have online through the library, or by accessing the library from your home or work computer.”

CAROL: Right.

BK: Please tell me your experiences using the public library throughout your life, and reflect on those experiences. Start wherever you like. Please take the time you need. I’ll listen first, I won’t interrupt, and I’ll just take some notes for afterwards.
CAROL: Okay. I don't remember public libraries as a child, I mean, as a small child. My mother, as I said earlier, I was 13 when my youngest sibling was born, and she was busy and I was busy helping her as I recall taking care of children. But I do know that -- are you talking about all kinds of libraries? I do know that I made use of the libraries that we had at school, and sometimes that would -- we lived a lot of different places.

I think my brother and I counted up from the time I was born until I left home, we lived in 56 different houses, and so we moved a lot. And so I think in ninth grade, we lived in three different towns, and that was the year I took algebra. And I'm really sure that that's the reason I never did math as my favorite subject. But anyway, I would make use of the libraries in the classroom, and if the school had one, I made use of that.

And some of my best experiences were from reading and traveling vicariously with the people in books because we didn't go a lot of places, as far as my travel experiences, other than moving from one place to another. It was hard to get 10 people in one vehicle to start with, and so I could go places through books. And I may have used it as an escape at times, but I also know that, you know, I just thoroughly enjoyed it. And I had --

Oh, in one of the schools that I went to, it was probably when I was in high school, a teacher gave me a list of books for the college-bound. I think that there were lists that floated around --

BK: Mm-hm.
CAROL: -- like that. And I guess over two summers I went through that list and read every book that was on the list, not knowing whether I would ever make it to college or not, but wanting to be prepared if I did get there. And anyway, reading and libraries were all good experiences for me.

Probably when I was a junior in high school, we lived in Wichita, Kansas, for a year, and we had a wonderful high school library. We had a wonderful public library. I think it was probably a branch now that I think about it, that that was part of the time that I was going through this list of books that I wanted to read. And I was a Louisa May Alcott fan. And I would find an author that I enjoyed, and I would just -- I would read everything that that author wrote because I thought if I liked one, I would like all of them. I think I probably went through some less than spectacular literature during that time, as well, but that was all right, too, and I enjoyed that.

And then I guess when I went to work for the telephone company in Oklahoma City, I lived at the YWCA and walked back and forth to work with a lot of the other girls who worked there, too. And you passed the library, the public library, to go to work. And so I read constantly there, as well. I would work 9 to 1, 6 to 10 shifts at the telephone company during the summertime, and sometimes I'd just spend the whole afternoon in the library, in the public library, just reading before I -- you know, then I'd get a bite to eat and go back to work.

During the school year, I would work a 1 to 10 shift and I would go ride a bus to OCU, and so most of my mornings were taken up. But we would get an hour for our lunch break, and
as I said, the library was not far away, and I would go down there sometimes and, you know, renew books or get new materials at that time.

So then of course I used university libraries when I was in school and public libraries, you know, after I was married. And then when I had children, we signed up for every library event that was available in Lawton when my son was small. And then when we moved to Fayetteville, we would -- you know, I -- well, my children are both avid readers, as well, and I continued to tell parents throughout my career, you know, how important it is to read to children and to make them lifelong library users.

Now, I raised two different children. Our son is a lover of owning books, whereas I have always been a person -- you know, after I've read the book I have no sentimental attachment to it, and so the public library is ideal for me. I don't have to purchase a book and have it in my house in order to feel satisfied about books. But my son, every book he reads, he wants to keep in his library. He's going to run out of room pretty soon.

But my children were involved in the library when they were young. And then of course with me, being in the library here in Fayetteville, they were -- I taught my daughter while she was in elementary school in the library, and then my son would come and help with inventory and different things like that when school was out. So they have been involved. And throughout the period of time that we were -- while I was working, I still made use of the public library, the genealogy section.
Right now I'm listening to a Play Away, and we've used the videos, we've used the CDs, we've used the databases. I use the on-line access at home to reserve books and to be notified when books are in. I'm trying to think of something I haven't used, but -- and when we have special speakers who come, special programs, I have -- I avail myself of those. And my husband, who is a doer rather than a reader, will come with me. He enjoys that part of it. He enjoys going and reading to the children.

And I was trying to think -- I mean, we come to a lot of the programs that are of interest to us. And I've been involved in book clubs. And when Georgia Kunze[sp?] was here earlier, she was in charge of the volunteers. Georgia had been my aide at Butterfield, where I taught for six years while her daughter was in elementary school.

I always had overqualified aides. They were usually the mothers of children. Georgia had a Master's in art history, and she then came to be the coordinator of volunteers here. And when they were starting up the new library, she asked me to do several things that I came and helped with there.

And I'm trying to think if there's anything -- I meet my friends here. We will -- if we're coming to the book club, or if we're coming for a special presentation, then we will come and do that. Sometimes we'll have coffee and visit out in the foyer.

I like to read everything: nonfiction, fiction. The one we were doing today was Scott Turow's Ordinary Heroes. There has been a play in town, My Father's War, and they were trying to, you know, tie in World War II together. I'm listening to on a Play Away right now Suite
Francaise, about World War II. It was about the things that happened during the German
occupation of France during that time period. And I can't even remember the author. I have -- I
still love children's literature, and I share that with my grandchildren. I'm probably not as up-to-
date as I was a few years ago.

But I enjoy biographies, nonfiction, fiction, historical fiction. My two most favorites that
I have enjoyed are The Kite Runner, and A Thousand Splendid Suns, simply -- part of it, I have a
friend who is a missionary in Kabul, and she has shared things with me that, having read the
books, it makes me realize the danger that she really is in there. And so I like a little bit of
everything. I guess eclectic.

Have you read The Glass Castle? The one -- she -- and I can't remember the author. It's
an autobiographical story of her family. And I don't know whether she was a migrant child or
whether her parents just moved a lot, but eventually they are homeless in New York City. And
she has -- through education has become -- I think she is either a broadcast journalist or some
kind of writer, and she sees -- she's going down the street, and she sees her mother climbing out
of a dumpster. And her parents are basically homeless, or they eventually become homeless in
the story.

And I can reflect back on those things and, you know, see things from my own past that,
you know, gives me insight. And, you know, I've long since got over the idea that I was the only
child that grew up that way. I think that I was blessed in the fact that I was able to work and be
able to get an education. So, yes, that does -- I mean, it makes me reflect on things from my own
past. But I also did that reading Lois Lenski and Cotton in My Sack I mean, there are books that, you know, I think are good for children who may think that they're the only one that has problems at home or there are things that they think perhaps they can't overcome. But I still feel like America is a place where if you work hard enough and you are determined, you can do it.

BK: Mm-hm.

CAROL: And so I like to see children be aware of that fact, that whether it's a Hispanic child who is here illegally, a biracial child, an Arabic child from Saudi Arabia. We had a number of Muslims in our school, and just realizing that we are a diverse nation and the fact that if you hang in there -- and I know that there are exceptions to that rule, too -- but you can work hard and things can get better.

BK: Can you think of other books that made a difference in your life?

CAROL: Mm-hm. Well, I would say of course The Bible, first of all. I have found many things in there that have been helpful to me personally and have been able to share that with other people who experience problems. We had a pastor who said, "There are two kinds of people in the world: Those who have problems, and those who are going to have problems."

And I think it's very true that every family has nuts in their family. [Laughs] Every family is dysfunctional in its own way. There, you know, are problems in different parts of it, and if we can help one another through these things, I think that -- I feel like that is something I was put here for. And I think that. I still love Louisa May Alcott, even though -- I mean that was a series of books that I went through in my junior high years that influenced me.
I don't know. You know, I like a lot of books. It would be really hard to pin me down. I give away Oh, the Places You Will Go by Dr. Seuss to graduating seniors every year. I think it's a wonderful book, and to make them realize that there are waiting places where life isn't much fun, but, you know, it will move on from there.

And I have so many, many children's books that I like, and I couldn't be pinned down on favorites there, either. They're good. And like I said, usually the one I'm in the middle of is the one that's my favorite at the moment.

I enjoy -- we enjoy traveling. I read a lot of travel books to prepare for trips that we go on. And for the most part, unless, you know, I hear of something -- We went to Ireland a couple of years ago, and of course I got the Fodor's and the Frommer's and the Rick Steves' and all of those, but -- and I can't remember the title of the book, but it was a fiction book about a storyteller. I think it was Ireland may have even been the title of the book. But he tells all the stories of, oh, from St. Patrick to -- what is the historical site there they compare with -- I can't think of the name of it now, but there were stories attached to all these different places, and it kind of gave a history of Ireland in fiction form that was -- That was very good. I enjoyed that book.

And then I listened to one that was a nonfiction on Ireland, and I can't remember the name of that, either.

BK: Do you like listening to books?
CAROL: Oh, I do! I do it when I'm driving. I do it when I'm dusting. I do it when I'm cooking. I do it when I'm gardening. I don't know, I've heard of hyperactive children who need to be doing something all the time. It seems that I need to have my mind engaged while my hands are engaged, as well, and I just enjoy listening to books on the Play Away, the CD, whatever format. And my husband loves -- he enjoys, you know, when we go on trips we will listen to books.

I don't know. I'm just -- I don't like to wait at doctors' offices. I don't like to not -- I mean, I can engage my mind other ways, other than listening to that, but I like to -- I always told my children that you should keep a flood book. Like if you're having to wait on your brother at soccer, or you are having to wait on your mother at the hairdresser, if you have a book, you can always be entertained and also learn new things. And so I practice what I preach.

There was one instance that was given in some illustration about a family that lived -- they had a low water bridge, and if the water came up, they always carried a book in the car that they could read until the water went down. And so we called that our flood books that they should carry in their car. So anyway, we talk about our flood books. So I always have a car full of books no matter where I go.

BK: Tell me about your last visit.

CAROL: My very last visit --

BK: Well, were you here today? No.
CAROL: No, our book club, the one that we're meeting in, that's a long story. But the one that I met with today was on the other side of town. And my last visit here I think I used the drive-thru and dropped off The Chinese Cinderella, that was a Play Away that I had listened to. But the drive-- we have the drive-thru drop-off here and then there's also one near our home, if I'm not coming downtown. That's very convenient, as well.

The last time, in fact today, I need to go back. They have a book bag for our Reading Road Show. This is for our Head Start reading, and I need to pick up my bag today because we will be going next Thursday to do the reading, and so we read the books before we go and --

BK: And where do you do that reading?

CAROL: We go to the Head Start building.

BK: Okay.

CAROL: Uh-huh. And it's very well-received. And there is a local person who is part of the Reading Road Show who has given money so that every year when we stop in May, each child gets to choose a hard-backed book to keep for themselves.

BK: Oh, that's nice.

CAROL: So this next-- when we go this next week, we'll be taking the books to them, and of course they love those.

BK: How many children do you read to?

CAROL: Last-- when we did it last month, we had fifteen 3-year-olds. And usually fifteen is about the max. There are I think ten different Head Starts in Fayetteville, and the
program -- the building that we go to is in a low-income housing area, and they have probably four different classrooms of I'd say twelve to fifteen children, so about -- let's see, I guess that would be close to sixty children in that building, but we just read in the small groups. We have enough volunteers who go that, you know, they can each read individually.

Then we also have a group -- I have not taken part in this one, but they have a developmentally handicapped group called the Richardson Center that they go to read to. And then there's another group called Children's House. These are children who have been abused where they go to read to them. I think they go twice a month to both of those programs. Anyway, there have been a lot of people who have really enjoyed it, and they got a grant of some sort to -- it's a big book bag, and they fill it with the Theme Books. That we read to the children, and it'll also include Big Books, and it will have CDs with music that go along with that particular topic, puppets. And so you get the -- you pick up the whole Theme Kit. And then we usually -- their attention span doesn't usually go past 30 minutes.

BK: Right.

CAROL: And so we choose the ones that we think are most appropriate for our children. And we have the same group every time that we go back. So it's -- the kids love it. They also -- our junior highs have a service project where they go out and do things at the Head Starts and other areas where they can work. And last time we had two junior high girls that were with our group, and they enjoyed the stories as much as the 3-year-olds did. [Laughs] So it was fun. It is fun. I would say it's something that we enjoy. Now, there are times when we have to be gone,
and they have a good substitute backup list who can go in and take your place if you're not there, so it's -- we have enjoyed it very much and look forward to it when we go. And the kids enjoy us. And you figure out which ones are the wiggly ones and -- [Laughs]

BK: Right.

CAROL: -- and let them sit right next to you. So it's been fun. This is -- we've been doing this I guess two years. They just started this the year before last. But it's been rewarding.

And hmm! I was trying to think of anything else that -- of course I as an elementary school librarian, the public library would come out and present a program in the spring to tell about the summer reading program. And I would of course encourage my students to be involved. And many years we were the most involved. And I don't know that it's a feather in my cap or in the public library's cap because they do such wonderful summer programs for the children. So it's a good -- And I love our library. It is wonderful.

BK: Isn't this stunning?

CAROL: And just the view of Old Main. And I have said ever since it opened that I was going to come and just spend the day, once in the spring and once in the fall, and just sit out and look at the foliage as it changes. This is incredibly beautiful in October, so come back then.

BK: That's a good idea. This is -- but today is stunning.

CAROL: Oh, it is. It really is. When we first came, this was our first trip to Arkansas 37 years ago. And we came from the South up over the mountains. And we had been both of us
from the flatlands of Oklahoma where trees were very scarce. And when we saw these trees and mountains, we just fell in love with it. And it's been a wonderful place to raise children.

    am a little bit more enthusiastic than -- well, no. Probably everyone you'll talk to will tell you how much they love the library. I can't imagine them not saying that.
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