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NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH SUE KOZEL

FOR THE

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INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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TRANSCRIPT BY

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Kathryn Tracy Rizzi: This begins an oral history interview with Sue Kozel, on May 14, 2021, with Kate Rizzi. I am located in Branchburg, New Jersey. Thank you so much for doing this second oral history session with me.

Sue Kozel: You're welcome, Katie.

KR: For the record, can you please state your name and where you are located?

SK: Yes, my name is Sue Kozel, and I am located in Cream Ridge, New Jersey, part of western Monmouth County.

KR: Let us start off today talking about your majors. You started at Douglass College, transferred to Livingston College, and majored in political science and labor studies. What was your course of study like in political science and labor studies?

SK: Well, in poli-sci, it was a lot of political theory and then basic how does government work? What's the structure of government, state, local and at that point federal? It was less international; it was more federal. It was looking at how does one construct laws, how do you build coalitions to change government, change society. Then, [there was] a lot of political theory, so lot of Marcuse, a lot of Marx, a lot of Malthus, the traditional, hardcore male political theory. So, Wollstonecraft, others were really read on our own, but it really was hardcore political theory, Locke, the Enlightenment theories, Hume, the French Enlightenment, Diderot, just the whole gang, then the American Enlightenment tied to the revolution. At the core, I was thinking about this last night, Katie, it wasn't articulated this way, but I see it now as, "How did human rights evolve?" If I were to restructure all those classes, I don't know how they're doing it today, I would have included women philosophers of the Enlightenment. I would have included people of color across time. I certainly would have put Cyrus the Great, who really is the architect of human rights, right in the center, and I didn't learn about Cyrus until I went to graduate school. Again, it's the basic American experience, looking at New Jersey. Most majors I met were looking for jobs in politics, so it was kind of, "This will get me into law school. This will get me a job. I will become active in government, or I'll run for office." Those were the kind of people in a lot of those classes.

As for labor studies, it really was understanding the union movement, understanding working-class people and how they constructed institutions, bringing to the forefront that movements of protest led to political change, not that benevolent people just gave rights to folks. Usually, it was a violent, militant working-class labor history of the United States of America, and slavery was not included in that labor history. Now, I realize labor history, of course, is slave history as well. It's interesting to see in a forty-year period how change has come about in terms of the study and the leaders in these fields. But, again, it was predominantly the white working-class experience, men and women. The ideas of the International Workers of the World would have crossed over, Knights of Labor crossed over with blacks, and poor people, who were not even workers, was exciting to me, that you could build a coalition that included people who didn't look like you. Then, how do you build common themes around which to organize? Labor history was radical, so to understand the radical history, and then also looking at the structure of labor unions, the structure of society, of wealth, how is wealth accumulated?

Wells Keddie was really key in the labor studies side, Wells Keddie, and I had a lot of TAs [teaching assistants] because graduate students in the master's program taught. David Bensman was a wonderful historian, and he taught. I didn't have Sue Cobble, even though she was labor historian. She came after I finished my undergraduate work and started really graduate work, but I wish I'd had her. When you think of Alice Kessler-Harris, she was after my time, but I read all her work. She was brilliant pioneer, a brilliant pioneer and glass-ceiling breaker in the reorganization of labor history as women's history as well.

The political science side, Gerry Pomper, I didn't really have him in a class, I don't know why he adopted me, but he did. Gerry Pomper, who if we stood next to each other, ideologically there's nothing in common, maybe the Democratic Party at that time, but, anyhow, him. Dennis Bathory, who was brilliant, just a brilliant mind, a brilliant, brilliant mind. Of course, Henry Plotkin, brilliant. I didn't know Carey McWilliams as a faculty member. A lot of them I really didn't run around with, but there was a core that I studied with, yes. [Editor's Note: Gerald Pomper is Professor Emeritus of Political Science at Rutgers University. His oral history resides in the collection of the Rutgers Oral History Archives.]

KR: You mentioned having Wells Keddie as a professor and how he had a lot of teaching assistants.

SK: Yes.

KR: What I am struck about with him is that he was one of the founding members of labor studies at Livingston College for undergrads.

SK: Yes, yes.

KR: He was really important in the faculty union at Rutgers.

SK: Oh, yes, the AAUP, yes. [Editor's Note: In 1922, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) chapter was founded at Rutgers. In 1970, full-time Rutgers faculty voted to certify the AAUP as the official bargaining agent, making it the second AAUP bargaining unit in the country. In 2005, members voted to affiliate with the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), so that the AAUP-AFT now represents 6,000 full-time faculty, graduate students, part-time lecturers, postdoctoral associates and non-tenure track faculty at the three campuses of Rutgers.]

KR: He was an actual labor leader.

SK: Oh, yes.

KR: You were learning labor studies from somebody for whom it was not just theoretical.

SK: That's correct.

KR: What was that like having him as a professor?

SK: It was very, very exciting because we would do a lot of simulations of strikes in our classes and roleplaying. He would always encourage discussion. He was not good on disagreement. He had a traditional radical Marxist-Leninist viewpoint, so he wasn't very open to the ideas of the New Left, so Students for a Democratic Society. He was very rigid in a pro-Russian viewpoint, but he was exciting.

Now, there was a dispute. I'm trying to think. I was a graduate student. I graduated with my M.A. in 1985 as well, and it was in labor studies at the IMLR Institute [Institute for Management and Labor Relations]. I remember there was a dispute over a teaching assistantship. Usually, you're only holding them for one year, and Wells wanted to give it to the current student who served. I told the department chair that if I filed a grievance, I would win, because he was violating the terms of the contract. I got that TA-ship, and I had that the following year. Sometimes, and I think all of us fall victim to this, you're part of our team or you're part of some group and get preferential treatment. I learned, even studying with the radicals, that they're human too. Wells was very human, but he stood up for what he believed. Even when his own faculty disagreed with him, he would fight for certain rights and I very much admire Wells for that. I think he is one of the most important faculty from Livingston, along with John Leggett.

I would say John Leggett in sociology was incredibly influential in how I think about class and power. He was your free speech guy from Berkeley. He was involved in the 1964 free speech movement, John Leggett. I would say he was a Leggett-ist. He'd have his own philosophy, it drove people nuts, but he was brilliant. He was more like an anarchist in that he didn't want any structure holding him back, "Whatever I think, I'm going to say and I really don't care what anyone thinks about it." There's a price to pay for that. He probably should've been a full professor. He was one of the most published faculty, but ideological values held him back and he was punished for his politics, just as Norman Markowitz, I believe, was as well. Two brilliant guys. Norman was recognized for his scholarship as a baby historian. Who does that? Again, he was another left wing, as sometimes people would say a left-wing nut, very strident in his views, but he was also very fair. He and Leggett represented a kind of fair group, I think, who didn't punish people when they disagreed. That, to me, is very important, even when you disagree, you shouldn't destroy other people, because if you listen, they really do have something to say that might change the coalition or the debates. [Editor's Note: In 1973, Norman Markowitz's *The Rise and Fall of the Peoples Century: Henry A Wallace and American Liberalism, 1941-1948* was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize.]

It was a very exciting time at Livingston, and most of my faculty were male. I had Sherry Gorelick, who taught the "Sociology of Education," and I loved that because it was a kind of a radical interpretation of education as she saw it, an instrument of the power structure to control people versus education as a tool when we empower ourselves to go out there and do whatever we want, whether to support the status quo or support change. Sherry was very, very important. Charley Flint was an African American woman who was denied tenure in sociology. She was amazing. She was very, very strong. At Livingston, there was this core of leftists kind of fighting each other across disciplines, and it was very weird to see that people on the left, just like people on the right, carry ideological baggage and they sometimes worked apart. Marty

Oppenheimer in sociology. I hung out with a lot of sociology people, even though I didn't major in it. Marty, brilliant. I forgot I worked for him one summer. I was going through the papers. I'm like, "Oh jeez, I don't even remember this," but I did a little research for him on power structure and class.

Then, there was Bob Alexander from Rutgers College. I think he must have been a CIA operative. He was one of those guys involved in the early '60s in Latin America, a political economist. I think he was involved in all those juntas. [laughter] I had very interesting conversations with him when I served in University Senate as an undergraduate and a graduate student and alum. When I gave the commencement address, I was one of three students who gave the commencement address for the Class of 1981, and I called for a third party in America. It was like, "Oh, crazy." Bob Alexander [wrote me]--I finally found it--a five-page single-spaced letter, telling me how I would ruin my life, "You're clearly very bright, but you will ruin your life if you proceed with ideas like this" and talked about how governing is very important. So, I've got this political economist who taught me more in some ways about government structure and ideology than my own professors. I never studied with him, but we'd always debate each other on ideas. We'd sit next to each other at meetings. He was very, very conservative.

For me, it was a freak show. I didn't care who you were. I was going to talk with you and then, okay, I guess we can't get along or we can get along. You shouldn't just judge people; you should try to have a conversation and then move on if it doesn't work. I had lots of in the classroom as well as outside [interaction with faculty].

I really enjoyed all these folks. I think with John Leggett and Dee Garrison, Dee was always like an intellectual Marxist. She wouldn't do anything. She'd just talk about radical ideas and everything, and then John would be out there marching, marching at everything. Paying for student lunches, I remember he paid for my lunch. He just grabbed people at Livingston, "Okay, we're going to have lunch at the pub." He was always engaging people. I think that Dee was masterful at building a women's network of historians, where everybody interlocked and rose together. She was more concerned about moving up. Leggett didn't care if he was denied promotion. She cared. She was very driven in terms of that way. I always was amazed they were together because they were so opposite. I guess, that's why it worked. One year, we gave Dee and John little gifts. I gave him a little chili pepper as a symbol of he's crazy. I loved that about him. Then, we gave her a little anchor because she was always holding it down. She was like the anchor. She called him "red sail." So, he was like the red sail, "Let's save everything."

At Livingston, you got to see the intellectual Marxists and then the people of all different values who just went out there and did things. So, it was like praxis. Sometimes, you have the man or woman of the intellect and the activism. Sometimes, it was just one or the other, and very few people, John Leggett, represented praxis. To a degree, I think Wells did. He didn't publish as much as Leggett. I think Leggett really represented the true praxis spirit of Livingston, yes.

KR: How much contact did you have with administrators, for example, Dean Jenkins?

SK: Well, when I was first at Douglass, I had a lot of contact with administrators. I was never sure what came out of it, but people could walk into doors and talk to people. I told you Jewel

Cobb gave me money for the Hyde Amendment table, which was kind of opposing that, which was amazing. Mary Hartman, no contact. She was part of that Dee Garrison kind of, "We are the elite star women and we're going to be untouchable. We're going to band together and crush anybody who criticizes us."

Jenkins was just super bright. I think his Ph.D. was in the sciences, so he was a researcher, very logical. He didn't like controversy, so as long as it was good times, I could bump into him. We'd have coffee together or lunch together. When it was controversial, especially with that alliance to defend the Rutgers federation, he was out on a limb, but he pulled back. He was looking for, "Where's my plan B?" I can't remember Kwaku's last name, EOF. I had a lot of contact with him, just all the time, anytime I wanted to.

Marvin Greenberg, interestingly enough, who was the Vice President of Finance, I think, for Rutgers University, I had a lot of contact with him through the University Senate, and I was always requesting information from him. This was all really before the OPRA Sunshine Law changes, where everything you request now costs money. In the old days, you could request things that didn't cost money. [laughter] I was always looking at the Rutgers University budget, trying to figure out why libraries were underfunded or when Livingston didn't seem to get its share of money, even though it had the largest proportion of minority and nontraditional students in New Brunswick. So, I had a lot of contact with him. [Editor's Note: Sunshine laws refer to laws that require government agencies and bodies to allow the public to attend their meetings and have access to their records. The Open Public Records Act (OPRA) provides procedures for the public to review or copy government records.]

I'm moving into the Rutgers University level now. Nathaniel Pallone was probably one of the most destructive people ever in the Rutgers administration. At one point, he became a persona non grata and they put him downstairs at Livingston, like in a janitor's office. But he was a horrible, horrible person. He wrote that I should be drawn and quartered at one point. That was published in a newspaper. So, the other thing that Rutgers and Livingston taught me is that there are crazy people. You can have people in power, but is something wrong with them? So, you just have to try to find ways to go around them if you can.

Hank Edelman in the Rutgers libraries, he was such a Bloustein sycophant. I think we were on the verge of proving that he had taken funds and shifted them because I was working with the librarians secretly. They were leaking all these documents at that time. Then, he was fired, and grandpa came in, the next librarian, who was the university librarian. I don't remember his name, but I met him. I always had access to him. I remember buying first editions of Beard books, the Beards for history. His staff decided to have a book sale, and they got rid of first editions. So, I bought them all and I brought them to his office and I said, "Look what I got." I said, "Look what I got. I've got all these books. Isn't it great?" He goes, "Yes, where'd you get them?" I said, "Well, your dumb librarians, some of them put them up for sale. Did you authorize this?" "No. Can I have them back?" "Absolutely not, I'm keeping them." We had that sort of relationship. There was a lot of cowboy behavior with people out of control doing things sometimes supervised or not.

With the University Senate, Martha--her last name just flew out of my head. She was amazing. Jean Sidar was the secretary for the Board of Governors, and I had a professional and thoughtful relationship with her. Sometimes, the secretarial staff, I had very good relationships. At the University Senate level, I had great relationships with the senate leadership because I had been in the senate for five, six, maybe seven years, from undergraduate, graduate, alum, to graduate schools. It depends like anything else. Sometimes, you can just bump into people. Sometimes, they'll avoid you. I got around, so I tried to speak to everybody I needed something from, and if it didn't happen, oh well. [laughter] Life goes on.

I found Livingston was an exciting place because usually I could visit with administrators. When Walton Johnson moved into a kind of quasi-administrative role, he was very, very accessible. I liked him a lot. I never studied with him, but I read his work, yes.

KR: I am going to circle back a little bit later to talk to you about the libraries and what happened with the external review, and then we will talk about Bloustein as well.

SK: Yes, all right.

KR: I want to ask you an opinion question about Livingston College. When you talk to a Livingston alum about Livingston College, they give you one view about what a vibrant education it was in a diverse environment. When you talk to other Rutgers alums from the other schools, maybe other faculty from the other schools, they have a different view of Livingston.

SK: Oh, yes, they saw it as the dumping ground.

KR: Why?

SK: There was such elitism, especially coming out of Rutgers College. I'm thinking about many in the Rutgers College History Department. Yes, they saw it as a dumping ground for lesser quality people and I think that's reflective of a racism and a classism that the institution had. Livingston is like Newark. It's a place where we put mostly the students of color--at that point, minority student was used a lot, that term--so minority students, EOF students, "They're not going to do well." I just thought that was so insulting. Even today, because the colleges don't exist anymore--they were destroyed and I think still that's one of the worst things Rutgers University ever did--a lot of alums haven't been involved for that reason because it's a sham to say, "You have Livingston College alumni and you don't have a Livingston College." The big question is are the values of Livingston carried throughout the institution now?

Warren Susman, on the other hand, was a wonderful writer, thinker, and advisor to the Alliance to Save Rutgers Federation. He was always available to give us direction and support.

I think it was the ignorance and the elitism of many of the faculty to have a pejorative, negative view of diversity. I mean, these are people, many of them all thought they should be at Ivy League institutions, and for some of them, Rutgers was seen as second tier of these elitist faculty. I don't know, you have to really ask them. There were a lot of accounting students at Livingston. There were a lot of people who were coming in who got corporate jobs. This was not a radical

churner, like everybody's coming out to be a radical. We have a lot of safe people at Livingston too. A lot of the Caucasian students who got into Livingston saw it as their last chance to get into Rutgers and they tried to transfer out to Rutgers College, just like I transferred from Douglass to Livingston. That was not seen as normal by some of the faculty. It's like, "What are you, out of your mind? Why are you leaving Douglass?" I used to ask them, "Well, why wouldn't I want to go to Livingston?" Yes, Livingston was seen as a stepchild, and I attribute that to racism and I attribute that to classism. I was one of the token EOF students at Douglass. So, I was like that tier that was put in largely because I didn't do well on my SATs. I came from a nontraditional background. I was poor. So, I fit anybody's slot. It's just a matter of who accepted me. Why do you think it is? Why do you think there's that elitism?

KR: In my personal view, I think it was a battle of resources, and the other colleges were trying to get what they saw as their fair share.

SK: Yes, yes. Livingston was built like a jail. It was built to contain rioting. [laughter] It's just crazy when you look at it. I don't know what they thought. They thought that they were going to let all these undesirables in and they were going to blow up the campus or something, but you can see it from the design. It wasn't an attractive institution. You didn't say, "I'm going to Livingston College because it's such a beautiful campus." You could say that about Douglass, "I'm going to Douglass. What a beautiful, beautiful campus." So, you had to go there for something else. It wasn't because of the beauty or the aesthetics.

I'm kind of an elitism smasher. You probably picked that up. I just had a letter published in the *Perspectives* [*on History*] of the American Historical Association back in November. I want the AHA as a profession to deal with the elitism associated with MAs and then with non-tenured track people. There is a, I call it, a caste stigma system. When you close out people because they're not good enough because they don't have whatever degree you are expecting the club to have, you lose a lot of talent. I've always seen that when you don't include the breadth of people, you don't get the benefit of all the knowledge. History is one of the most elitist fields. It's a wealthy person's field. Before the internet, I had to go travel everywhere to deal with archives. I had to pay for everything. Even with a fellowship at NYU, it just wasn't enough. So, it's not the working man or woman's profession. I think that in many ways, the historians, Richard McCormick, Jr., they wanted a research institution and they just were not clever enough to understand you can have a research institution and still let people feel connected to something smaller. Small is beautiful. That was one of our phrases for the federated system. You can have both. Why do you have to have no imagination? You can do both. In fact, people were doing both. [Editor's Note: Dr. Richard L. McCormick served as the president of Rutgers from 2002 to 2012. In 2007, Rutgers University consolidated undergraduate education in New Brunswick, and the undergraduate colleges were merged into the School of Arts and Sciences and School of Environmental and Biological Sciences.]

KR: Let us talk about the movement against academic reorganization. How did you first get involved?

SK: I was in the process of transferring to Livingston, and Chris had heard through the Senate and then I had heard also through administrators that there was something going on that might

create a change in the organization of Rutgers. President Bloustein was obsessed with making it a top-tier research institution and he looked at the Rutgers budget. It's not there to support a top-tier research institution. It's a state budget. The endowments were not big enough, and Bloustein was trying to pull everybody with him to say, "We can be the best with these changes." It was kind of budget discussions, some leaks from the Board of Governors. Linda Stamato and Jaffe--what's Jaffe's first name?

KR: Sanford.

SK: Sanford, yes, Sandy Jaffe. They were talking to faculty, and all of a sudden, it started trickling down. "What is this?" You have to look at it, it happened in one year. Now, it's been building for probably a decade, but all this moved in one year. It was rapid fire, lack of informed debate, lack of details. Bloustein wants to be the president of an Ivy League institution, and he's trying to turn Rutgers into something it can never be. It's a great institution. Why can't we have our own form of greatness? The faculty started taking lines, division lines. Then, being in the University Senate, we got all the plans. We got all the plans for the academic reorganization. Douglass students and Livingston students were very, very opposed. The Rutgers College students weren't sure where to go because their faculty was telling them that they would support the reorganization because it would make the university better and, "You'll get a better degree," meaning you'll make more money, "if we become this top-tier research university." There was no discussion about class size from these wannabes who wanted this excellent research university. It was all about faculty having more time to research and less time to teach, "You're going to be teaching less because we're not going to emphasize teaching as much and you're going to be researching and publishing and bringing in grants." Well, they were already doing that. You didn't need to change the university structure; you just needed more money to come in.

I never quite understood the marketing of it. It didn't make sense to me, but apparently, a number of faculty bought in. Then, the alums at Douglass were the most powerful group as the outsiders leading the effort. Mary Hartman was kind of all over the place on it. I remember Dee was opposed to it. Wells was opposed to it. John Leggett was opposed to it. Tony Vega was opposed to it. Ed Ortiz was opposed to it. Peter Klein in philosophy was kind of all over the place on it. The first thing that Bloustein was successful in doing was picking off faculty to form a core group to be the advocates for it, and it was masterful. I mean, what he did, it was like a master class in how to change the world in one year, just do that.

I became involved first by hearing rumors, and then the University Senators all met and the student ones said, "We've got to form a group to kill this. How do we do this?" Then, Livingston reached out to all the different student groups to get them onboard. We believed that if we passed enough resolutions--how foolish was this, we believed our classes--if you pass enough resolutions and show enough opposition and gather all this evidence, you can win. But we learned when it passed in 1980, the fix was in, for such a long time. Even the people we spoke to on the board who [said], "I'm open-minded. I'm open-minded," they just lied. [Editor's Note: In 1981, Rutgers University centralized the faculties of the New Brunswick undergraduate colleges, Livingston College, Rutgers College, Cook College, Douglass College, and University College, and formed the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS). This is commonly referred to as academic reorganization.]

It was such a learning experience in how sometimes you can fight the good fight and still lose. You still lose it. Reorganization, we worked to outreach to legislators, to board members, to newspapers. We got some good *New York Times* features on it. Jeanne Herb was amazing, from Cook College. She was one of my best friends at that time. Jeanne really coordinated with Dr. Hamilton from Cook College, who is now dead. He was in landscaping, Bruce Hamilton. You had firecrackers all over the place, trying to build support. [laughter] All these petitions, student petitions, with thousands of names on them. It's remarkable we did as much as we did in a year, but I just don't think anything could have stopped it.

This was Bloustein's legacy. Remember, he was at one of the elite institutions in the world, Bennington. Bennington was a super elite institution. Jeanne Herb and I filed Freedom of Information Act requests on him because we believed he worked for the CIA at one point, and so we got redacted stuff. It didn't even make any sense, ridiculous. I mean, Ed Bloustein was a brilliant guy. He did not like average people, and he also did not like to be challenged. He was a true autocrat. He wasn't burning buildings. He wasn't killing anybody, but he would destroy their careers. He really was a vindictive person. Why nice people allow that sort of leadership is beyond me, why they hook their star to that is beyond me?

KR: Did you put in the Freedom of Information Act request for Bloustein during this period of the debate over reorganization?

SK: Oh, yes.

KR: It was around 1980-1981 that you put in the request.

SK: Yes. I wish I had it. It's in the collection [Guide to the Rutgers Grass Roots- Progressive Activists Files, in Special Collections and University Archives, Rutgers University Libraries]. Yes, I think it was either '79 or '80. We had been talking to Congressman [Edward] Patten about Bloustein and just Rutgers in general. He'd call us his New Jersey tomatoes. [laughter] We would write him. We visited with him. We visited him in Washington to get his support. Yes, so, it was very, very exciting because we believed we could do anything, that intellectually, if we showed the intellectual people the error of their ways with facts and evidence, well, we should be able to stop this. The answer was no.

Then, we had reorganization planning committees. I was on one of those committees to try to look at how to--my purpose was to limit--but how to appropriately implement this without destroying the success of the colleges. We just didn't understand even the first year that the colleges were going to be dead. I think for some of us, some friends I know will never give money to Rutgers because of this. It's not going to happen. We felt the best way to preserve Livingston and student activism was to create our archives, Chris and I, in the late '80s. We stayed involved in alumni activities through the early '90s. Then, it was just you've got to move on now. [laughter]

It was a hard thing, Steve Garfinkle, Pat Alwell, all the Douglass leaders, Adelaide Zagoren from the Douglass alumni. She really was key in fundraising. It's kind of like you're fundraising--I

get it--to protect the institution, but you understand it's kind of like the glory days. The institution doesn't exist anymore. There's one big alumni association. There's the Loyal Sons and Daughters of Rutgers. The colleges, the memory of it will be gone when the last student who graduated from the federated system is dead. It will be seen as, "Oh, that was an interesting time." That's upsetting to see it that way. I don't know if that makes sense. It's upsetting to realize that a dream is gone.

KR: You graduated in 1981, and then you still were at Rutgers as a graduate student. How much did you feel the effects of reorganization?

SK: Well, I had graduated in '81 and went off and was a union organizer for my first year, year and a half in Pennsy. Then, I came to work for Mary Hartman. The Center for the American Women and Politics, Ruth Mandel brought me back to work on the Public Leadership Education Network. I thank Ruth--I know she's dead, I know--but I always thank Ruth for opening a door there. What I saw is that many people did not want to resist on an administrative level because, "It's happening, so we're just going to do it to the best of our ability." It's the alumni who were still pushing, especially those at Douglass and Cook, not as much as the RAA [Rutgers Alumni Association], because the Rutgers alumni thought they were going to eat us all up and they did, ultimately. [laughter] They ate us all up. We have some alumni leaders who are accountants and traditional people in those roles now from Livingston. We've lost some of that radical element. But I served on reorganization committees trying to look at how it was being implemented. I'd try to look at funding issues through the University Senate. I mean, while I was working at Rutgers, I was still in the University Senate, this time as an alum. I was actually elected by the Rutgers Alumni Federation to represent them. So, it was very unusual. I'm twenty-two, twenty-three and I'm serving in an alumni leadership role.

We used to joke. I'd joke with Ruth, "Are you sure you're still happy you hired me?" because it would hit the fan sometimes. Ruth, as a Holocaust survivor, she felt she needed all types of people around her, not little mini-me's all the time, and that's why I loved her. Mary Hartman was much more conservative. Mary Hartman actually told me I had to go out and buy new clothes because I didn't look the part of an administrator, crazy stuff. I worked under Louise Duus. There were some wonderful Douglass students who I met when I worked for Douglass. It was fantastic. [Editor's Note: When she was an infant in 1939, Ruth Mandel and her parents fled Nazi Germany aboard the *St. Louis*, an ocean liner carrying over 900 Jewish refugees that was denied entry in Cuba, the United States and Canada. Her family was able to settle in England and then moved to the United States after World War II. Mandel went on to serve as the director of the Center for American Women and Politics and the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University.]

Then, I got the assistantship to go in the IMLR [Institute of Management and Labor Relations], and I staffed the Summer School for Union Women. That was one of my tasks, so that was exciting. Tony Vega was in charge of that through the IMLR. That's when Dee said, "You really should get a Ph.D. in history. Why aren't you doing this?" I went, "Well, who has the money to pay for this?" So, she and Wells Keddie and some others wrote letters to NYU to their History Department, to Danny Walkowitz, who had been at Rutgers and went to NYU. During that time, we had just got married, Chris and I got married in 1982, and I'm commuting. Once a

week, I'd drive to Pennsylvania and then come home. So, I'm trying to balance all this and still be active at Rutgers, trying to hold the line on how much will be destroyed by reorganization.

Our alumni association, if the elitists look at it, they would see it full of rejects, people who were less concerned about how much money they made in their career and more concerned about the impact they were having on the world in which they worked. All those ideas are part of the reaction to reorganization. Probably ten years out, I realized that's it. It's over. Whatever we try to do, there's not enough money. Livingston is now a memory, a bumper sticker, and it's not a living entity anymore. Now, I see, looking back on it, that a lot of Livingston ideas on racial equity, on cutting sexism, on the radical reconstruction and reorganization of society, it has spread throughout the university. I see it a little differently now, but then I think I was so close to it. It just was upsetting to keep trying to preserve something that institutionally doesn't exist anymore. It just doesn't.

Yes, so, that started happening. Then, the sale of the Rutgers Ecological Preserve comes up. I said, "Oh, my God, what is going on at this university?" [laughter] I was still in the University Senate then. The neighbors called me. I had no connections to any of these people. Some of these are very elitist people, some of them supported reorganization. They all lived next to the preserve. Do I think they cared about the preserve? Maybe, maybe. [laughter] But I cared about the preserve because I went hiking in the preserve when I was at Livingston. It's just beautiful. I said, "You know, we're going to have to fight this one. We're going to have to just join the fight, try to stop it, take the abuse for it, and just stand up because you can't destroy one of the last uncut forests in New Jersey, uncut, virgin forest, you just can't do that." Here we go again, the clash of the titans, and this time I was pretty good at lobbying. So, [it was] a group of us, and Christopher was also involved in the outreach. [Editor's Note: Established in 1976, the Rutgers Ecological Preserve is a designated 316-acre tract of land that is part of a larger 425-acre tract of undeveloped forest land that adjoins with Livingston Campus. Friends of the Rutgers Ecological Preserve (FREP) was formed to save the Rutgers Ecological Preserve from real estate development plans decided upon by university officials in 1988. The University called for 335 acres to be developed commercially and residentially, including eighty acres abutting the ecological preserve.]

One of the funny moments is we brought down all these Highland Park crazies. One guy had a Mao hat on and stuff. We never said that they were Republican, we never said that, but the staff inferred, "Oh, these people from Highland Park, where they have a Republican mayor, oh, my gosh, these are all Republicans. They want to meet with Speaker Hardwick." So, the speaker comes to meet with us. They thought that these people were all Republicans and, "We're going to have inroads into Middlesex County." At this point, I thought, "Oh, my God, one of our 'Republicans' has a Mao hat sitting right up front, shaking hands with Speaker Hardwick." [Editor's Note: Chuck Hardwick served in the New Jersey General Assembly from 1978 to 1992. Hardwick was Assembly Speaker from 1986 to 1990.]

It was a weird coalition of people and Democrats and Republicans legislatively, in the legislature, on a county level, local mayors, who normally would support John Lynch on everything, all breaking, saying, "We don't want this development. We don't want this toxic incinerator next to it. We don't want any of these things." That was like a year-and-a-half battle,

which we won. We won, even with Tom Kean supporting Ray Bateman and saying Rutgers is a separate entity, arguing that the legislature should not get involved. John Lynch announced there would be a Green Acres proposal, and it went away. There was never a Green Acres proposal. I'm concerned that when some of us die, they'll try to sell it again. [Editor's Note: After the New Jersey Legislature passed a bill in 1988 to give the governor oversight of land deals made by Rutgers University, Governor Tom Kean vetoed the bill. John A. Lynch, former mayor of New Brunswick, served in the New Jersey Senate from 1982 to 2002. Raymond Bateman served in the New Jersey General Assembly from 1958 to 1968 and New Jersey Senate from 1968 to 1978, before becoming chair of the New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority.]

That was a big victory for a lot of us, who were so angry at Rutgers for what it did on reorganization, that we were able to save something precious tied to Livingston. Even when Ted Stiles wanted to trade the land--I couldn't believe this--he had a pet project somewhere down in, I'm trying to think, Somerset, Franklin. He wanted to trade, and he picks up the phone and said, "I've got a great deal. We're going to save more land in Somerset, but we're going to trade the preserve." I said, "Are you out of your goddamn mind? No, no." That got leaked to the press. I don't know who did that, but somebody leaked that to the press. Our own people are trying to sell out to get a piece of the pie. This is why Ed Bloustein was successful because he was a skilled administrator; he'd read everybody and looked for their greed point. There were just some of us that couldn't be bought off. [Editor's Note: Ted Stiles, a biology professor at Rutgers University for thirty-five years, was involved in land preservation efforts in Somerset, Morris and Mercer Counties.]

It's part of the Rutgers story. I know it sounds so negative, but it's like it never goes away. To put all those houses in the middle of an ecological preserve, claiming you support low-income people, and then I go get all the government documents that show that's a sham, you were already trying to trade those. You know how in Mount Laurel settlements, you can exchange houses. They already had an agreement to do that. This had nothing to do with minority housing. What we did, which was quite an unusual tactic, is as part of this we called for Rutgers to meet their housing obligation for Mount Laurel. Bob Smith went nuts, Assemblyman Smith went nuts. He was in Piscataway. He went cuckoo-crazy calling us hypocrites, liars, saying we should be sued. We said, "No, if you really believe in affordable housing, you should stop selling your housing units to other towns." I mean, this was rock'em, sock'em stuff, Katie. This is not you're going to get a plum appointment to the Board of Governors by doing this. That ain't going to happen. This is about doing the right thing. [Editor's Note: In *Southern Burlington County N.A.A.C.P. v. Mount Laurel Township* (1975), referred to as Mount Laurel I, the New Jersey Supreme Court ruled that municipal land use regulations preventing affordable housing opportunities for the poor are unconstitutional. The court ordered municipalities to provide affordable housing for low and moderate-income people. The ruling was reinforced with a second decision in 1983, known as Mount Laurel II. In 1985, the New Jersey Legislature, in direct response to the Mount Laurel decisions, enacted the Fair Housing Act, which created the Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) to enforce fair housing standards.]

When I served on the Board of Trustees for a year as a student, I learned just how simple people are: make them feel important, give them good booze, make sure you feed them, feed them really well--this was the Trustees, this was not even the Governors--pat them on the back, and they'll

do anything. I thought, "Oh, my God, I didn't sign up for this. These are not my peers. This is not my college experience." Livingston College and Douglass College, this is not what it's about. So, you carry all these lessons with you as you progress. Each step, you reflect back, saying, "What went wrong? What went right?" We actually were able to win that one because of the thousands of people involved. In fact, some people just did things without coordinating. Half the time, I had no idea what anybody was doing, and it seemed to work out. It seemed to work out.

KR: It is really interesting, the interplay of these really fundamental issues in New Jersey, which are land preservation and affordable housing.

SK: Oh, my gosh, yes.

KR: How was it that you and others knew to intertwine these issues to get what you wanted?

SK: Somebody told me to come look at the archives. Somebody told me, "Come look at the archives," and I can't disclose that person. So, I was like, "Okay." They didn't tell me what was there. They didn't tell me what was in COAH, the Council on Affordable Housing. They didn't tell me what to look for. They didn't tell me a name. They just said, "I think you should look in these archives." I spent, I think, two or three days down there and went, "Oh, my God." The very people who were calling us racists--and this is where, again, Bloustein and some people, Bob Smith, [were saying] we were racist because we were opposing affordable housing--[now I could say in response],"You never wanted the housing, you never wanted it, so guess what, we're going to tell the media about it. Now, you defend it." That's exactly what we did.

In fact, I can remember going to planning board meetings. I never wanted to go to planning board meetings, it was like you have to go to planning board meetings now. This was learning--again, the political science training from Livingston--all politics is local; figure out all these local interconnections. We constantly said, "By the way, don't talk to us about your zoning problems. You never wanted affordable housing here. Again, just in case you didn't read *The Star-Ledger* article, here it is, saying you never intended to have affordable housing." The preserve was split between Piscataway, Edison and Highland Park, so three towns had different parts of the land. Then, you're dealing with three local jurisdictions and then on top of it, now you have a state agency and then Rutgers is a state agency. It required you to constantly shift how you think. We never knew what we were going to get.

Then, somebody leaked to us, which was shocking, the blueprint for an incinerator to burn, as *The Star-Ledger* said, "Little animals that were shot up with cancerous chemicals." We called it "Toxic Tuesday." It was kind of like another freak show, all over the place, boom, boom, boom, all this hitting, when we released that. *The Star-Ledger*, *The Home News*, *The News-Tribune*, WCBS, 101.5, all the radio stations, WINS, we gave out twenty embargoed press releases, saying, "If any of you violate this, because it's being released tomorrow, we'll never work with you again." I met with all these people the day before giving them the releases and it exploded. That story just exploded the next day, as it was supposed to. It was supposed to be all at the same time released; nobody gets the first shot. We gave no exclusives.

Those local mayors went crazy when they heard that there was going to be an incinerator releasing toxins into the air. So, it was like, "That didn't come from us. We didn't know about that." We called them an "administrative conscience" who gave us the blueprints. We couldn't Xerox the blueprints. We showed it to everybody. Yes, they couldn't believe it. Bloustein had to explain why they lied on that. I remember Tom Paterniti, Assemblyman and Mayor [of Edison], would say, "Why didn't you come to us with this? Why am I reading about this in the newspaper?" I made sure that local constituents for each of those towns made the first calls to those mayors, and then we'd come in the second tier, "Oh, I don't know if you heard about that. It's front page in this newspaper." It was kind of roll up the sleeves and with the help of people I have no idea who they were, we were able to find things and then release it.

Shame on the university with its government relations operation--how ridiculous was that?--lying all the time to people. My training in politics came at Rutgers. I mean, everything I needed to learn about the good, the bad and the ugly came through Rutgers University, first Douglass, then Livingston College, and then having to deal with all those RAA members. All of it came through that first-hand experience. Praxis, this is what we think, this is how it works. Reality, this is how it works. Boom, it came together. [laughter]

KR: How is it that the area of the Rutgers Ecological Preserve is actually preserved? Is it through an act of the legislature?

SK: No, nothing. It's good will. It's intimidation and goodwill. Now, part of it was developed, Coach Schiano's house. Oh, my God, so that was the next thing that happened. Coach Schiano comes, and we're at planning board meetings opposing the university's agreement to build that house. That was outrageous that this man, who still doesn't have a winning record at Rutgers, this man comes in and they ripped down because it's not good enough for him and his family, that our housing is substandard in Piscataway and Highland Park; I don't think so. He has to have a brand-new mega hotel built for him in the preserve; they clear cut part of the preserve. Are you out of your mind? [Editor's Note: Greg Schiano served as the head coach of the Rutgers Football team from 2001 to 2011. The university rehired Schiano in 2020. At the time of this interview, Schiano's record as the football coach of Rutgers was 71-73.]

The only thing that keeps that going, Katie, is the memory of it hitting the fan, and environmentalists, coupled with others, saying, "We have a treasure here." There was never any Green Acres grant for it. Then Senator Lynch didn't put in anything. That was CYA, "We're getting out of this thing. We can't take it anymore. We're going to preserve it." Then, nothing happened. It's there. It still exists by virtue of the memory, the political nightmare, yes. I regret we didn't get the Green Acres money. I regret that didn't happen then, but it's still there, thankfully.

KR: I want to go back to something from your Livingston days.

SK: Yes, yes, please.

KR: You wrote for *The Medium*.

SK: Yes.

KR: What was *The Medium* like at the point that you were writing for it?

SK: For the most part, it was all white people. I was one of the few women, and it was like super-talented nerdy people. Jerry Eisenberg's kid was on it. It was just a group of well-meaning misfit nerds and we all came together and wrote stories. When the reorganization came, I worked on a supplement in *The Medium*, where we did an analysis of all the different positions on reorganization, the pro and the con. There was a horrible picture of Richard McCormick, Sr. One of the guys took a photo, and literally, he looked like a ghost. This is really funny. I drew in his face with a pencil. Chris was on one of the campus buses, and people were like, "What the hell is wrong with this guy? He looks like his face is drawn in or something." *The Medium* was a lot fun. It was crazy deadlines. Steven Hart, I adored him, so smart. It was fun. But, again, you can't be writing for something and then be in it, so I gave up the news editorship. I was news editor and then I can't cover myself. I'm not a public relations machine. It's a newspaper, right?

I loved journalistic writing because journalistic writing is punchy; it's clear. In fact, I think the best historians use journalistic writing. I see it as a perfect complement to historical writing because you've got to say it quickly, clearly and actively to hold people, whether it's spoken for radio that paints pictures, or whether it's written or it's television.

It was just fun being on *The Medium* staff. I got to meet a lot of people. We'd be up to about three in the morning because everything was last minute. We had pizza. We got beer. It became an all-nighter. Oh, my God, we'd get up and go to class, sometimes without a shower, looking pretty sad because I had eight AM classes. So, yes, it was like cuckoo crazy. It was fun. We had a lot of fun.

KR: During your time as an undergraduate and graduate student, what speakers do you remember on campus?

SK: Well, I really liked Tito Puente. I loved him because he did a concert and then he spoke about life being a Puerto Rican in America and how he was always seen as an immigrant even though he's a citizen, and I thought that was so, so powerful. The Byrds came. These aren't really speakers, but they're concerts. So, that's pretty amazing to see people who ten years before were writing music to change the world. Arlo Guthrie came, and he did a concert. Then, he spoke, and to hear the son of Woody and then to see his new lapsed perspective on things. When Pete Seeger came, that was amazing. That was just very, very powerful, where he talked about fusing the environment and his radicalism in labor history, and then he talked a little bit about his role in civil rights. That was pretty amazing. Yes, any time I could hear Jewel Cobb speak at Douglass--I know she's not a speaker, but I saw her as a speaker--I'd go listen when she talked on the sciences or whatever. I just thought she was an amazing communicator. I just didn't understand what a major superstar she was until she died and I read the obit [obituary]. I said, "Oh, my God." I knew she was a powerful woman, and I think she was underutilized as a role model for everybody. To me, that was a tragedy.

When Jesse Jackson came and spoke at the divestment rally, it was incredible. I voted for Jesse in the primary when he ran for president. I love Jesse Jackson, and just to see Jesse, this icon with King, he's still the same dude. He's still kicking butt. He's still with the people. He can still turn a phrase.

For me, the best way to learn was through music, so any time there was a concert, I'd go to concerts and then I'd hear Sweet Honey in the Rock. When they came, oh, my God, that was amazing. That was like listening to spirituals connected to Bernice Reagon doing stories about civil rights leadership. I wish we'd had Odetta. We never got Odetta. Yes, the speakers who came moved me with music and then the protest, they were the best.

KR: You majored in labor studies, and then there was also this crossover into your activism. You were involved in the Committee to Organize Student Workers.

SK: Yes.

KR: Tell me about what you did in that role.

SK: I was a summer worker. Part of my scholarship was college work-study, so I worked the summer when I was living in New Brunswick at the provost's office. I want to say Liz Mitchell was there. Liz Mitchell was always encouraging, and the provost, I can see him now, I don't remember his name, he was a slug. He didn't like students. It was a problem. This was when I was involved in the [Committee] to Organize Student Workers. I couldn't understand why we weren't getting the minimum wage. Apparently, certain contracts allowed sub-minimum wage for students, even in college work-studies. I'm doing the math and, "What? I'm working all these hours. Why is it so small? Why am I not working the amount of money I should, but in less hours," which I thought was quite logical. So, I met with Marvin Greenberg just to ask him, "Why does the university get these waivers to pay sub-minimum wage? You expect people to go out and change the world and become corporate attorneys and accountants, but you're telling them essentially it's okay to mistreat employees, to really take advantage of them." "Well, you know, we have limited funds. We have to do what the federal government says." We always had these discussions on, "Why can't Rutgers be an innovator? Why don't you just do the right thing, rather than, 'Our hands are tied by the government.'" I mean, that's ridiculous. You can break the bonds of tying hands here.

I started a petition drive. I did tables at Douglass, I did tables at Livingston, I did tables on College Ave at the Student Center. Tabling was a big thing. I'd stand there, "Hi, would you like my flyer?" [laughter] Then, I wrote a lot of op-eds. Then, I started speaking before the student government, asking for the support of various student governments for the effort. The RCGA, Rutgers College Government Association, supported it. Then, I talked to Chris because Chris was in the University Senate, and he tried to get discussion of it there. I wasn't in the Senate yet. So, I thought, "This is where I am. I'm working here. Why don't I try to change it because it will help other people in addition to me?" A few people came to some meetings. I tried to do meetings. We'd get a group of people, who'd join a club, "Let's get money." But I couldn't get a lot of interest from it because I think a lot of the college work-study students were so angry they had to work and they didn't want to spend time on this because this was temporary. I find that

also in unionization; a lot of people today look at it as a temporary thing, like, "Why should I join a union with Amazon? I hope to get out of here at some point." "Why should I join a union at Whole Foods because I don't want to stay here forever?" Or, "Why should I join a union at McDonald's? This is just temporary." You look and see there are people in their sixties working there. Some people make a career there.

It helped me also understand how people are prisoners of their own reality, that by not wanting to change something, it's the status quo, nothing changes. I felt I should do something. Livingston kind of inspired me, as I met Wells Keddie. I took a class before I went to Livingston. Before I transferred, I took several classes, with Wells saying "Yes, why don't we try to do this?" Well, it's not quite a union. What we're trying to do is get a minimum wage increase, which did not occur. That was my first venture into union-life thinking.

I enjoyed that. I met with lots of administrators, lots of people. It was kind of a bore. Anywhere I'd go, I'd talk, and they'd be like, "Oh, my God, not this again." "Yes, again, let's do something." So, sometimes you can do things, sometimes you can't. I learned also, there's only so much one person can do. You need to really have a group of people that support you. You can't be a lone star out there. It only goes so far.

KR: What was your involvement with the movement against tuition increases?

SK: Oh, that was a very fluid effort. I signed petitions. I went to the demonstrations, and we took over College Ave. I remember being in the president's office. We didn't take papers or destroy anything. We didn't urinate like people did on January 6th in Nancy Pelosi's office. We just sat there quietly. We sang songs. We wanted to meet with the president. We were chanting. I remember going outside, "Yeah, yeah, yeah." I spoke at one of those things.

I actually reached out to a lot of legislators. So, I helped the group of people who helped put together a lobby day. We chose to go down when Rutgers went down with all the alumni--we did our own thing--which drove the administration nuts, Don Edwards, because we were ruining their Rutgers lobby day. "Well, we want accountability for tuition. We don't want to pay more. Excellence shouldn't come with a price tag. We should be excellent no matter what. If I don't have money, I still can be excellent." We felt that money was not going to support enough student programs, and if you want students to be good alumni, you should start giving them better programming. I was very happy to go testify in Trenton. I'd go down, meet with people. Chris would meet with people. We'd drive down in the same car. It was quite a learning experience.

Then, we'd sometimes, to drive the Rutgers officials crazy, tell them we had a meeting--we'd have a meeting with the speaker and with Senate President Merlino--we'd drive them nuts because, "You're undergraduates. You shouldn't know how to do this." "Well, we have great classes at Rutgers." We learned how to do this from our classes at Livingston and watching community organizing and watching how the Douglass alumni organized themselves because they were such a sharp contrast from the Rutgers alumni. We always saw the Rutgers alumni leaders as an old boy's network, like guys who belonged to the golf clubs. This was another notch on their corporate movement to CEO and stuff. The Douglass women were kind of more

emotional, the alumni, and more committed to what they saw as the ideal of Douglass, so I watched what they did a lot to learn their organizing strategies. I really admire the Douglass alumni. [Editor's Note: Joseph P. Merlino was a Democratic politician who served in the New Jersey General Assembly from 1968 to 1972 and New Jersey Senate from 1972 to 1982. From 1978 to 1982, he served as the Senate President.]

KR: You mentioned how you were a speaker at your commencement in 1981.

SK: Yes.

KR: What was your graduation like?

SK: It was a beautiful outdoor day. It was amazing. Three of us were elected by the student body to present wishes for the class. My mom was there, and it was an amazing day. My mom just was so happy. My whole family came to it. Chris's whole family came to it. A lot of the faculty from Livingston were there already, but some faculty from other campuses came too. So, it was just a great day, a day of feeling achievements and celebrating with people. It was wonderful.

During the day's activities, we were at the university commencement because I was on the Board of Trustees. I got to sit on the dais. My mom got to come to that. I got to bring one guest to President Bloustein's house for lunch, and so all the Trustees and the faculty and student reps got to come, on the Board of Trustees. My mom was just blown away. She had never eaten in a home so beautiful and had never been around so many people. It looked like she was going to cry. I told her, "You're as good as anybody else. You're as good as anybody here. This is our day." Bloustein was very gracious. She was like babbling. I was like, "Okay, come on, Mommy. Let's go get our lunch." So, he was very gracious that day. It was a big day for my family, because being the first one, it was like we all graduated that day, so my sisters and everybody. It was a wonderful, wonderful day.

KR: Where was the Livingston graduation?

SK: It was outside. We didn't quite all fit in the courtyard, so it was outside in the grassy area beyond the courtyard. It was just a beautiful, beautiful day, not too hot, not too cold, just perfect. Jenkins--we were the first class after reorganization--he talked about how to hold on to values, even when those values seem to be changing, how important it is for everyone to not forget who they are, even if there are institutional or life forces that try to change you and to always carry your memories with you. You should wear your memories. I thought it was very powerful. It was not a scientist's speech. It was just a beautiful human speech. The alumni, I didn't realize this until years later because I never got the award, the alumni made me their student of the year for Livingston--not the alumni, the parents' association, which was quite nice. I never knew that. I was always looking at the webpage, "Oh, I didn't even notice. Okay, good." It has my name up there, etched in something, terrific. So, it was just nice to be recognized by the committee.

KR: Just to clarify something, you said the commencement was outside of the courtyard.

SK: Yes.

KR: I do know Livingston Campus, but what does that mean?

SK: At that point, it was less developed. Outside the courtyard, there were these big grassy areas. So, there was a parking lot, if you're coming down [Avenue E]. Let's pretend we're driving and to the left is the Livingston Campus. Before they put all the new buildings there, there were huge grassy areas, interspersing the parking lots. That's where we were, because the courtyard was too confined, so they had to have an outside [area] near the road but on the big grassy area. I know that didn't help, but that's the best I can do.

KR: I am visualizing.

SK: Okay, yes. Visualize where the new big monstrosity of the Student Center is, so if you were inside the building looking straight ahead, there would have been parking lots and mostly grass and that's where we were.

KR: What else would you like to add about your undergraduate years that we missed or skipped over?

SK: I think Barbara Lingelbach. She was the convener of the Voorhees Chapel Choir. She was such a generous person. She was a brilliant, brilliant Philadelphia blue blood, and she married a Jewish man who was an incredible pianist. She would bring values cross culture into musical training and the life lessons. So, I took a lot of vocal classes with her. I just loved her personality and nurturing. She was a big risk-taker with the music that she selected, a lot of modern music, a lot of Dvorak, not the most pleasant to listen to at times, but she liked experimenting. I always remembered that you need to never feel comfortable in what you know; you need to always experiment, always try new things, always grow, grow, grow, never stay, always grow.

During the Alliance for Rutgers Federation--I don't know if we were going to talk about Bloustein or not--they had a *Mugrat* issue in *The Targum*. I didn't realize I was very, very visible on campus, more than I thought. I was Princess Leia, but I was Princess Kozel. Bloustein was Darth Vader, so he was Darth Bloustein. This is the sort of stuff that drove him crazy because he had no sense of humor. I remember going into the University Senate office. We were having a meeting, I don't remember why, but three of us, Ashby Foote and Jack Nelson from education and I were having some meeting. So, Jack goes, "Princess Kozel, what do you want to talk about today?" I looked at him like, "What are you talking about?" because most people think I'm Jewish and they'll call me a JAP [Jewish American princess], like the racist ones. So, I thought, "Oh, what is he saying?" So, I'm like, "Well, what are you saying?" Ashby had a very southern drawl and was very reserved, "Well, Princess Kozel, he's asking you a question." I'm like, "What? Have you lost your mind?" Then, they showed me *The Targum*. I'm like, "Oh, my God." It was *The Mugrat*. So, it was like oh, my God. I was intertwined with Bloustein on so many levels.

I think that the thing I remember the most is that there were so many people wanting to help you and you have to be open to help. Sometimes, you have to ask for help, which is humbling, whether it's your writing or thinking or you need advising or just whenever you need life help. Rutgers taught me, at that time, there's so many people who want you to succeed and just be open to it and grow with it, especially if they suggest something that at first, you're like [makes "ahh" sound], you know, there's some good in there. Somebody sees something different, so don't close out what you don't think you want to hear. I'm very opinionated and I have gut feelings like that, but sometimes they have to be checked because none of us has all the information and we're never right, fifty percent of the time, forget a hundred, fifty percent of the time. That was humbling about college, that there are so many people in life who can support you.

KR: Let us talk about what happened with the libraries in the mid-1980s after reorganization.

SK: Yes.

KR: Can you give me a sense of the context behind what was going on with the libraries that led to this controversy?

SK: Well, yes, before that began, I had served on--that's what it was called--an implementation committee of reorganization. Jeanne Herb and I were like a tag team. We were on a committee that Hank Edelman was made the chair of, and Hank Edelman was the University Librarian. We could never get a straight answer from him on anything, and he always laughed like this [makes laughing sound "ch, ch, ch"]. He thought we were adorable, and then when we started asking questions that were very pointed, then we were like bad. We went from cute little adorable things to, "Oh, my God, you are problems." My relationship with Edelman didn't start off well. That was in '81.

Librarians felt that he was going to fire many of them, he was reorganizing the department without their knowledge, and that he was shifting money and that there were less books being purchased at Livingston. What started was the book fund for Livingston went down. This was, I guess, when I was a graduate student and then involved with the alumni. I was like, "Why is the book budget going down?" "Well, it's going down." "Well, why?" "Well, I don't know, it's part of the university policy." It started at Livingston. I find out from the librarians that they're trying to get rid of individual libraries in the long run, so they're not replacing the books stolen or damaged and they're not setting aside new funds for expanded collections. It's kind of like today, everything's on the internet. Well, no, everything is not on the internet, and JSTOR is not available to the public. You have to pay subscription fees. There is a lot of misinformation about today and how we look at everything's free and available to you, which is not true. I saw it as a direct insult to Livingston because it was Livingston being targeted first. [Editor's Note: JSTOR is a digital library that was established in 1995.]

Then, the librarians start leaking me all these documents. Again, it was all these people who came to me and said, "Hey, Sue, do you know about this?" I'm like, "Know about what?" [Editor's Note: Ms. Kozel makes the sound of an explosion.] All these documents come with there's going to be less funding for books. They're going to be shrinking resources for the

library. There was interest, at that time, developing more borrowing with other institutions and less development of certain collections. I think some of this is in the archives; I don't remember all the details, Katie.

I wrote to Edelman a letter asking, "It's come to my understanding that certain policies have been made by you and your colleagues to restrict purchases for Livingston College, to cut certain budget lines, to reduce certain faculty lines, and to potentially reorganize the library. Is this true?" "No, no, no, it's not true." He bounced it upstairs. I wrote the president just to say, "This has come to my attention." I think I did it as an alumna and University Senator. I always signed it "Alumna Leader," which drove them insane because if I was a graduate of Rutgers, I would have never had a role like that, but because I came from Livingston, I was elected to this role.

It got to Nathaniel Pallone. I'm still unclear why he got involved in this, but he got involved in it. He issued a letter about red herrings, it's in the collection, "You are creating red herrings and you are fabricating lots of information." They didn't know I actually had copies of stuff with policies because I never unveil what I have until after they give me an answer, and then it's like kaboom, I have all of it. You know the old saying, "Never ask something you don't know the answer to." So, he issued [a statement that] I considered to be libelous, saying that because I fabricated all this information, I should be publicly drawn and quartered. So, I met with libel attorneys, who at first said I had a case. But I learned that apparently unless you suffer from what somebody says, you cannot win libel, had I had something taken away from me at that moment, had I been working in a job and fired, let's say, or had I been denied something because of it.

At that point, I had no money. I was a union organizer, then working for Douglass, then on a teaching assistantship, then at NYU on a fellowship, and then a graduate assistantship, so there was no money or anything. So, I went to the newspapers and they did feature stories on it. They said, "Rutgers Alum Alleges Libel," and then they put the quote right in it, that he said I should be drawn and quartered. I mean, this is unbecoming behavior. This is not mentally stable writing of somebody to do that.

The librarians told me that, at that point, after all these stories broke, they had been informed by Edelman that there weren't going to be any changes in the library budget, that no one was going to be adversely affected, that they weren't going to have a reorganization. I had been told by Livingston librarians that the budget had increased. All I was interested in was stopping something from happening.

I met with the attorneys, and Christopher, who is super bright, just told them, "We think you're wrong in how you're interpreting the law. She hasn't been hurt by it. Her reputation hasn't been damaged because apparently all these people are laughing at this. So, we are going to rescind the suit and we won't be paying you any money." The attorneys agreed and dropped it, and then nothing happened.

I felt that it's really important when people behave like a wingnut and just do ad hominem attacks that are crazy, you need to hold them accountable. I think his training was psychology, so it's like, oh, boy, cuckoo. [laughter] I think for many people in the white male establishment,

especially now, with all the changes, with new voices, people from different ethnicities, races, more gender fluidity, more gay people coming into it as well, all these crazies have been threatened and I'm happy about it because maybe the best people are finally going to rise to all of these positions. I'm very hopeful that change will come.

KR: What was the upshot of this situation for the libraries?

SK: Well, I think the upshot was certain budgets were restored, and everything was put on hold for a little bit. Now, I have not been in touch with the librarians like Francis John and Clark Beck. I haven't been in touch with a lot of the archivists who retired. I lost touch with librarians really in the 2000s period, as life was moving on for me. I don't know ultimately what happened with the collections. I was really on top of it when I was an undergraduate, graduate student, up until my thirties. I don't know. It's gone on now.

KR: I read in the Grass Roots Progressive Activists archival finding aids that you had some contact with the Institute for Research on Women.

SK: Yes.

KR: What did you do?

SK: Well, I went to all their events. Alice Kessler-Harris did some work with that; I'd go to some seminars. I didn't work for them per se. When I worked with the Public Leadership Education Network, I invited them to participate in all the CAWP events that were sponsored by Douglass College. Mary Hartman was the leader in that institute for many, many years. Yes, it was more kind of in the context of the Public Leadership Education Network. I was kind of a conduit who would bring all these people into meetings, planning meetings, and then they would send students to attend these programs. It's like when Bella Abzug came, for example. So, they were kind of advisors for the young students who wanted to join the Public Leadership Education Network, sponsored by Douglass, secured funding through the Center for American Women and Politics.

The Institute was such an exciting place because it had openly lesbian women as leaders in it. It had kind of an international feel, so for those who were interested in feminism, it was looking beyond the borders of just the United States and it was questioning this idea that the United States should bring its cultural values of feminism to the world. They were actually asking the question: should the world bring ideas to the United States? Feminist world leaders, multiracial, multiethnic, all religions, how can they contribute ideas? I'm trying to think of the woman who did all the research on labor economics who was at the Institute.

KR: Was it Lourdes Beneria?

SK: She was one of them, but there was also somebody else. The name Kessler keeps coming up in my mind. I don't think that that's right. But she was doing all the Bureau of Labor statistics and reinterpreting them. So, it was looking at gender in the Bureau of Labor Statistics numbers. It was brilliant, absolutely brilliant. I took advantage of every single event I could go

as an undergraduate, graduate, and alum because we lived in New Brunswick and Somerset at that time when we got married, yes.

You made me think of something, it's a little disjointed, but I'm trying to think, it was my third year or my fourth year, my financial aid was held up for a whole year at Rutgers. I think that was an attempt to starve me out because I got no money. My dining plan was stopped at one point. I had no financial aid. My husband's family would buy me bags of food, and then I took a job off campus to bring in money. It was the last day of the term and I got all the money. I just thought it was a deliberate thing, because nobody else had that experience. I thought how crummy that was. What I did that year, Katie, is I went to every free wine and cheese because there was still wine and cheese on campus at that time. So, I remember going to Cook College, and one of the guys was in the University Senate, one of the faculty members, and it's on leaf eaters and their cycle of life, okay, whatever. Free food, so then I went there. I went to every single thing I could. Chris and I would comb *The Targum*, and once a week, he would buy me a sub at Little Teddy's, that was a big deal. I just couldn't believe it. I thought, "How could this get messed up and nobody could fix it?" Nobody could fix it. So, that was a really screwy experience, and it just taught me you'd better have deep connections. Leggett fed me. Dee Garrison fed me. The faculty fed me. They didn't throw me off campus, but I was living in places I hadn't paid for. It was the strangest thing. Nothing had been paid for, but I was still there. It was very, very strange.

KR: Yes, I was going to ask you what repercussions you faced as a result of your activism.

SK: I didn't think of it at that time as such, but I guess that was one of them. It was just a very small thing to do, and fortunately for me, I had a lot of intestinal fortitude and I had a lot of networks and I'm very creative. But I also benefitted so much from the activism. I got to meet people I never would have met. It works both ways.

One thing I can remember is I was supposed to be elected to represent Livingston to be on the Board of Trustees as an alum, and at the last minute, another candidate had been brought in and he was given that position. I called him at home and I said, "You understand what's happening and that because I have been outspoken and involved as a young alum, I'm not getting this now and I want you to consider will you step down?" "Absolutely not, this is going to be really important for me." So, I said, "Okay." I think what I learned also in life is the prize isn't the prize. If you're obsessed, like Gollum, "My precious, my precious," that's not the prize. The prize is you and how you adapt to certain things, including good things. I mean, when you've had a lot of good things happening, you start feeling this is the way it's going to be and of course it's not. I sound like a Zen mini master for a second. Now, if I could only remember these things when I actually get off the Zoom with you. Sometimes, I'll explode when something stupid happens. Other times, it will just roll off, like whatever, keep going. This too will pass.

I think those undergraduate things, being able to sit among peers and talk with each other like we were all intelligent, respectful [individuals], that was one of the great experiences of my undergraduate time period, to say, "Wow, people can actually talk with each other and disagree. This is amazing." Then, when it didn't work, "Okay, it doesn't work all the time." To be open and say, "This isn't the way it's always going to be," rather than, "I hate you. I'll never work with

you again and you suck." You try not to have that permeate because then it becomes so negative and toxic.

KR: I was asking about the Institute for Research on Women because I have been interviewing faculty and staff associated with the IRW over the years.

SK: Yes, yes.

KR: So, I have interviewed Ferris Olin.

SK: Ferris Olin, absolutely, art historian, art librarian, yes. Those are people that again, with reorganization too, you come in contact with all of them. Ferris was very, very important in the libraries and in creative films, working with film work as well. I haven't thought of Ferris for a long time. She's amazing. Lynn Miller was there too and then worked with Ferris in the libraries. Yes, incredible, incredible women. Women role models. It was a privilege just to be near them and learn from them.

KR: Did you have contact with Kate Stimpson, the former director of the IRW?

SK: Yes, yes, I did. Kate Stimpson, I always called her a character. I think she was like a wild woman character, and every organization needs a Kate Stimpson because she wears her heart on her sleeve. She was committed to everything that she believed, and she was a driving force. Without her, I don't think anything could have been built upon, yes. The founders of an institute or a movement and the people who follow sometimes had different tracks as well. The revolutionary or the founder comes up with an idea, and then the next generation may see it so differently. That's okay because ideas evolve, just like people. Kate, wow, I haven't thought of her for a long time, amazing, amazing driving energy. [Editor's Note: Dr. Catharine Stimpson directed the Institute for Research on Women (IRW) from 1981 to 1985 and then served as the Dean of the Graduate School and Vice Provost for Graduate Education at Rutgers. She is a professor and Dean Emerita at New York University.]

KR: What else stands out from your time working at the Public Leadership Education Network?

SK: Well, the synergy of really smart people, like Debbie Walsh, who went from being Ruth's second daughter almost to now being the head of CAWP [Center for American Women and Politics], and Susan Carroll. I adore Susan Carroll. She's an amazing intellect and thinker. Sometimes, they weren't respected by male colleagues in the departments where they also shared a space. I remember Jeff Henney, who was one of the few men that I worked with at CAWP, a genius on coding and on how to ask survey questions. Kathy Kleeman and I were like water and oil. We worked together. I like her, but, yes, we weren't meant to be together and I think Ruth saw some brilliance there by putting us together. I don't think we ever understood why. But I drove Kleeman nuts. Then, she always pulled out her red pen. I was like, "Oh, my God, I can't even read this because it's all been rewritten over." But she's very smart. I know she gave a scholarship to CAWP to support women elected officials. [Editor's Note: Debbie Walsh has served as the director of the Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP) since 2001.

Susan Carroll is a Professor of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at Rutgers and Senior Scholar at CAWP.]

I think what Ruth did through her vision is she helped set up a national standard with I think Ford Foundation money and other money on leadership for young women. You think that would be natural at a women's institution, whether it's Spelman or Douglass, but so many of the women, even when they're all together, don't see themselves in leadership positions. I think that's a sickness that comes from societal norms. The Public Leadership Education Network was trying to bring a new generation of leaders through dynamic speakers. I would say Bella Abzug was one of the greatest speakers I ever heard on campus because she doesn't fit a quiet WASP model for success: [spoken in a quiet tone of voice] be patient, don't speak too loud, don't be threatening. If you and I were having a conversation, that person would say, "Don't yell." [laughter] Bella is just like [spoken in a shouting voice] boom. You need many role models. You don't need one; there's not one right one. Faye Wattleton from Planned Parenthood came in--she's another one who was a speaker--an African American woman, she was always picked as the one black woman. I wonder how she felt about being a token at times. Wherever she went, she was always the black woman coming in to speak for groups, a brilliant orator. She talked about whether you're the only woman, whether you're the only black woman, whether you're the only human being that represents one viewpoint, share it. She goes--I remember this during one of the seminars--"Do not be intimidated." She goes, "If anything, you should intimidate others. You should show your brilliance. You should show your ideas. You should show your values and you should advocate always for yourself." Some amazing moments of synergy and ideas all because Ruth survived on a ship that was turned away ... [Editor's Note: Faye Wattleton is a reproductive rights activist who served as the president of Planned Parenthood from 1978 to 1992.]

KR: Yes, the *St. Louis*.

SK: … During the Holocaust. I mean, here's like the accident of life. Ruth Mandel, in many ways, was an amazing influence on me in the little time we worked together because she's a survivor and I think that's really the message for anybody involved in activism because you are a survivor. Not everything is going to go well and you choose what stories you tell, the history you remember, and how you want to be remembered by how you act. Ruth, major loss for Rutgers, major, major loss for the world, her passing last year.

KR: You did your graduate studies at Rutgers and then NYU.

SK: Yes.

KR: What came after that for you?

SK: After NYU?

KR: Yes.

SK: What I did was I worked for a foundation in New York for a little bit of time, and I came in as a clerical actually. I came in as a clerical. I left NYU with a master's. I just decided, "Wow," at that time, "the Ph.D., this is not for me. I don't know how Chris and I can live. I don't have wealthy parents, so there's no extra money coming in." I worked in New York. I had a great time for a few years, and then I formed my own business. I created my own consulting business. I had a lot of clients in the New Brunswick area, public relations, research. That was about the time when FREP formed, Friends to Save the Rutgers Ecological Preserve, and I helped out with that. So, I was a volunteer lobbyist for FREP, and take a penny. I did a lot of volunteer work, obviously. Then, I worked for my own company.

I found the Middlesex County Democrats--I was a very liberal Democrat--were very disappointing, with the preserve, with the bad faith and how they acted with COAH, and other government reforms. I remember [Assemblyman] David Schwartz literally pushed me up against a wall in Trenton during the [campaign to save the] preserve. As you know, we had several votes in the legislature, we always wanted the votes, and he went to me, "What are you going to do?" I go, "What are you talking about?" "Where are you going to go? You're a Democrat. What are you going to do? No one is going to hire you." I went, "Well, what do you mean?" He goes, "Where are you going to go?" I said, "You know what? I'm going to become a Republican."

I think the preserve was a big break for me because I found that many of the Democrats were so tied into land involvement, crazy power things, and Rutgers was tied right into it. I mean, this was like a little cabal between Rutgers and the statewide politicians. I never thought that was going to happen [laughter], so I became a liberal Republican and I worked for the New Jersey Legislature as a spokesperson for the Assembly minority and Senate majority office for a few years, doing research and constituent service, organizing press conferences, writing reports, designing the graphics of reports. I was like a Jill of all trades. A lot of people gave me heat for it and I said, "Yes, I'm kind of sick of being involved in things which are so full of hackdom. I can't do it." I can't say I'm doing this environmental work and then I turn around and the people who I'm supposed to be aligning with are doing everything they can to obstruct it.

[I was] still involved in the alumni association and then worked on Cary Edwards' gubernatorial campaign as his press secretary. I worked individually for legislators. I never did anything that was anti-choice. That was very important to me. I would tell people, "I can't do that for you. I won't do that." [Editor's Note: William Cary Edwards was a Republican politician who served in the New Jersey General Assembly from 1978 to 1982 and then as New Jersey Attorney General from 1986 to 1989. He sought the Republican nomination for governor in 1989 and 1993.]

While I was doing that, I did a lot of community involvement in Upper Freehold. When we moved here, I was on the environmental commission. I worked with two students on a project in the high school to document all the vanishing vistas of our township due to development. I'm trying to think--I worked on John Bennett's congressional campaign as a volunteer. [Editor's Note: John O. Bennett III is a retired New Jersey politician who served in the New Jersey General Assembly from 1980 to 1989 and in the New Jersey Senate from 1989 to 2004, during which time he was Senate President from 2002 to 2004. He served as the Governor of New Jersey for four days in 2002.]

I left the Republican Party in--I can't remember the year exactly, but it must have been around 2005 in Monmouth County because all the liberal Republicans wanted to become conservative all of a sudden. They started morphing their policies, and I found it quite disturbing. So, I said, "Time to go. Time to go." We registered as a Democrat.

After all that, I formed my own business again, in 1998-'99, through about, I want to say, 2007. I did a lot of public relations for non-profits. So, I did spokesperson work for domestic violence and other groups, help small businesses, and consistent, Katie, to make a long story short, with my reputation, I was always picked by these national business groups as the person who cared most about charity because I built in my business plan that twenty percent would go, before I took any profit, into non-profits, because I felt that I was a beneficiary of so much non-profit help and scholarship. That was one way for me to do that. So, I was involved in national networks, Women Impacting Public Policy. I helped do volunteer outreach to block the Bush administration's ANWR [Arctic National Wildlife Refuge] development of Alaska. So, I was very proud to volunteer time to do that. I was on the Chamber of Commerce, the national board in Washington, D.C., for small business. I found I had hit 150,000 dollars a year, which was very small still for a small business, revenue, but I couldn't grow. I felt if I grew, I can't have health insurance and not give it to employees. That was like a critical moment, and one year before the collapse of the economy, but I decided, "You know what, I've had a good run with the business, I've made a big difference, received recognition from all these groups for being a women's advocate, it's time to close it." Then, I started teaching again. I went back and started doing adjunct work at community colleges and then Kean and William Paterson and retired from that this past summer, summer 2020. So, I've done a lot of volunteer work, a lot of community activism.

During COVID, Monticello wanted to start charging for tours, virtual tours, for schools of their slavery site. I'm like, "What? You want to give them a slavery tour, but now you want schools, who are just strapped for money in the middle of a crisis, [to pay]. Don't you have money so you can do this?" I'm going to be at Monticello on a fellowship in August this year. So, I wrote a Twitter response, saying, "Why don't you do it for free? Why are you charging now in a health crisis?" Someone I greatly respect and I had a chance to study with, Annette Gordon-Reed, writes me back on Twitter and goes, "Well, don't you think people should be paid for what they do?" I'm like, "Oh, my God." I write her back, in response, just saying, "Maybe I've done too much volunteer work." That, I think, sums up a lot of what I believe. Sometimes, you can't get paid for what you do; sometimes, it's volunteer work. Whether it's your individual program or somebody else's program, not everything can be paid, and if we start embracing that idea of unless it's paid for, it won't get done. I'm just thinking about all the work in the world, not only in New Jersey, that's volunteer based. All the energy that comes from volunteers to change things, to fight for things, to advocate, to reform, sometimes successfully or not. It was kind of like a full circle that brought me back to say, "I've still got my core values. I still believe it's got to be done. Whether it's paid for or not, somebody's got to do things. You have the right, whoever you are, to speak out and express yourself."

Right now, I'm working on two book projects. I edited one book on Quakers with Maurice Jackson at Georgetown. I've been doing a lot of research and writing. Life, for me, is like

George Plimpton. I don't know if you remember that symbol. George Plimpton was a guy who had a new job every few months, "Let's try this." He was very wealthy. "Let's try that." I feel like George Plimpton, that I've been blessed with a wonderful marriage, a wonderful life, cuckoo-crazy moments, but who doesn't have them, and really a chance to test and learn every single day. I hope many other people get to have those opportunities too. [Editor's Note: Maurice Jackson and Sue Kozel are co-editors of *Quakers and Their Allies in the Abolitionist Cause, 1754-1808* (Routledge, 2017). As a recipient of the 2020-2022 Public Scholar designation by the New Jersey Council for the Humanities, Ms. Kozel is researching "Why Wench Betty's Story Matters: The Murder of a Slave in 1784."]

KR: I could ask you questions all day.

SK: Yes, I am fascinating. [laughter]

KR: But I think we are drawing near the end of our time.

SK: Yes, please.

KR: I just have a couple more questions to ask.

SK: Okay, yes.

KR: I want to first ask about your work in public history. You are currently doing some research and writing and presenting on Wench Betty.

SK: Yes.

KR: Can you tell me about what that project has entailed?

SK: Yes, I am waiting--oh, jeez, I don't want to tell you the name of the publisher because in case it doesn't come through, I've got to go to another one--but I am waiting for a major academic publisher to come back. It's been almost six months, and with COVID, a lot has changed in how they respond. She tells me, the editor, "Just be patient." I'm like, "Oh, my God, if I'm going to get a no, just tell me no now." It's like too much mentally to handle. Wench Betty, she was another accident because in my life, I go in for one thing and here comes something else. I was on a grant, a mini-grant from the New Jersey Historical Commission about eleven years ago, researching New Jersey Quaker Richard Waln, and I found this murder file. When you're a historian, you just look at everything. I said, "Let me look at this, let me look at that." Arthur Barcalow murdered his slave named Wench Betty, also it appears her name is Betty Lathan, and, well, nothing happened.

I started looking at the files, and I found the coroner and all his--it's called an inquisition. So, the inquisition members were horrified by this murder because first he whips her with a horse whip on her arm in front of guests. It was confusing the way it's written because it wasn't clear if it was Arthur's house or his brother Derick's house in Upper Freehold, New Jersey. He whips her because she says, "No." He tells her, "Go home." Now, the home in her case could mean the

kitchen or, as I later figured out, you leave the brother's house, which it's like 170 acres between these two brothers, so leave his house and go home to Arthur's house. All the while, he's whipping her as she's going home. To make matters worse, two witnesses are following him, two white men are following him, watching. Nobody's intervening, by the way. They're running after him as he's running after Betty. As she gets in the house, she sits down, and it appears from the court records that they witness the killing of Betty with a broomstick, all because she said no.

Now, I published a little thing on her back in 2012, but I wanted to come back to her, saying, "How does Betty's story reflect this idea of slavery, not only in New Jersey but in the country? What does it say as a black woman who said no to a master in front of white people?" Mind you, except for these two guys that are racing after Arthur, nobody heard anything. Nobody saw anything. They're all witnesses to it that are physically present, "Oh, I didn't hear anything." "No, I went home after that." How do you not hear something? I bet if somebody got a whip and slapped me, I'd probably scream. It's like crazy going on.

Well, I keep digging in the records, and I've now found that Arthur's--and I have a grant proposal and I hope I get funding for it--but I found that his whole family has moved to Kentucky and Ohio. This murder occurs in 1784. Arthur dies in 1800. He continues to have slaves, even though they're not listed on records. So, it's been kind of like the historian's training you go through. He has no slaves listed that he owns. Well, he has tons of slaves apparently because when he dies, he leaves them in his will to his children. As I've been looking at family records, another set of slaves are involved that aren't even mentioned by Arthur in his will because apparently, they're giving the slaves out as presents. Now, it appears that one source says that Arthur had a daughter by Wench in 1770, and as I've tried to help audiences understand, when you say "wench" in the context of this period, that's for slave. It's not like the serving wench. This is enslaved people; wench is used in that context at this time. He may have had a daughter with Betty. He may have actually died, and his daughter may have been living with one of his white children.

I want to stress "may" because the records are showing this interconnectivity between Arthur, the slaves, and then, as the folks moved to Ohio, it's unclear they're keeping their slaves. Kate Masur wrote the amazing book *Until Justice Be Done*. So, we've got a situation where there are no slaves in Ohio and yet the Barcalows don't register the black people who allegedly are free until 1833. They had been living there since 1803. I found one of the records that says that. I'm trying to look at the movement of New Jersey slaveholders westward now. This is something that's completely unexpected, and if you're open to the records, things come up that you can't explain.

Not having a Ph.D., although being in a Ph.D. program, a lot of times people don't consider us skilled at research, that we have the abilities that a Ph.D. has. That's that letter I wrote that was published by AHA. Part of what I expect to face now is what qualifies me to be able to do a westward movement of slavery from New Jersey westward. I'm starting to see that the Ohio Black Codes that Kate wrote about and other people wrote about, there wasn't a lot of monitoring of these black families. So, I'm now finding records of the guy who was freed by Arthur Barcalow's, one of his sons, beat up the son like fifteen years later. It was like crazy stuff going on in this family and I've got to believe it's typical, it's not atypical. It's what happens when

freedom comes, and it's not really free. So many brilliant people have written about those stories, but by accident I've fallen into this big, exciting mess. I'm hoping to get out to Ohio and Kentucky to look at the records. Ancestry and FamilySearch only have "they're available" or a transcription. I need to see all these originals.

Betty is the window now that's opening up and expanding the look at New Jersey's slavery continuing westward, which is not a normal story. So, Jim Gigantino and I are talking to Rutgers University Press about doing a black history in the revolution volume, pulling together scholars to write about that. So, I'm thinking now I'm probably going to write about that westward movement piece there. Then, I'm hoping I get an answer before I drop dead from [the publisher] about whether I'll do the Wench Betty with them, the expanded westward story. I'm very excited about that.

Again, my whole life has been based on accidents, things that I didn't think to do, and something, a piece of paper, a curse or something comes along and it's like, "Oh, let's think about that." I sometimes get defensive about not having credentials and other times it's like, "That's your problem. If the scholarship can meet the standard, why should you care if I'm not part of the club?" I'll do it with or without them. It's going to happen. It's happening one way or the other. Betty is taking me on a journey I never expected to go on. Somehow, Betty had an ability to negotiate with Arthur, her slave owner. This isn't the first time she said no. I have to think, "Why would she say no to embarrass, in his mind, him in front of white guests, men and women?" It's like a crime of passion. My gut is telling me that if not lovers, they had some sexual relationship. Feminists would say it's rape, because she really can't give consent when you're a slave. Now, we're looking at all these ideas of intimacy and power and relationship.

The other thing, and then I'll leave you alone, I found by accident a potter's field at the Allentown Presbyterian Church. I've always thought about this, but I was reading [Edward] Raser's book on Monmouth County cemeteries and he had a reference to, "There was a potter's field there of colored people from olden times." That's the quote, and it's before 1800. Oh, my God, that's where Betty is, because they couldn't have dumped her in the backyard. There's a major inquest. Ultimately, [Monmouth County] Oyer and Terminer [Court] reject the bill. They don't issue a bill on Betty's murder saying it should definitely go to trial, that there was enough cause, but they wanted Barcalow to come back. The records in the state go dead at that point. He gets off. Clearly, he got off; he's running around Upper Freehold. I'm thinking, "Where is she buried?" My gut is telling me she is one of those bodies in that cemetery. So, I've written--very controversial in the church--and Linda Epps [Douglass College '73 and president and CEO of 1804 Consultants] said she could help them fundraise to determine how to do a marking, a slave memorial marking for it. The church hasn't spoken to me now for two-and-a-half, three months. I don't know if they know what to do with it, but we can't forget it now because it's based on historical documents. Some of the people in Allentown want to say it's Revolutionary War soldiers. Well, why can't it be both in there? The fact is that I believe, based on memory, there are black people buried there, probably slaves, and that we now need to mark that.

See, Betty's kind of taken me on something completely out of my own personal experience. Everywhere I turn now, there's some weird connection. My hope is that I can get a grant with somebody after I finish all this research, and we can do a public history exhibit. I know at

Rutgers, you have some public history programs. I was thinking maybe I can get a grant and work with them. They can implement it. I can share the materials, but that's a few years down the road. I'd like to do that for the Revolutionary War. We'll see. I'm very excited about all this, very excited.

KR: I want to ask you about your and Chris's collection of papers that you donated to University Archives.

SK: Yes, yes.

KR: Officially, it's called the Rutgers Grass Roots-Progressive Activists Files. [Editor's Note: The Guide to the Rutgers Grass Roots-Progressive Activists Files can be found online at http://www2.scc.rutgers.edu/ead/uarchives/rugpaff.html.]

SK: Yes.

KR: Tell me about the process of amassing this collection.

SK: I think that we're like history hoarders; it's just insane. We brought it over in the late '80s, I believe, and we already had a hundred boxes then. It's from every movement. People would close an office and were going to throw it out, and I'd take it home or Chris would take it home or somebody else would take it and say, "Oh, do you want these things?" "Oh, okay." It just grew and gave birth. It's from the University Senate, from newspapers, from photos taken by Rutgers photographers--they gave us some of those photos--newspaper clippings, memorabilia. So, it wasn't like we said, "Let's form a collection." It just happened that we had all this stuff and we said, "Oh, my God, we can't live in our little tiny apartment anymore. What do we do?" We reached out to the archivist that we knew and said, "We have this massive collection. What do you think?" We hadn't even put it in any order yet. You had like a box of South Africa, a box of this. He said, "Let's do it. How many boxes?" We told them, and they were horrified and they said, "Just bring them all over." I remember, staff came with these wheelie things. We had to make two or three trips. That's how it started.

Clark Beck was really instrumental in it. [Tom] Frusciano helped. Ron Becker helped. It was just a great group that said, "We don't want to lose this." We go, "Wonderful." We really felt we should preserve the history because the college is dead now. Winners erase history, and sometimes alumni associations do that as well. They bring out one celebratory photo of black people at a meeting because it's the fiftieth anniversary and then we won't talk about it anymore. We want to have something that anybody could find any time if they're interested and dig out things. There are things we don't even know are there that we just threw in there and forgot about.

That's the process. It was like the hoarding show, "We're being eaten by the paper monster." Then, we can't throw this out, help us, and then going to our library friends who said, "We want it." We said, "Yay." Then, they put together the finding aid and all the resources. It's amazing. It's amazing what's there.

KR: Well, I have reached the end of my questions. At this point, is there anything you would like to add?

SK: No, I think that is more than enough. I'm exhausted and bored by listening to myself. That's enough. That's enough self-indulgence for one lifetime.

KR: [laughter] This has been really wonderful. Thank you so much.

SK: Oh, you're welcome. It's been a pleasure to meet you too. I wouldn't have known anything about you and the activities that you and the oral history group do. Thank you for teaching me and sharing with me this whole process.

KR: I am going to stop the recording, and then I would like to talk with you off the record.

SK: Okay, please.

KR: I am stopping the recording.

----------END OF TRANSCRIPT----------

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