Oral History Interview with Laura Newell Stockford

Interview conducted on August 28, 2019

By Professor Judith Raiskin, UO Department of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and Linda J. Long, Curator of Manuscripts, UO Special Collections and University Archives, UO Libraries

For

The Eugene Lesbian Oral History Project

Laura Stockford, ca. 1986

Laura Stockford,

Recorded in the University of Oregon Libraries

Preface

This is an ongoing community-engaged oral history project. Linda J. Long, Curator of Manuscripts in the University of Oregon Libraries, and Professor Judith Raiskin of the Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies Department at the University of Oregon, conducted video interviews with eighty-three narrators in the summers of 2018 and 2019. The interviews were held in the UO Libraries' recording studio. This collection includes the video interviews and the bound and on-line transcripts. Associated with the interviews are materials collected from the narrators, including photographs, diaries, flyers, business records, letters, posters, buttons, and T-shirts that document the businesses, organizations, and cultural and political activities discussed in the interviews. These collections will be made available separately as individual archival collections and can be searched and retrieved using the Library's Online Catalog.

In the 1960s-1990s hundreds of lesbian-identified women came to Eugene, Oregon from across the United States. These women founded cornerstone organizations central to Eugene's history and influenced Oregon's political landscape. They created and worked in collective businesses, ran printing presses, and founded cultural organizations (theater companies and dance troupes, music bands and choirs) and gathered in lesbian cultural spaces (book stores, martial arts studios, restaurants, bars, and softball teams). They became leaders of Eugene community service agencies and worked in City and State government positions. A number were instrumental in leading important legal challenges of discriminatory policies at the county and state levels regarding employment and housing protections, benefits, lesbian and gay adoption, and marriage equality. Those who came to study or teach at the University of Oregon were influential in making institutional change protecting the rights of lesbians and gay men.

The artist Tee Corinne, whose papers and photographs also reside in the University of Oregon Special Collections, asserted, "The lack of a publicly accessible history is a devastating form of oppression; lesbians face it constantly." The Eugene Lesbian Oral History Project seeks to preserve a specific and vibrant history that otherwise is lost. This collection of interviews captures a range of engaging and important stories that reveal new angles on lesbian history, women's history, the counterculture movement in the 1960s-1980s, Oregon history, feminism, sexuality, intentional communities, and women working in jobs reserved for men. Looking back over twenty-five - fifty years, the narrators reflect on the complex relationship of individual aspirations and larger social

movements in times of dramatic historical change. Many of the narrators have retired and continue to be involved in vibrant artistic, scientific and political work.

Abstract

Interview conducted on Wednesday, August 28, 2019. Laura was born in Tampa, Florida in 1957. She spends time talking about her childhood and her growing up years. Her grandparents were Native Americans and members of the Penobscot tribe. She went to college at the University of Maine in 1977, graduating with a degree in business. A friend suggested she move to Eugene, which she did in 1982 by taking a Trailways bus across the country. Near Denver she broke her leg and talks about the kindness of a woman who helped her. She arrived in Oregon and describes the beauty of Oregon and how lush everything looked, especially traveling along the McKenzie River. While working at the phone company in Eugene where she was out, Laura received a death threat. She describes living in a collective household in the River Road area, nicknamed "Elkay Island." She spent considerable time in the southern Oregon lesbian communities. She describes Tee Corinne and her work. Laura became a therapist. Many of her clientele were and are transgender people. She discusses gender issues. She also discusses aging issues. Laura concludes her interview by reading a passage in her diary from 1984 when she came out as a lesbian.

Additional subjects: AIDS (disease); Aging; homophobia; Back-to-the-land; Ballot Measure 9; Collectives; Coming out (sexual orientation); Communal living – Oregon; Consciousness-raising; Growers Market; Gwynn, Bethroot; Kraft, Cina; Ku Klux Klan (1915-); LaDuke, Winona; Lesbian separatism – Oregon; Madrone; Miracle, Billie; Southern Oregon Women Writers' Group, Gourmet Eating Society, and Chorus; Transgender people; WomanShare (Grants Pass, Or.)

Transcriptionist: Rev.com and University of Oregon Libraries

Session Number: 069

Narrator: Laura Stockford

Location: University of Oregon Libraries, Eugene, Oregon

Interviewers: Linda Long and Judith Raiskin

Date: August 28, 2019

Long: This oral history interview is part of the Eugene Lesbian Oral History Project. The recordings will be made available through the University of Oregon's Special Collections and University Archives. This is an oral history interview with Laura Stockford on Wednesday, August 28, 2019 taking place in the University of Oregon Libraries' recording studio in the Center for Media and Educational Technologies. The interviewers are Linda Long, Curator of Manuscripts in the UO Libraries' Special Collections and University Archives and Professor Judith Raiskin of the UO Department of Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies.

Laura, please let us know if you agree to be recorded for this project, and that you give your permission for the university to preserve and make available your recorded and transcribed interview.

Stockford: Yes.

Long: Thank you. Why don't we start with a basic question. Can you please tell us when and where you were born, where you grew up and something about your early background?

Stockford: Sure. I was born in Tampa, Florida, December 15, 1957 in St. Joseph's Hospital. I was the first of four children born to my mother, Joyce Louise Newell Kasanokwis Stockford, and my father, Charles James Stockford. I went to Catholic School for eight years, my first eight years. I'm sure that had an influence on me. But in ninth grade, we didn't have enough money for me to go to Catholic high school, so I moved to public school. I would say that my childhood was full of reading and books, and playing outdoors. I had good pals, one of whom just died last November, who I stayed in touch with all my life, Patti Jo. And my other dear friend, Ray Eydman, is still my dear friend, and he still lives there, in Tampa. We've been friends fifty-eight years. And I really value relationships. I'm a therapist. It naturally emerged. What else might be important?

Raiskin: What was your temperament as a child?

Stockford: When I wasn't helping my mother, or parents with the younger children, I read, and I played. I was mild. My mother called me something like "Susie Sunshine," or some kind of eternal optimist. "Sally Sunshine," that was it, and told me that I had incredible resiliency, which stuck with me. There was some abuse in my

childhood. My parents didn't know how to raise children in terms of getting them to do what they needed them to do. So, mostly my father was physically disciplining in a more and more intense way. He eventually became an alcoholic. As the early child though, I got to know him before he was an alcoholic. We played physically a lot. I helped him repair the lawn mower. When we went camping, he and I put the tent up, and he explained the parts of a car to me, which I really liked because I was with him, and I was given responsibility. There was real joyfulness in the camping part. Our family went camping a lot.

Raiskin: In high school did you have particular academic interests?

Stockford: Academic interests in high school. I was talented and gifted, but that wasn't very focused, so I just had fun. And I was part of the human relations committee, the school yearbook, and the school newspaper. So, I leaned into journalism, they called it in those days. Hung out with nerds who competed in trivia contests. Made civil rights statements pretty early on; intentionally dated black men, and made a show of it in my high school time. Both so they knew they were wonderful, and lovable, and to show the world they were. There was really— this is who I am, essentially, is someone who believes in the worth, and value of every human, regardless of who they are. It still reflects who I am today, that high school time.

Raiskin: Now what were those relationships like for you, personally, sexually, emotionally?

Stockford: My mom left my dad after domestic violence, when I was about fifteen [sixteen]. That was probably the hard time in my life, in my bringing up time. Right, keep going.

Raiskin: About your relationships with the boys in high school.

Stockford: The boys in high school, oh well. I intentionally chose African-American young men on the football team to be with and flirt with in public, and be friends with. I had friends in the drama club, and I participated in the debate, and speech league. So, I like to talk about those positions, which I held, which include women's lib, in the '70s. I have never been someone to shave my legs. In fact, when I was about fourteen, the neighbor lady told me I needed to come back into her back restroom, and she sat on me and shaved my legs. She said, "Now isn't that better?" And I wasn't really old enough to understand that I could have said no. But I mean, this about forced sexuality in a sense.

So what else? I had a little early substance abuse. Of note, two of my early boyfriends turned out to be gay men. When I look back, I think some things are interesting like that. I was also accused of being a lesbian when I was fifteen or sixteen, in the Burger King. And I wasn't aware that I was leaning in that way at all, and I just said, "Well no, I am not." But when I look back on that, it was so interesting.

Raiskin: Who thought that you were?

Stockford: Nobody I knew very well.

Raiskin: So it was just based on how you looked?

Stockford: Kid in school, based on how I looked. I had long hair, but whatever. I don't know how they got there.

Raiskin: And what did you understand, what did you know about lesbians? What did you learn growing up? What access did you have to knowledge about lesbians?

Stockford: Nothing. No access, until I went to college. That's not true, my— No. So, it was moving to Eugene, also. But my first really exposure to lesbianism as something other than something over there, that the Catholics told you was very bad, wasn't until I went to college, when I was eighteen or nineteen. It just wasn't even in my awareness.

Raiskin: Did that Catholic, early education slow you down, or make you uncomfortable, or make you worry?

Stockford: At what point?

Raiskin: When you came out.

Stockford: When I came out?

Raiskin: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

Stockford: No, I didn't come out until I was twenty-six. I guess we'll get to that. So, I wasn't out. My first sort of opening to the possibility— my mother moved out. My father remarried at nineteen. And then I moved in with my "boyfriend," a gay man, with a lover named

Miguel, who I didn't really understand was his lover, at the time. So, I had a couple of AIDS scares. I didn't get AIDS. But he did eventually. Uh-oh, waterworks [tears up]. Yeah. We didn't last because he did come out.

So then, my grandparents found out— I'm Native American on my mom's side. Also, suppressed by my white, Irish, working class, Catholic father. I didn't know I still had feelings left about this. Right. My grandparents on my mother's side, who are Native, tell me about who I am, who my mom is. It felt like the first coming out of the closet, like, "Oh. Well, that explains a lot." Because I also got racial name-calling as a child. But I didn't understand why I got racial name-calling. I just went along with it. And as a child, I definitely looked like some kind of ethnicity that other people couldn't figure out. So, I got different kinds of name-callings. My grandparents then found the Maine Indian Scholarship grant for me at the Penobscot [this was a scholarship from the State of Maine for all of the native people from the state]. My grandfather was part Penobscot. So, I left Florida to then move to Orono, Maine. I moved to the reservation, and in with my grandparents. It was a seminal and important point in my life, as I came to who I was in a racial way, or in an ethnic identity way. I was very pleased. My grandfather was a professor of anthropology. Who was one of the first Native Americans to go to the University of Pennsylvania without ever having attended real school. He got a Ph.D., and he taught. His contribution was *Indian Contributions to White Civilization*. That was the thesis paper. And I have a whole book I

brought that my mom wrote about him, and that piece of my history, which I realize isn't lesbian history, but it was formulating, and important to me. So, I moved with my grandparents, and then I was exposed to more things, a lot more things at the University of Maine. As a freshmen, I met a lot of people, and I saw, I could see who lesbians were. Because they had short hair, flannel shirts, and hiking boots. From my perspective, I got that. But I went to early women's center meetings in college, and understood that I was a feminist, at least. And then the attraction began, the interest began at that point, I would say. I didn't come out yet, but I did have a brief sexual experiment with a married couple, who are my dear friends still to this day. They live in Salem. You know, I didn't like having the guy in the mix. Though he's still a very dear person. And they're both feminists, strong, feminist people. They raised a wonderful son, who died of HIV, and sadly, a few years ago. I'm old enough that people have died. Wow. As I'm reflecting on times when I'm in my twenties and thirties. I know, it's different. Well, anyway.

Long: What year did you go to college at the University of Maine?

Stockford: Yes, 1977.

Long: Okay. Did you live on campus?

Stockford: Yes. After I lived with my grandparents for three months. I was hitchhiking nine miles to campus, and in the snow. It was too hard. Because I lived on a reservation, so I had to get lucky, and get

across a bridge on the Penobscot River. Because the Penobscot Reservation is an island, and then get to Old Town, and then get lucky again, and get a ride to the U. Which, when you're nineteen, doesn't seem hard. But it got cold. So, I moved on campus and lived in dorms, and had a busy campus life. I got a degree in business marketing, because I felt like I needed a way to support myself. Always a feminist. Always very determined to be self-supporting, a self-made person, someone who could accomplish something. That was just my first idea, "Okay, well let's try that. It's kind of fun." So, I have this degree in business, which, oh well. I graduated from college December of 1981. I have a four-year degree in business marketing, from the University of Maine. It was a wonderful experience, for the most part. I was active in the Native American Club. I was active in the women's center. I brought a newspaper clipping. I was on the newspaper staff, volunteer position. I was part of the feminist movement, in ways, like not wearing a bra, and wearing a flannel shirt, and saying, "I can do whatever I want to do." And, "I can do the same thing a man can do." I felt strongly that I could be whoever I wanted to be, if I could figure out how to support myself. Then we got the next chapter because I left Maine when I graduated in December of '81. And my grandfather had died, so my strong connection to the reservation wasn't there. I couldn't find a job. I moved back to Florida, and by this time my mom lived in Sarasota. I got a business job in Sarasota, Florida. Lived with my mom for a few months and then got my own place. Tried cocaine for a few months. That was

weird. Just— you know, I'm this try-a-new-thing experimental person, which will show up here in a minute. But I wasn't really very happy in Florida, after living in Maine for so long. So, my best friend in high school, Patti Jo McGill, that's who died last year. She came to Florida with her husband and her baby and she said, "You have to move to Eugene." I'm like, "Okay, well, I'm not too happy here." I was sexually harassed on my job there. I didn't connect the dots. This guy felt like he could just slide his hand up the back of my leg to my ass, and that was fine, because he was my manager. Right. And I was so naïve. When I left that job after eight months, to move to Oregon, I filed worker's comp, and I wrote the story up and they went, "Oh, well, you can have unemployment." And, "This was sexual harassment." I was in Oregon, by then, with no resources. So I didn't pursue it anymore. And then just say, "Thank you for my unemployment compensation." And to have that dawning, "Oh, right." And it breaks loose when I move to Eugene in 1982.

Raiskin: Why did they suggest Eugene?

Stockford: Well— My best friend's family had moved to Eugene. Tampa, Florida, where I was born, has an Air Force base, MacDill, where Patti Jo, my pal, she'll come in the story later on too, and that we bagged groceries on base, for our summer job. We dated airmen in high school, because they had big, exciting cars, and they let us drink alcohol. She and I were bff's, and she said—and I trusted her—"You need to come to Eugene because I think you'll really like

it." And she wasn't very specific. She just said, "It's a beautiful place, and maybe— and it was good, because I stopped using cocaine when I moved to Eugene. I took a Trailways Bus. I put my bicycle in a box, and my suitcase, and it took eight days. I had $200. Stopped and visited a college friend in Illinois. Broke my leg in Denver, running to get some food that wasn't from a bus stop. And this sweet older woman named Mrs. Goode, I'm not kidding you, said, "Your leg looks really swollen, dear." I said, "I know, but I'm moving to Eugene on a bus. I don't know what to do. I have no insurance." We got off in this very tiny town in Colorado. Her son picked us up, and they took me to the emergency room, and stayed with me. The doctor pro-bono'd a walking boot, and gave me the X-ray. We went to her little apartment, and she made hot dogs for dinner. She put me back on the bus in the morning. That was just a remarkable moment of kindness I'll never forget [tears up]. And I was on my journey again. I got here, and my friend's parents lived in Eugene at 44th and Pearl. They let me stay in their den for a few months, and then I moved out with my friend Patti Jo and her husband, where I got my first cat. That's when it was on, yeah.

Raiskin: What did Eugene look like to you when you first came here?

Stockford: Oh, my gosh. That's such a great question. The Trailways Bus comes over the mountains from the eastern Oregon desert, and rolls down the McKenzie River, and I think, "Oh, my God. I've moved to the Garden of Eden." I literally thought that. It was so lush. The McKenzie River is just the most joyous place in the

universe, because it was like, "La-la." And we stopped at the shop, and we had pie. I'm sure it was Mom's Pies. I walked around marveling at what I had come to. Very happy. Very happy I moved here. It really felt amazing to move here. And for the first few years, when I would write home, and we wrote letters in those days. I would say, "You cannot believe what you can walk up to a tree and eat. You can just have an apple, or some berries. You can go pick things, and eat them." It just fucking blew me away, how amazing the Willamette Valley was in its aliveness. So that was very awesome, and then yeah. It was good.

Raiskin: Did you connect with the women's community here? Or the lesbian community when you first came?

Stockford: The very first exposure was when I moved in with my friend's parents and my friend. Her mom was at the University of Oregon, as a student. Boy, she was taking sociology of women, and her assignment was to get to know lesbians. She would come home and say, "I met lesbians. You should hear about them." That was my opening up, was a women's studies class in 19— I mean she had gone to Women's Studies in 1983, and she was an older person. She would have been, wait, let me think, gosh, she would have only been in her fifties. She was great. She was humorous and open in sharing her stories of how fun it was.

Raiskin: And where was she meeting the lesbians?

Stockford: In women's studies class.

Raiskin: Oh, in classes.

Stockford: Yeah, that was awesome.

Raiskin: So how did you connect with lesbians in Eugene?

Stockford: I moved from that 44th and Pearl. Then I lived across from the glue factory in Springfield, in this tiny duplex with Patti Jo and our cats, and her husband, and baby. I finally got out on my own, moved in with a graduate student at 20th and Lincoln. The house is still there. I go and look. Had my last sex with a man. I'm not saying who. But he was a native man. And I had a yearn that if I ever procreated in my life, it would be with a native man, because I really felt like assimilation was wrong. If I was going to go through all that with a pregnancy, that baby was going to be native. But I didn't get pregnant, so that was good. But then I started joining groups, like Eugene Direct Action, and started a little local, I don't know, what did we use to make newsletters? Like a mimeograph machine or something?

Long: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

Stockford: "The Nuclear News Bureau," by Laura Stockford. Eventually I was part of *Women's Press* the next year, as just a contributor, and going to the meetings. The feminism bloomed into meeting more lesbian people. That's how it happened. Eugene Direct Action was this very dynamic group of thirteen activists, many of whom I still know, who are alive. Betsy Reeves, Thyme Siegel. Betsy was part of the original Hoedads group. The lesbian Hoedads group. Thyme

was a lesbian writer. They owned property on River Road, on Elkay Street, which we called Elkay Island. When I was in Eugene Direct Action, we started doing these sit-ins, and protests. I became an activist, and met lesbians, and liked them. My friend, Mindy Brady, who's still a teacher at 4J, right now, was part of that group. I can remember— Wait, I'm getting a little ahead of it. So, I became an activist, and I started meeting activists in other areas. That's where I met my first lover, Sky. I have a picture of her with me. Sky was quite a bit older than me, which at the time I didn't realize might have been a problem. I was twenty-six, and Sky was in her early forties, at least, maybe forty-five. And Sky was part of the southern Oregon women's community. That is the big opening. I have many stories about that. Which I know you know about to some degree. So, I meet Sky. We go on the Hanford Nuclear Action Peace March, sixty miles, sleeping on church floors. I was so enamored with her. I just thought, She's so strong, and she built her own cabin. And I just really admired who she was. She was who she was. I asked her about being a lesbian, and she was delightful.

Raiskin: Do you remember what you asked her?

Stockford: What did I ask her? I think I just said, "So you're a lesbian?" And she just laughed, and goes, "Yeah." And I go, "Oh, well, I want to know about it." I mean, I don't know what I asked her. I just wanted to know about it. She and Dawn, who were part of the southern Oregon group, had come up to network with the Eugene group, and our activist household. By now I had moved in with

Thyme and Betsy onto Elkay Island, which is a house with a separately— an apartment above a garage, a back cabin, and a wood-fired sauna with a cold bathtub. And the hub of many great women's events, I'll say. It had a fire circle. And I moved into that thinking I was probably straight. We had a joke when I first moved in, what do a Jew, a Pagan and a Christian, who are straight, bisexual, and gay have in common? Elkay Island! But it wasn't a joke because I came out there. I came to who I was at Elkay Island. That was so safe. It was like a cocoon of coming out, that Thyme and Betsy were there. And so was Pamlin Pegg, who's still my dear friend, but lives in Portland now. And Sandra Pastorious, part of the southern Oregon women's land community, Laughing Giraffe Horoscope. I brought my horoscope chart she did back then.

Long: How do you spell Elkay?

Stockford: E-L-K-A-Y. Elkay Drive.

Long: Okay.

Stockford: It's off of River Road.

Long: Off of River Road, okay.

Stockford: I don't remember the house number, but it's there. I don't know who owns it anymore, of course. Thyme and Betsy owned the land. You know, that's one of those radical things, when women started owning land. So, also part of the attraction to the household. There was this environment. People walked around naked, because we

had full proximity fencing, and a sauna, and it's Oregon, it's cold. You get hot in the sun, you walk around naked. I was exposed to women loving women in a beautiful way there. That made it easy to come out with Sky. I just got in bed with her when she was taking a nap, and started kissing her on the neck, and I had no idea what I was doing. That's the coming out right there. The moment. It's a very happy memory. I don't know where to go from here. I feel really, kind of worked up. Heart rate racing.

Raiskin: Your coming out letter, was that from around this time, or later?

Stockford: I wrote a story about it during the time. I journaled about it during 1984, and I kept the journal.

Raiskin: Did you—

Stockford: It was so freeing. Coming out just set me free. I came out to my family right away. That night— well, after Sky went back to Ashland— I almost ran to Mindy's house, I mean two miles, and woke her up in the middle of the night. I said, "Mindy wake up." And she's like, "What? I'm drunk." And I'm like, "Mindy, I'm gay." And she's like, "Okay, whatever." And I'm like, "Can I sleep with you?" And she's like, "Just get in here and sleep." And we just went to sleep. Mindy has come out since then. I don't know— I worry about, we should wait ten years. Because I don't want to out Mindy, as a teacher. That doesn't seem fair to her. Because Mindy wasn't out yet either. Mindy and I weren't lovers, but were just friends, and have stayed friends for a long time. It was just so

exciting to tell someone who would appreciate it. Then I called my mom and I'm like, "Mom, I'm bisexual." That was how I came out though, because that felt safe. And I'm like, "Tell everyone I'm bisexual." Like, "I love everybody. Don't get confused. I just love everybody." Which was how people came out as a strategy. It took me about maybe another year to go like, "Well, pretty sure I'm just a lesbian now." Like, "That's what's rolling out." I'm on my second lover, and that seems to be what's happening for me right now, and I'm just going to go with it.

Raiskin: How did your mother respond?

Stockford: Typically. It's probably just a phase. She wasn't unkind, or rejecting. But she was diminishing so as not to bring it in too fast. My mother's become my greatest supporter, just so you know. She's a wonderful person, just took her a while to get adjusted. Even my father, who had many problems, came to terms with it.

Raiskin: So you're part of this community. Can you describe a typical day that you—

Stockford: Back then, before I worked for the— I was hired by US West Phone Company late in '84. But before that I only worked part-time. We had this fire circle. And little cans of beer that said, “No Name Beer.” That was hilarious. I mean, and people would go in and out of Elkay Island. It was like this welcoming place. We would make food together, sing, protest, process, have political protest

meetings, sauna. It was such a time of discovery. It was such a time of discovery for me. Yep.

Raiskin: What were the attitudes around sexuality at Elkay Island?

Stockford: [Chuckles] A real openness, and acceptance of whoever and whatever. One of the women on Elkay Island that was an owner, identified as a bisexual. We had these long conversations like, "Well what does that mean?" Well, her partnerships were all with women, but she kind of liked to have sex with men sometimes. But that's all it meant. Men weren't meaningful in that patriarchal way. They were just fun to have sex with sometimes. That was her idea of bisexuality. And then there was one woman who was like, "No men, never, ever." And then there was me, coming from straight to bisexual, to lesbian during that time. So, I would say there was a wide acceptance. Other women came out on Elkay Island, and other women came out with Sky. I would like to talk about that.

Sky, whose real name is Doris, which she didn't want anyone to know. But I think she has Alzheimer's, or isn't alive anymore. So as I last heard— LaRosa knows her. And everybody knows LaRosa, right? She moved to Port Townsend, and I don't have contact, but I understand she doesn't remember. Because she's quite a bit older than me. If I'm sixty-one now, she would be in her eighties, if she's alive. So, I doubt it. But at the time, she was in her forties. She was part of that vibrant, southern Oregon women's community. I would take the bus to Medford, and Sky would pick me up. And we were in the throes of early sexuality, so we had all this wonderful sex.

And then we'd go to Tee Corinne's house. Right. I'm going to tell you some really personal stories about this. The first party at Tee Corinne's house, there were thirty women. I'm sitting next to Sky on the sofa, and I said, "Sky, is everyone in here a lesbian?" And she just laughed until she couldn't talk, and said, "Yes, Laura. Everybody in here is a lesbian." I just thought I had come to this place of amazing, amazing possibility. Because Tee Corinne's bedroom had one wall of breasts, individual black and white photos of breasts covered one whole wall of her bedroom. I was beside myself, literally beside myself. Yeah.

Long: What year was this?

Stockford: Probably '84 or five.

Long: So was this when Tee Corinne had her house in Sunny Valley?

Stockford: Yes.

Long: Okay.

Stockford: And Lee Lynch lived there some of the time.

Long: Yes.

Stockford: And I joined the Southern Oregon Women's Writers, and Choral Society, and Gourmet Eating Society. The thing kind of went on for a while. Oh, I put my hands up, sorry [gestures]. I got to be part of this seminal group of women who wrote books and published poetry, and sang songs, and really made strong statements about

being lesbians. I just think that was amazing. You know, Hawk Madrone, a woman who didn't speak much, but could talk with the animals, so to speak, who had such a spiritual, and deep connection. Her partner, they were amazing, what they did. Their theater productions, and their publications. They still are doing the calendar. What is the calendar called?

Long: The We'Moon calendar.

Stockford: The We'Moon calendar, which I still buy every year. Because Sequoia Water Woman, who used to be Sequoia somebody else, who was in the phone company when I worked there, is still on the We'Moon staff. I mean the roots are amazing from back then.

Long: And was it Bethroot Gwynn—

Stockford: Bethroot.

Long: —at that time was Madrone's partner?

Stockford: Was, at the time.

Long: At the time, yeah.

Stockford: Yes.

Long: Can you spend some time talking about Tee Corinne, and your impression of her, what she was like?

Stockford: Okay. I was really, pretty fascinated with Tee Corinne, because of her sense of accomplishment as a lesbian. That she had written

books. That she held the ear of lesbian writers whose books I read. I read all of Lee Lynch's books, and knew Lee Lynch at the same time. That was pretty exciting stuff, right? And that she had the photos, the erotic reverse imagery photos, the one in the wheelchair—

Long: The solarized photographs.

Stockford: I just adored what she was doing with lesbian archive and history. So just being in her company, I could hardly talk. I mean, I was this person who just came out. So, I didn't really form a close relationship with her. I just stood around and went, "Wow." You can't say I had full engagement, because I was so wowed. Even though, I probably did attend about fifteen or twenty Southern Oregon Women's Writers—

Long: Group.

Stockford: The creativity in that group. I would leave with my heart so full. I could be an out lesbian. I got hired by the phone company about this point. In the phone company, I got pretty active with EAGLE, Employee Association of Gay and Lesbian Employees, and a Native American employee group. I had a death threat. I was out in the phone company, a conservative place.

Raiskin: Death threat, how did that—

Stockford: Someone left a note on my desk at work that I should die. A death threat.

Long: And that was in Eugene?

Stockford: Yes.

Long: Okay.

Stockford: So that was about '86, when I got the death threat. My gosh. My heart's just pounding. I had forgotten about that. I didn't seem to care. But looking back— Union, I was active in Communications Workers of America, as a local steward. Eventually, as the education chair, and outspoken there also. An out lesbian. At the phone company— I realize I've digressed. But we'll come back to the southern Oregon women, because I never left them for several years. That was integral to me. It fed me, spiritually, and it fed my courage and fortitude to come from that place. I mean, yeah. I mean I can remember— Okay, I am digressing, so sorry this isn't flowing. But I can remember driving up for a meeting, and we drove onto women's land, what land was that? That was in Grants Pass. One of the famous lands.

Long: WomanShare?

Stockford: Yes! Yes. Right, Billie.

Long: Billie Miracle?

Stockford: Yes! Well, she was probably the most gorgeous lesbian on earth at that time. She just rips off her clothes, and Sky rips off her clothes, and they embrace, and I think, Oh my God. I just died and went to lesbian heaven. It was crazy, those times of openly embracing, and

liberating ourselves. Yeah. And art, and music, and ritual, and ritual, like when we went to Roseburg women's land, I went to several Land's End— There's two land groups in Roseburg, Hannah Blue Heron was part of—

Long: Rainbow's End?

Stockford: Yes, Rainbow's End.

Long: And then Rainbow's Other End.

Stockford: Oh yes, that's right. And so I knew Hannah Blue Heron, who was a lesbian nun, part of the book. We did a dream circle there under the stars, where we slept with our heads to the fire, and tried to dream a dream together. I still do dream work. We had— so precious, really. We set wands on one woman's land, so she would feel safe. We followed this walking around and setting of wands and just asking the universe to take of these women on their land. Things like that, that were, yeah.

Raiskin: I wonder what you felt about some of the use of native ritual in these environments.

Stockford: Wow, good question. Well, after I found my voice— So you know that first couple years, I was just enthralled. I really wasn't productive yet. But once I found my voice, I spoke to it. And you know who raised my consciousness the most about that is Winona LaDuke, who taught here. She had a chair endowment, I think in '92. She taught here on indigenous — stealing indigenous culture. I

took her class and wrote a paper, where I profiled indigenous native women stopping— She actually wanted to print— I forgot about that. I wrote a paper that Winona wanted to write a book with me about, and I didn't have the resources to do it— where I profiled activist, indigenous women returning to native practice, and economic survival. Starting with Winona, if you think about all what she has contributed to the history of women and native people in this country. So, I know her. I can call her a friend. I have always raised consciousness to that very fact, because Eugene being the hippie land that it is, and me liking the hippies, because they seemed to be fascinated with me, as a native person. Eventually, I started going, "Look, you came from somewhere, too. I'm actually native." If I want to do a ceremony, I'm going to do it with my people, my native people. It's different. It's not going to be an appropriation. Stop appropriating, and find who you are. So I just found that kind of words. But it did, it really took a while to find those words, an awareness. Is that what you meant?

Raiskin: Yeah.

Stockford: I mean I'm still sensitive to it. I've had really long conversations with former hippies, now therapists—

Raiskin: I mean in particular about women's land ritual—

Stockford: About specific to women's land ritual? I didn't have the words at that time. I didn't have enough awareness or words at that time. Because it really seemed like a mish mash, frankly, of pagan

spirituality, Wiccan, ex-nuns, some native, some Celtic. This mish mash of— And dreaming, which is Jungian, and I think that it was really a strong desire to find a way of deep meaning about being a lesbian. I can look back on it now, and I can see that there's just a deep search for meaning and connection that's real, and it crosses a lot of boundaries and barriers like that.

Raiskin: And it was incredibly meaningful for you, at the time, what you were—

Stockford: It was.

Raiskin: Yeah.

Stockford: I mean, the worst of it were rattlesnakes, and not having enough money, and gay-bashing. And you know, gay-bashing, meh. I never got really hurt, because the late '80s is was when the AIDS epidemic was on, and I became an activist about that. I held my friends when they died. Men, gay men, we all did. I went to San Francisco and sat on the steps of Health and Human Services, and tried to make my voice heard about how poorly people with HIV were treated. At that time, I thought, "Lesbian, piece of cake." Gay man with AIDS, damn, those guys suffered. They suffered with hate and fear. And they were the sweetest men. I mean I think I got a little— my activism took a turn at that time. And all that wonderful activism got me to therapy school.

Raiskin: Can you tell us about that?

Stockford: In about 1990— before we get to 1990, can I say one more thing? I formed a permanent partnership with a woman after Sky. Sky and I were only together nine months, and I had a couple of other lovers that were short term. But I formed my first long-term relationship with Jen Anderson, who I'm still dear friends with, in 1986. She and I met, and I think I probably moved in with her around '87. We stayed together thirteen years, and we are still friends. We had a really civil breakup in the '90s. I grew a lot. We quit smoking cigarettes— bleh! and stuff like that. But I was with the phone company consistently. She rose to a position of leadership in 4J, and she was a closeted lesbian, kind of, but an outspoken feminist. She came out. But we went to Wings. I just want to mark that Wings seminars in the late '80s also was assistive to me in not being afraid of who I was. I did some of their seminar work, and I still— It's not a perfect world at Wings—

Raiskin: Can you describe what Wings is?

Stockford: Yes, sorry. “Personal Effectiveness Seminars” is what they called themselves. They came forward in the '80s, and you'd go for four or five days of fifteen-hour days. You would just process through all of these opening-ups. You would find that people are just afraid of each other, and there's nothing to be afraid of, and who you are is beautiful, and wonderful. That's not a very good summary, but I did a lot of my first, personal work there. That wasn't in the lesbian community, but I was out as a lesbian. In day one in the seminar, they said, "Who wants to go first?" I'm like, "Well, I do." So, I stand

on stage, and I'm wearing these black cowboy boots, and my black jeans, and my black T-shirt. I'm a dyke. I'm like, "Hi!" There's no doubt I'm a dyke. And they go, "Well, why do you dress like that?" And I go, "I like it. I feel good this way. These are my dyke boots. What's the problem here?" And they were intentionally being provocative to break it down. Now, they challenged all stereotypes, men and women, girl and boy. But they weren't very good at it. I went back five years later, and did a consciousness raising seminar, and they paid me. I told that story, and they said, "Oh yeah, that was homophobia." And so, it's been on since I came out that I raise people's consciousness about homophobia and racism, and gender-ism of any kind, and able-body-ism, and body image-ism. Don't get me started on body-shaming, for example. I'm a person who fights to love everyone. In the phone company, by the way, I was a diversity trainer, and I did go to southern Oregon to do a training, a three-day seminar where they called it “pluralism.” I faced the Ku Klux Klan in that seminar, and I lost my composure. We're trying to explain why it's a good business model to think of everyone's ideas as helpful. That was the point. And they're saying, "Why can't we be in the KKK? You should accept everybody." And I couldn't maintain. I have really met hate in my life. Okay. But that, those seminars, and that work with the phone company, and my coming out, and my activism led me to want something different for my work. To do my work in a way that was in alignment with my values. That's how I got to where I am now. The phone company announced a closure, and an early buyout, and I took it, and they

helped me go to school at Portland State, in the Masters of Social Work program. Which I started in my last year, in 1991. My last year at the phone company I also went to school, distance learning. That was gruesome, because they were in Portland. We would travel for a nine-hour course on Wednesday, and I'd go back to work. But my second year I was finished with the phone company, and just a grad student. I started being a counselor, social worker. I started with teenagers, because teenagers were open to the world. I started teen groups, young women's teen groups. We called our youth group "Colors." I let the kids name it. They were all teenagers in recovery from substance—

Raiskin: Did you work for an agency?

Stockford: I did. I worked for Looking Glass, yes. For my first five years that was my early proving ground where you get $22,000 a year, work sixty-five hours a week, and you're never ahead on paperwork. There were no computers yet, really. So, being a lesbian was less relevant because I was so focused on learning to be a lesbian and—

Raiskin: A therapist.

Stockford: I was in a— Right. Sorry, learning to be a therapist. I was in a long-term relationship that was satisfying in a deep way. She had two children, Chris, and Brian. They grew up and moved out. We grew apart after I graduated from my graduate program in '96. We didn't make that final transition.

Raiskin: Why do you think that was?

Stockford: Well, I know why. Because I also did a recovering, co-dependents anonymous for ten years. I was never happy with her maintenance use of alcohol, and her introversion, and staying home. We had jokes. I would leave the house. I would be, "I'm off to a party." "I'm off to a rally." "I'm off to an organizing meeting." I was always off to do something like that. I'm naturally a social worker. And she would complain that I didn't stay home and watch TV. That sweet, warm, safe place became cold. My consciousness was raised by therapy school that I could leave. It took us five years to split up. I mean, we are still close. She's seventy-three or four. We look at grandchildren, and talk about our aging and health problems. We just have lunch once a month, and it's very satisfying to feel that I still have a loving relationship through everything you go through in life. So many things, you know. So that was—

Raiskin: Does the time that you were in school was also— and you were in Portland once a week, was also the time of Measure 9? I'm wondering if that intersected in your life in any significant way.

Stockford: Laurie, the investment person, Laurie—

Raiskin: McClain?

Stockford: Yes, McClain, was a heavy organizer of Measure 9. I went to organizing meetings for that. We did a wonderful fundraiser for Measure 9, just as an organizing supporter, one of the many, not as a leader. Cina Kraft was part of that leadership. Oh my God, I hope

you interview Cina Kraft. She's so rich with history in this town. And she still plays, and knows the most beautiful music on earth.

Raiskin: She's still on Monday nights on KLCC.

Stockford: Yes. Though she announced her retirement's ahead. I know. One of the great, old lesbians. There are so many great, old lesbians in this town. Oh my God. I mean, I became more active at Measure 9, with lesbians in Eugene. So that was different than the southern Oregon women's land womb of growing that I treasure. It sounds so dramatic when I say it. But they were powerful beyond measure. They created change in this world. You know that. And then there was Measure 9.

Raiskin: Did it affect you emotionally, that kind of hatred against gays and lesbians?

Stockford: Okay, and then there's also Measure 22, from Springfield-

Long: Can you talk about that?

Stockford: Well, Springfield says it's illegal to be queer, or you can't be protected if you teach a class, or— they wouldn't cover— I still, I'm still outraged that the Springfield Human Rights Commission in 2019 does not offer protection to queers. They are not represented on the Springfield Human Rights Commission. Measure 22 did not, as an anti-gay measure, and I worked against that. So, I have, in my own Laura way, boycotted Springfield since then. For twenty years or something. People say, "Let's go to Springfield and eat at that

new—." And I'm like, "No." And I explain that I do not spend my money in Springfield, and I still don't. There are places that supported Measure 9, one of the ways of countering Measure 9 was we made known who was giving money to the conservative people. Hiron's Drugstore, and let's see if I can even remember anyone else. No, I can't.

Long: Rexius maybe? Was Rexius—

Stockford: Yeah, I'm sure the Rexius family was part of that.

Raiskin: The old owners of Gray's?

Stockford: Yep. Yep. The old owners.

Raiskin: Of Gray's—

Stockford: You know, I can say to their credit, they did have a cat.

Raiskin: But not current. Not current [owners].

Stockford: Yeah.

Stockford: Right. I was one of those people who took the list, sorry, no paper. And held the list up and said, "Look, don't spend your money here." I leafleted. Remember in those days we leafleted to raise awareness? So, I was part of fundraising and leafleting. I talked about stories of when people were harassed. Consciousness-raising was language we used. I would say that's how I was active in that. Did it affect me personally? It just made me more resolute.

Long: For clarification purposes, can you tell us again, that Measure 22 was Springfield?

Stockford: It was a Springfield city measure.

Long: Springfield city measure, okay.

Raiskin: I think it was one of the "Son of 9's" I think, yeah.

Stockford: It was, that's right.

Long: And so it was after 9 was defeated—

Stockford: It was after 9. Yes, that Springfield was like, "Okay, well. You can defeat Measure 9, but you're not going to defeat Springfield." And I went, "Well, then I'm never spending money there again. And you guys suck." But since then, this new awareness is out. All us queer people live in Springfield, too. It really pushes my boycott situation. Because they don't always feel safe. Springfield is a working-class town. It started as a mill town. It's less so a mill town now. It's also a hospital town. It is changing in its nature. But by its nature it has cheaper housing, and it's more working-class, and it is more conservative in its attitudes towards accepting people. So, I tend to not like it. Because now I do my work in a different way, which is where we left off. I do my work in the therapy room, and in a social work way. I had big conversations with people, "Oh, you're going to be a therapist now. That's not activism." There is a good conversation about that. But I needed a way to make a living

that was aligned with my values, and the phone company was not the answer. I did help make a difference there.

Long: For the record, can you tell us what your actual job at the phone company was?

Stockford: I was a sales and service representative.

Long: Okay.

Stockford: They closed in 1992, that area. The police station now is in that building. Eugene police. It was that building on Country Club Road. Yeah, so I talked to people, disconnecting, and changing, and adding fancy things to their phone service, and buying telephones.

Long: What was the phone company name? It's hard to remember now, but—

Stockford: It's changed several times. It started out as Pacific Northwest Bell.

Long: Okay.

Stockford: Then there was US West, and it had to do with splitting up the phone company into regions. And then technology changed during the next time with the phone company. It changed again. I don't even know what it's called now because I don't work there anymore. But landlines, whose got a landline? It's really shrunken down. There weren't even cell telephones when I worked there. They had started with that block telephone. It was so fancy. Remember that? "I've got my cell phone." and it was this big block

that had to be plugged into your car, and you could be like, "I'm in my car in another town."

Raiskin: Can you tell us about your growth as a therapist, and what you appreciate about your work?

Stockford: Yeah. So, I did move from Looking Glass into adult and family treatment. I trained under Erika Waechter. God, I hope you interview Erika Waechter, who is eighty-six, and started an agency called The Center for Family Development. My friend Jennifer and I made a film about Erika last year, because she finally retired. But she did the early family systems training with the American Family Therapy Academy. I'm a proud member. I have been nominated, and elected, and participate in this academy. It's a little bit academic, sorry you two. It's full of academics with about 15 percent field supervisors, which is what I'm in there under. It studies the depth of systems thinking, which is incredibly important when you think about people, diversity, change, and how it works. Where I am now is— I'm actually on my way out of the agency. A quarter time, I'm wrapping up, and I have a private practice. I simply need a softer life. The agency is a very demanding life. I've been a teacher there. They call it a teaching clinic— I've taught in the teaching clinic, whatever, new therapists. It's been an honor. I am the transgender coordinator for the agency. I do work with transgender people now, primarily. It is the next iteration of my activism, really, is to help people sort that out, and realize who they are. I'm doing the work I always wanted to do.

Which is this idea of self-realization, plus freedom for people to be who they are. And I feel very, very self-activated, and good about what I do now as a different way of activism. Because now I'm sixty-one, and I have all that great wisdom you get over time.

Raiskin: What's most challenging to you about being a therapist?

Stockford: So, my website, I'm out on my website. Wait, we skipped a chapter. Can we go back?

Raiskin: Yeah, sure.

Stockford: Nineteen ninety-six, I started taking a class with the Lesbian Ballroom Dance Club, which LaRosa and Maura Scanlon, maybe one other person started as a swing club. We had a local lesbian newsletter. I was on the cover dancing. I have a picture with me. I started the Lesbian Ballroom Dance Club a few years later. We gave classes for lesbians to learn ballroom dancing, and swing dancing, and partner dancing. It was really a fun chapter. So that was about ten years of my life. I did do one competition in the San Francisco area of the National Gay and Lesbian Ballroom Dance Competition. I did one competition. I might have a picture of that, with Maureen Kelly, Mo Kelly. We were not professional competitors. We were in the first level, you're not considered a professional. You're considered an amateur. I've got some ribbons from that. But it was really fun to be in a different environment with all these athletic gay and lesbian dancers. It was another little chapter in the late '90s that was fun. It was really fun.

Long: When you did the dances in Eugene, where was that located?

Stockford: We had more than one place. Do you know Upstart Crow Studio, on—

Raiskin: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

Stockford: You do? That's where, that was one of the places we had classes.

Raiskin: It's on First?

Stockford: Yes.

Raiskin: Yeah.

Stockford: That's where it started. But then we got that— it's a place called Studio B on Eighth, now above Cosmic Pizza, and above Brenner's Furniture. But Brenner's Furniture has furniture in it now, even though they have beautiful dance floors in there. Anyway, so we had our dance club there mostly. We had community dances, at the Hilyard Center, community center where we opened it up and taught a basic lesson. We had two or three at the Hult Center downstairs, where everybody—

Raiskin: Did you ever dance the Vet's Club?

Stockford: Yes.

Raiskin: There's swing groups that meet there.

Stockford: Yes. But not as the Lesbian Ballroom Dance Club, which is that what you're asking me, though?

Raiskin: Yeah, just what different places that you—

Stockford: I danced a lot at the Vet's Club, but not really with the lesbian group because it's expensive to rent, and it's really big. So it's more of an event venue than a class venue. Yeah, I really love dancing. I still dance. I'm in this class, Laura Taylor is a local ballroom dance teacher in her sixties, married to Robert Phaigh. They've been dance teachers all their lives. And they taught the Lesbian Ballroom Dance Club, but we ran out of resources to produce that. So sometimes I have to dance with smelly, old men. I don't really like it. But no one has the skill level anymore. Mo moved to Portland. My partner has a new knee. In your sixties, all these things happen. But you asked me a reflective question. I've forgotten—

Raiskin: What's challenging to you about your therapy work? That one?

Stockford: Negotiating insurance systems. It's a boring answer, sorry.

Raiskin: It's where we are.

Stockford: Negotiating insurance systems, that's where we are in this country at this time.

Raiskin: Let me ask you another question about your transgender clientele.

Stockford: Sure.

Raiskin: And how you trained yourself, how you move from identification as a woman only spaces, that whole world, to working with transgender people.

Stockford: It's less intentional than you think. I was always about having women's or girls groups. But at some point in the early '90s, and the aughts, from the year 2000 to the year I don't know, 2010. That's when to me, the piece of history started to shift. We had made it through the AIDS crisis. It was the transgender time of coming out, just this century. I started getting in my work as a mental health, or substance abuse counselor, transgender clients. And because I was an out lesbian, they said, "Here, you should see these people." And I went, "Okay." I mean it started out almost inadvertently. And then I learned a lot about their journey, and their pain, and— wow. It wasn't a far jump for me, for who I am, to go, "Oh, here's the next piece of advocacy for me." Because there was a time when lesbians were not liking trans men. They were mean. It's an all-women's meeting, trans women are not women. What? And then those big political conversations—

Raiskin: Do you remember being in those conversations?

Stockford: Yes. And at first I was like, "Oh, well, okay." Kind of like, "What do we have to lose here?" So yeah. I'm their advocate now. I understand there are still some lesbian women who only want women who were born women biologically, together as a source of power. It's legitimate, in that women haven't had power. But let me just say that if I was born a man, and I realize that this was not a fit in some way, and I wanted to be woman-identified, hello? That's not a step up in the world, you know? Being a trans woman is the hardest thing in the world for people. You can die. They're the

number one targeted group by hate— I mean what, why would we not be linking hands? I don't get that. I'm passionate about it. You know, I would say the only hard thing about— there's one other aspect of this that's a little hard. Which has to do with where the line of being a therapist and being an activist, and then being a friend. There are boundaries when you're a therapist. And the boundaries create a somewhat in life for this extrovert, and the line is thin. So here's how I divide it right now. I go to rallies, or public events. I— trans clients who are— because I see a lot of youth who are afraid. I meet them there. I say, "You don't have to identify who I am to you. I'm your auntie. I'm your friend, whatever. Let's go." Trying to help them be, and be— realize who they are. But it is in a way, how I finally got what I wanted. I'm getting paid to do the work that matters to me, and to this world. I get to do that now. Put it on my gravestone, or whatever memorial thing I have that's not a gravestone. I helped people self-realize. I walked up to the line in any way that I could that was within— you know you have all these rules you have to follow as a therapist. You have ethics, and professional associations and all of that.

Raiskin: What's the conflict between the rules and what you want to do?

Stockford: Right. Well, right now, I don't attend organizing meetings as a— I started identifying myself as no gender, as a political statement. But it's really funny, when I was a queer, I'd write, sex, yes. Because I was a smart ass and I hated being divided into genders. I just thought that was so stupid, even in the '80s. I would always do

stuff like that. I would always mess with gender. So I think I would be a little more active, politically. It's really all the energy I have to do this for others' individual paths. That's where my focus is right now. I don't know if I answered your question.

Raiskin: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

Stockford: It can be a lonely life as a therapist. I go to an event where some great lesbian comes to speak at the EMU or perform. I will come as an out lesbian, but there will be clients, former clients, ex-lovers of clients. I'm surrounded by the history that I have a commitment to keep private and confidential. People connect, and I just go, "Uh-oh." It's all an internal story about— You can't talk about it.

Raiskin: And you hold a lot of that history.

Stockford: I do. I'd say that's a little challenging.

Raiskin: Are you retiring?

Stockford: Yes, eventually. So, I'll be eventually retiring from my agency, probably at the end of this year, maybe next year. I'm quarter time at CFD, and three-quarter time in private practice. And then I'll be in private practice until I don't want to do it anymore. Until I feel I've made the difference I want to make. Until I have the income I need to retire. And as long as my health holds. Knock on wood. That's an old wives' tale, probably some of you never heard of. But at any rate, just go part-time in my seventies, so I think that we need ten years here.

Raiskin: What are your thoughts about aging as a lesbian?

Stockford: I always wished we would make lesbian— I always had this fantasy that we'd have little cabins in this circle, and we'd all each have our cabin, and we'd take care of each other. That was just a fantasy, because lesbians are so really divergent in so many ways. And finding eight people kind of like me, who kind of want to follow the same values, and have enough money, no. Not happening in my lifetime. God, I hope it happens for people in the future. For women in the future, that they can create the retirement life they want. I have interviewed at those lesbian retirement communities. There's one in Florida. I went and interviewed with Gina what's her name? That's hilarious. All the old lesbian couples buy mobile homes, or fancy little homes in this gated community in Florida, and they have potlucks and take care of each other, and it's very sweet. And it's very middle-class. And it's very white. Can I just say those things?

Raiskin: And why do you think that is?

Stockford: And it's very lesbian-only. I didn't see any trans women, or hear about trans women there. So, it's a little stiff for me.

Raiskin: Have you been to the one in New Mexico?

Stockford: No. I've only seen it on the Internet. Have you?

Raiskin: No. I think it's a lot of former military women.

Stockford: Oh. I think it would be fun to visit. Military women, what's not to love?

Raiskin: There is a couple I know from here, who's moved there. Not military.

Stockford: And you know, and it brings me to another identity. I have identified as a femme much of my life. I was androgynous in the beginning, and then I realized, "I'm really a femme here, people." My heart pounds for a tall, butch woman, still. Or trans man. It's very interesting how that attraction changed for me, how I think trans men are so wonderful, and beautiful in their own way.

Raiskin: There's been some regret, for loss of butches.

Stockford: No kidding.

Raiskin: I'm wondering what you think about that.

Stockford: Sad loss. Sad loss. Because I think people who were butches in the past are more trans men-like now. I think that there's crossover there.

Raiskin: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

Stockford: I don't really like facial hair though. That's where I draw the line [laughs].

Long: Can I ask a follow-up question about your time at—

Stockford: Please, please do, because I'm distracted.

Long: When you were living at Elkay Island.

Stockford: Oh yeah.

Long: Can you tell us a little bit more about the living relationships. Were there any kind of conflicts with the group of people who lived there? Was there coming and going, people live for a while and then leave, and then some people come?

Stockford: Yep.

Long: And then how did you manage finances? You mentioned the two women who owned some property, but how did you, did other people pay rent? What was all that like?

Stockford: My rent was $60. Because I worked part time and I had a whole house. However, my second bedroom was up-for-grabs, to the collective, which wasn't an official collective. But it was the time of the collectives in Eugene. I'm sure you must be interviewing Ladybug Collective, and the Hoedad tree planting group, and the coffee houses. I never talked about Mother Kali's, oh my God. Well—

Raiskin: No, do.

Long: But first tell us about the details of living at Elkay Island.

Stockford: Uh-oh. I'm off the tape [moves chair]. Okay. It started with low rent. Oh, you adjusted to my wiggle.

Long: Yeah, it's okay.

Stockford: So, it started with them really offering me sanctuary with low rent. I just read a letter from Betsy, who had moved to Berkeley, who said, "What is wrong with you that you can't pay the rent on time?" I just read that this morning, and I was like, "Oh yeah." And I'd start hustling up what I needed to send Betsy. It was tight financially. But it was kind in its own way, because it was collective. We fed each other. I made brown rice and tofu, do you want to come over? Typical meal. Because it was so inexpensive and well there's a tofu collective in Eugene, so tofu's really cheap if you just go get it in bulk, etc. etc. You would go to the collective Growers Market and get your vegetables, and so we lived not always as a group, but often. We would share the refrigerator. We would share the food we made. We would share the No Name Beer. That was really funny. There was a refrigerator in the garage we all used. We would just buy a case of No Name Beer, and whoever came in could have a beer. And then we'd pitch fires in the evening. It was a good life. I can't tell you, because we sang in the sauna. We got sweaty and we sang. It was so amazing. I don't know how to accurately portray how important this coming out place was.

Raiskin: Did you want to read your coming out letter?

Stockford: It's not a letter. It's just a journal entry. Is this time?

Raiskin: Yeah.

Stockford: I need a moment to find it.

Raiskin: Okay.

Long: That's all right. Go ahead.

Stockford: Okay, I'm just not going to be doing anything.

Long: That's okay.

Stockford: Can I stand up in my chair to look at this?

Long: Sure.

Raiskin: Sure.

Stockford: Oh good, my back's killing me. Okay. April 24, 1984. I'm going to read from my journal. [Reads:] "It's a Tuesday. Trying to shake a sore throat. I made a fire with the last of the wood. I don't know what I'll do for wood until I can get some. I never actually bought wood before, I've always scavenged it. So I made whole wheat noodles, and tofu, and cheese for dinner, and a nice fire. I found out I'm starting a job Monday. Today, I move out. On Thursday I am in [inaudible 01:27:14] [sorry, I don't know what that means.] There is, I relish in the lovely fragrance of the smell of Sky's hair, which smells like the fire. For about thirty minutes, the beautiful women in the Applegate Valley who tell me I should start my own business. The 29th, Sunday. There's a lot happening. Reading a book on the laws of money. My fear of being alone in the house. But I got ready for Dawn's concert. [Oh, this is right where I come out.] I went to the Saturday Market. It was a beautiful evening outside. A bunch of my favorite people were there. Friends, Reba,

Leslie, Kim. [I hope he's okay.] Emily, Thyme and Betsy, Dawn and Sky. I drank a little, smoked a little, jammed a little. Sky plays the flute. And danced until late. Sky and I made love until 5:15AM. She pooped out first. Awoke Sunday morning and made love. What a high we are on. Washed and dressed for breakfast at the old Keystone Café on 5th."

Raiskin: Thank you.

Stockford: Yeah, thank you very much.

Raiskin: This was great.

Stockford: Thank you.

[END OF INTERVIEW]