

WOMEN VETERANS HISTORICAL PROJECT
ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION

INTERVIEWEE: Jo Anne Kilday

INTERVIEWER: Therese Strohmer

DATE: May 7, 2011

[Begin Interview]

TS: This is Therese Strohmer. It is May 7, 2011. I am in Jacksonville, North Carolina here with Jo Anne Kilday. This is an oral history interview for the Women Veterans Historical Project at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Jo Anne how would you like your name to read on your collection?

JK: Jo Anne Kilday.

TS: Okay. Jo Anne, thank you so much for coming today. Why don't you start out by telling me when and where you were born.

JK: I was born in Barberton, Ohio 18 November 1936.

TS: Do you have any brothers or sisters?

JK: I have three brothers.

TS: You have three brothers?

JK: Two older and one younger.

TS: So you're kind of in the middle there?

JK: Yes.

TS: Now, what did your folks do for a living?

JK: My mother was a stay at home mother and my father had a small business; grocery store combination garage service station.

TS: Did you live close to that, his business?

JK: Yes we did.

TS: Did you? And in Barberton what kind of—was it a small town or?

JK: Well, now I was born in Barberton but I came to Greenville, Tennessee when I was three years old.

TS: Okay, so is that where you spend most of your formative years growing up?

JK: Yes.

TS: So what was that like there?

JK: It was a small town—I called it a little village—there were only about three hundred people in the place.

TS: That would probably be a village. Did you have to do any work in your dad's store or anything? You or your brothers?

JK: Not really. At that time my brother was working—both, one was in the service and one had just had gotten out of the service and my little brother was too little to work in the store.

TS: Yes. So when you grow up—you would have been a very small girl during World War II. Do you remember anything about it?

JK: I do because my oldest brother was in the Navy.

TS: He was?

JK: And I can remember Mother sending me telling me to go to the post office and please come right back because she was waiting for letter mail from my brother. And I would, invariably I would end up stopping to play with the only other girl in the village. And I would get in trouble every day.

TS: So that was your job to go get the mail every day?

JK: Yes.

TS: So you just kind of did the wandering back home?

JK: Yes and at that time you could do those things.

TS: Yes. So you didn't have a lot of kids to play with or no girls?

JK: Very few girls.

TS: Okay.

JK: But mostly were boys.

TS: Okay. Do you remember anything else about the war?

JK: Blackouts. I can remember that my mother and dad would put blinds or put the blinds down so—at night when we were having blackouts.

TS: Did you listen to the radio, like the President Roosevelt? Do you remember those talks that he did at all?

JK: I don't remember that.

TS: Yes. You would have been very little.

JK: Yes.

TS: Anything about rationing or—

JK: I vaguely remember that because of the margarine. You didn't get butter and you had this block of lard and you put coloring in it and mix it up to make it look like butter. I remember that.

TS: Is that right? That's interesting. So did you—were you worried for your brother that was in the navy?

JK: No. I didn't—

TS: Didn't really have an understanding?

JK: No.

TS: So what about—in this kind of town, was it like a farming community?

JK: It was a farming community. Yes.

TS: Okay. So did you—when you went to school, did you walk to school?

JK: I walked to school, it was very close to where I lived and it was one big brick building. I went starting the first grade and graduated from high school in this same—

TS: In the same building?

JK: In the same building with most of the same teachers, really, that was there when I started.

TS: Is that right? You don't hear that too much.

JK: Not anymore.

TS: No. No, that's true, not anymore. So the town was only about three hundred people so how many were in your class.

JK: Well, in my graduating class, for my school we probaly had about forty because they would bus the children in from the farms in the community.

TS: Okay. Did you like school?

JK: I did. I wasn't—I liked recess. As I got on up in high school I enjoyed sports. I played basketball and softball. And I lived for basketball.

TS: Well, tell me about how you played basketball then because I know the game was a little different.

JK: Yes, half court, and you had one dribble then. But by the time I graduated from college though we had gotten up to three dribbles.

TS: Is that right? Still half court though?

JK: Still half court.

TS: What was your position? What did you play?

JK: I was a forward.

TS: So you got to dribble?

JK: I got to dribble and I got to shoot.

TS: Did you play a lot of basketball then?

JK: I did, yes. That was about all that we had in school. You know, we didn't have all this other stuff that they have now; never heard of soccer.

TS: Right, me neither.

JK: Or field hockey or anything like that.

TS: And how about softball? Did you play organized softball?

JK: We played organized softball. Then through the church leagues we had softball, organized softball, with the various churches.

TS: Was that just all women or were they co-ed?

JK: No, it was all women.

TS: All women.

JK: But my father was an avid sports fan and so was[sic] my brothers. They worked with me on both softball and basketball.

TS: Oh, did they?

JK: Yes. They—I guess I grew up a tomboy.

TS: Yes.

JK: I had more male influences around than female influences.

TS: Well, with three brothers and no sisters. It's not hard to notice. What about softball, did that game change at all over the years?

JK: Oh yes. You know, it was definitely a slow pitch type game and it's much faster now. Gosh, those ladies now can hit the ball twice as force as I could ever hit the ball.

TS: The bats are different too.

JK: That's true.

TS: You're not just looking at a stick; pretty much that's what you had. Well, what position did you like to play?

JK: I usually played short stop.

TS: Yes. So you're a pretty good soft ball player if you're playing short stop.

JK: I thought I was good. [both laugh] My father said I had the best arm of any female he had ever seen, so I guess that was—

TS: Well that's a nice compliment. Coming from a family of three boys I'm sure that you had to have a really good arm. When you're in school did you have a favorite subject?

JK: History.

TS: Oh, you liked history.

JK: Yes.

TS: What did you like about it?

JK: I just enjoyed reading about the past and I just was fascinated with the battles. And ancient history, I was fascinated with the gods and goddesses, you know, all that.

TS: Did you have a teacher that was interesting to learn about history and things?

JK: Yes, in fact I had the same history teacher in high school. All three years I had to take history in high school and he made it so interesting that you felt like you were right there. Whatever that was or listening to political rallies, you know, I felt like “oh golly, I’m right there”.

TS: Well that’s neat. Did you have any—growing up in the post war, early post war years really and during the war too but later—did you have any sense of, like, you know how we had the conflict between the Soviets and the United States and worries about nuclear wars and things like that.

JK: Yes. I do remember a little about the nuclear because in school we would practice getting under the desk. But I never really worried about it. It really didn’t scare me. You know, my parents never talked about it or anything but I was aware of it. I became more aware of it as I got older and in college, but here again, I didn’t sit around and worry about it.

TS: Right. What did you have—did you think—President Roosevelt would have been president for a while with you growing up, did you have any feelings about him one way or the other?

JK: No. I remember when he died because I walked into the room and my mother was crying. And I don’t think at that point I had ever seen my mother cry. So I wanted to know why. She tried to explain this to me but I don’t know him. It really didn’t mean anything.

TS: It didn’t have a connection.

JK: No.

TS: What about at the end of the war when we dropped the bombs on Japan? Do you have a memory of that at all?

JK: I do, but here again I didn’t think—

TS: You’re like nine years old—not even, you’re like seven.

JK: I was, yes, seven yes. I’ve—it was accepted and that really—and I think in the community with the people around me, not just my family, they thought it was definitely

the right thing to do. And it would save so many lives in the long run. And I didn't really worry about that so, you know.

TS: You're concerned with your little world and what are you doing in that world?

JK: Oh, playing, you know. Riding a bicycle, playing cowboys and Indians, climbing trees, and you know, things of that nature.

TS: Did you have any expectations for like what your future held as you're a girl growing up in Tennessee?

JK: I knew that I—that there was more in life. I knew that than just the little community that we lived in. I think a lot of that was because of my mother and because of my aunts that had traveled and went to other places to work during the war and things. And I just knew that there was other things I wanted to do than be a school teacher or nurse which was the only two occupations really that—oh, I guess a secretary. And I knew that nursing and secretarial work was not for me. I knew that at a very young age.

TS: Were any of your aunts or anybody that you knew besides your brother, in the military?

JK: No.

TS: Was your dad, your father, was he in?

JK: No.

TS: But some of your aunts had worked in the war factories and things like that.

JK: Yes.

TS: So you saw that. Was that sort of like—seems like an adventure to you of some type?

JK: Yes, certainly. It was a lot more adventurous than staying and preparing meals and washing and ironing clothes and things like that, yes.

TS: So what did you do after you graduated from high school? That would have been in—

JK: Fifty-five.

TS: Fifty-five, okay.

JK: I went to college and I lived at the college even though I was about 20 miles from home.

TS: So it wasn't too far?

JK: No, and I went, you know, I could go home whenever I wanted to.

TS: What was the name of the college you went to?

JK: Tusculum College. It was a Presbyterian school with a liberal arts college. And I—one of the other reasons that I'd stayed at the college was my mother and father felt that, especially my mother, that there was more to education than books. And that the socializing would be also very important and I had a scholarship that made it easier to live in the dorm. First year I waited tables and then the second year I had an assistant scholarship where I worked with the physical education classes.

TS: What was your major in?

JK: In college, history and education. I got a teaching certificate. Minor was physical education.

TS: And how did you like college?

JK: I liked it. In fact I really enjoyed it very much. Probably more than I should have.

TS: Well, why is that? Tell me more about that.

JK: My first year my grades were fantastic and then they just kind of went down, but they stayed enough to keep my scholarships.

TS: So you started having a little bit more extracurricular activity besides the studying and going to classes.

JK: I'm afraid so.

TS: Tell me about that because you're growing up in the 1950s and so you're getting different kind of music coming out—especially in Tennessee. What kind of things did you do for fun?

JK: Really, going to the drive-in movie, loading your car full, and we had even put people in the trunk to sneak them in. You know, because we were limited on the amount of money. Roller skating and church. That was basically it.

TS: Did you have dances or anything?

JK: Square dancing, did that. A lot of that. I did not like country music particularly and don't ask me why. I just never did.

TS: You grew up in—you were born in Ohio I think that got in your blood.

JK: And then in college it was the normal thing: dances, here again, going to the drive-in movies and roller skating. And when I went to college, we as freshmen, you only could

go out on Friday and Saturday night but you had to be back in at ten o'clock. And then as you—my junior year—sophomore year and junior year you got to add another, like, Wednesday night but you had to be back by ten. And you couldn't wear slacks or shorts unless you were participating in a [unclear].

TS: And this is a church college too right?

JK: Yes. Yes. That was part of it. You couldn't have a car. The girl, women, could not have a car until their senior year.

TS: Was it a co-ed college?

JK: Yes, it was.

TS: Okay. And so did—let's see—what movie, when you went to the movies, was there like a movie star that you cared about?

JK: Doris Day, but I think that was probably in high school more I think the Doris Day. And I don't remember. I know when I was a little kid I like Roy Rogers. One of the things in college we had no African Americans in our high school or in grade school even though we had a community that was close by. My mother had a very good friend and I played with her children so I, you know, didn't quite understand about not having blacks in schools. But you know, it just, that's the way it was. But when I went to college we had two African Americans in college.

TS: Women or men?

JK: One was a man and one was a woman.

TS: Okay.

JK: I think that helped me grow and helped my education immensely because I just never had any problems with any of that stuff.

TS: Yes.

JK: I didn't have time for that.

TS: Yes. You would have been growing up in Tennessee during the Civil Rights Movement.

JK: Yes.

TS: Did you see any of that? Were there any sit-ins or anything going on where you were? Well, sit-ins were more in the sixties but—

JK: Yes.

TS: Marches or boycotts?

JK: I don't recall any. That didn't really happen until after I got into the Marine Corps.

TS: Yes.

JK: And I know one time I went back from, I don't know Quantico or Camp Lejeune back to visit home, to visit. And I always went to see these friends of mine. They were talking to me about African Americans and they were talking to me about should they integrate this school or shouldn't they. They had their own school and this of course was the adults that were talking to me and I encouraged them to integrate. If you know—do it. Go in to the train station and use any bathroom they wanted to use.

TS: So in Tennessee was it segregated for that—for like—like you say at a train station or at the water fountain and things like that?

JK: Yes.

TS: You had that. So you kind of grew up with that though right?

JK: Yes.

TS: It wasn't like you went there and oh, what is this, because that's what you knew right?

JK: Yes.

[comments about chair redacted]

TS: So you had a nice time in college. Now what about Elvis or that kind of music?

JK: You know I never liked Elvis.

TS: No?

JK: But now I listen to his music but no. And you know I can't remember—I mean we always had music playing, but you know, and every room had a stereo, I mean, not a stereo but a record player going but I don't—if I hear this music now I think that was popular when I was in college.

TS: Right, but just off the top of your head you're not—that's all right. What about—Eisenhower would have been president then; you have any thoughts about him?

JK: I remember about the—the thing I remember about Eisenhower, and I think we may have discussed this in college or in high school, I’m not sure, was about the interstate, the road.

TS: The highway system?

JK: Yes. And I—that’s—I always associate that with him.

TS: Yes.

JK: And I remember him talking which didn’t mean anything at that particular time but in later years it really stuck with me and that was the military civilian complex [sic, military industrial complex] that he warned about.

TS: Yes, that’s true. With the highway system, did that change your hometown at all? Because a lot of little towns, it did change because of where the highway went.

JK: I had already left that area and in the Marine Corps. In fact, when I came back from Naples, Italy and whenever that was, I had trouble—I knew where my house was but I had trouble getting to it because the interstate had been completed in that area, that section while I was gone. And it I said, “Oh my goodness, my house is over there. How do I get there?”

TS: So it kind of looped around at somewhat. Yes. That’s what I’ve—I’ve heard some people say that about—it changed how you drive and things.

JK: Yes.

TS: And now when you finish college, what did you—what was your plans?

JK: Well, I was going to teach and I didn’t really enjoy my practice teaching. And I was dating a young man that was in this PLC [Platoon Leaders Course] program that the Marine Corps had. We were in what we called the sub, or the student union, and he was sitting—we were sitting there and his officer, selection officer, from the Marine Corps came in to talk to him and he started talking to me. And he says you can go this summer for your six weeks of training and you’ll make around three hundred dollars. And I thought three hundred dollars! I said, boy, let me—you know—think about this because in the small community there wasn’t any jobs, you know really. Three hundred dollars was a lot of money to me and at that time. So I had a little trouble getting my parents, they had to sign and they were not too happy about that.

TS: Was it a commitment to the Marine Corps then or was it like a train in college you get the test of it and if you like it—was it that sort of thing?

JK: Yes. There was no commitment. I could go for those six weeks come home and forget totally about them.

TS: But your parents were still a little skeptical?

JK: Yes.

TS: Both of them?

JK: Both of them. But my oldest brother said “Oh let her go sign.”

TS: Was he the one that was in the navy?

JK: Yes. But he also said that she’ll never really last. She won’t like that type of life, you know, there’s too many rules and regulations.

TS: Is that what he said?

JK: Yes, and I heard this. So I was bound and determined I would finish that six weeks and had no intentions of going back at the end of my junior year. But here again, I thought “Oh we get more liberty and I get to go to D.C. a couple of times.” I thought I was going to get to see this young man I was dating that first year, well I—needless to say I didn’t. The second year I think I was able to see him one afternoon with about five hundred other people. But it was a chance for that money and I could tolerate cleaning the bathroom heads and things. That didn’t bother me.

TS: So what other kinds of things did you do in the summer training?

JK: We had classrooms. Much—A lot of hours in the classrooms learning history, military justice—we drilled a lot.

TS: Were you in a uniform?

JK: We were in what—at that time they were utilities. They were all solid green and we did not get our, you know, we didn’t get uniforms. We just had—well, that was a uniform but it was, you know, you wore that during the day. You had inspections every morning. You had details, like cleaning the head bathroom, you know, squad bays, quite different now.

TS: Yes. Well, what did you think of it all, though, at the time? Was it what, you know, was it more than what you wanted to do?

JK: No, it really wasn’t. It wasn’t any more than kind of what my brother told me it was going to be or what the officer selection officer had told me. And I kind of liked meeting different people and I was learning different things. It was a little exciting to me really. And then I—when I graduated from college, I decided I’d done my practice teaching and I decided that maybe I needed to grow up a little bit more before I went into the classroom.

TS: What was it that you didn’t like about this teaching?

JK: Well, my practice teaching, well it was—they were all seniors and primarily boys.

TS: Like high school seniors?

JK: Yes.

TS: Okay.

JK: I had a little trouble controlling the class to be honest.

TS: So you're like three or four years older than them?

JK: Yes. I thought "I don't think I really want this". And it just, you know, I liked the look of the uniform and the salary. I was going to make as a second lieutenant more than I'd be making teaching school. The commitment was for three years and I thought, "I can do that standing on my head." And that maybe I'd see something different. And then I would get out and I'd teach. I had no intentions of beyond that commitment.

TS: So originally it was just you're sitting with your boyfriend and the recruiter comes in and it entices you. Had you thought in any way, shape, or form, anything about the military before that?

JK: Well.

TS: I mean he would have been doing something in the military, your boyfriend, right?

JK: I didn't know that much about women being in the military. I did know one person that had gone into the air force from high school.

TS: A woman?

JK: Yes. And I thought, oh, that was neat. Well I think it was after—yes it was right after high school. And I thought, oh, that was neat. But I never thought about myself at that time. And I knew about the military because of my two older brothers that had—one still in the air force and one being in the navy. So I was fairly familiar and I liked the looks of the uniform.

TS: Of the Marine Corps uniform?

JK: Of the Marine Corps uniform.

TS: Yes. What did you think of the hat? I heard the hat was—

JK: That's—I really liked the hat.

TS: That seems to be a draw.

JK: Because it was different you know. And I think, basically, I liked structure even though I would fight against it when growing up. But I think basically I liked it.

TS: So it was something you were comfortable with?

JK: Yes.

TS: Knowing the rules?

JK: Yes.

TS: Whether you were going to follow them or not was another thing but—

JK: But I wanted to know what the rules were.

TS: Right. So at what point then did you decide to join the Marine Corps?

JK: When I made the decision to accept my commission was based on the fact that I just didn't think I was ready to go out and I needed some time to grow up.

TS: With the teaching?

JK: Yes.

TS: Now how did your parents feel?

JK: By this time I think they had accepted it.

TS: Yes. Because you had been doing it in the summer? Were your friends surprised at all? I didn't mean to interrupt you.

JK: Oh no, that's okay. Some of them were but some of them knew before I knew that I was going to do it I think.

TS: Well, this was about four years after, well, when you originally started was that—

JK: Fifty-five.

TS: Fifty-five. So after '55 is when you graduated; '57. So the Korean War had been—well, I guess about six years earlier.

JK: Yes, it had been.

TS: Had you thought about that at all? That there might be a possibility of war anywhere?

JK: Oh no. I'm sure I didn't, you know. I saw more the doing something different.

TS: So doing something different and then getting a regular paycheck—

JK: Paycheck.

TS: —that was going to get you more than your teaching job was going to pay you.

JK: But the big thing was really, doing something different. I just didn't want to do what every other female was doing or expected to do I think.

TS: So tell me then about—so you had before you actually went to Quantico for your leadership class?

JK: Yes.

TS: Well, you went there a couple times. Now, did you then have an officer training, or were you—

JK: Yes, after I was commissioned at college graduation—at graduation, then I went back to Quantico and we had a six week basic school, what they call. There we got into more drilling but this we were leading and teaching and more into the leadership type. We had an awful lot on leadership. And we had problem solving and things of that nature.

TS: To show you how to be an officer sort of thing?

JK: Yes.

TS: And what did you think, how did you like it?

JK: I liked it but I was looking forward to getting out of training. I mean, you know, I was ready to go on and be doing something. And I did like the training and I really liked the leadership and I liked the problem solving.

TS: Was there anything physically hard for you?

JK: Not—well yes it was hard but I look back and think, “Goodness, these girls now, what they do now is unbelievable.” But at that time because of how women grew up we didn't have all this physical fitness. Even though I was in sports you still didn't have all this stuff that they have not. But it was hard for us, for all the women I think because we were not really used to the drilling. We were not used to getting up at o'dark hundred—5 o'clock in the morning. Or getting up in the middle of the night doing your duty [?], doing your tours. You'd have assignments and you might have to get up and stand a watch for two hours, three hours. So all this, yes, it was physical but it was not something that you couldn't do.

TS: But it was exhausting too.

JK: Yes.

TS: Because of the time you put in. What about—at what point did you learn what your job as an officer was going to be? Your MOS [military occupational specialty].

JK: At the end of basic school, when we got our orders to where we were going to be going we also found out what our MOS was going to be.

TS: And so what was your MOS?

JK: It was 0130, which meant that I was a—either could be an executive officer or a company commander. So I was very pleased with that because I thought I was good with people, plus I have an ego. Wow, executive officer or company command—

TS: It sounds pretty good doesn't it?

JK: It does but you realize also the responsibility that goes along with that. Regardless of what your MOS would have been, officers have responsibilities. And if they don't live up to those responsibilities—just like staff NCOs [non-commissioned officers]. NCOs, they have responsibilities and if they don't live up to those responsibilities it's not only the individual getting hurt but you can hurt so many people. 'Cause you do have some power there that can affect people's lives.

TS: Is this like reflecting on it now or were you aware of that at the time?

JK: Well, I think it—I was fortunate I went in as an XO down here—executive officer, here at Camp Lejeune. We had a—then you had women companies, you know, and they all lived together. You had centuries walking around, so male marines could create any problem. [chuckles] I had a very good CO [Commanding Officer] and she guided me very carefully. And she just really knew how to get the best out of me and she did. This was one of the first things that she really taught me, was about, you know, you have a great deal of responsibility here and it's not all fun and games.

TS: So what were you doing at Camp Lejeune? What was it that you did? That's your first assignment?

JK: Yes. That's where I was the executive officer of the Woman Marine Company. And I did that for about a year and then I became an education officer for the base.

TS: So would you say the woman that was here that helped you kind of along, was she like a mentor?

JK: Well, she was my boss, but I would—yes. Her job too was to train and guide those under her and she did it quite well. She took lots of time with, I call them, her people, which sometimes I don't like that term but—

TS: But the people under her that she had—

JK: Yes. She would, she never brushed you off; she always had time to listen to any problems or you know, that you might have or anything, and I think that just rubbed off on me.

TS: Now as an XO you're like 21, 22?

JK: Twenty-two.

TS: Pretty young. And the women that are under you that are about—are they all enlisted or they some—?

JK: They're all—they would be all enlisted.

TS: All enlisted.

JK: Staff NCOs.

TS: So then did you have to do any disciplinary type things?

JK: Yes. I did.

TS: What kind of things did you run across?

JK: Well, people, you know, if they came in late, if they came in and maybe had too much to drink, or their uniforms for inspections—I held all the inspection, personnel inspections, if their uniform wasn't pressed right or whatever. Same way in the barracks then, there would be different type of discipline or things—most the time they would volunteer to do things.

TS: Oh, is that right?

JK: Yes.

TS: Did you ever have anything like—because at this time women couldn't be pregnant. Did anything like that ever crop up?

JK: Oh yes. Unfortunately it did and not as many as people would like—at that time wanted to point out. You know, it was because we can't have women because all they do is get pregnant. Yes, and you would have to write their parents a letter.

TS: Oh really?

- JK: If they were under 21 and that was very hard. You would counsel the women and all. That made me grow up pretty fast as a matter of fact.
- TS: How would you write that letter; what would it say? Oh my goodness, I'm thinking.
- JK: But you tried to convince the individual to tell their parents because you'd show them a sample of a letter that you know, I'm going to have to send this home. The CO usually would make me do that 'cause she thought it was a good teaching, and it was.
- TS: And so what—Did you enjoy this then, being in this position?
- JK: Yes, I did, and partly because of ego. But you also—I got a great deal of satisfaction out of this because I felt like I was helping young ladies. I really was. And I just—and I also had some involvement with men that—and certainly as I progressed up the line in rank I felt like I was there to help mold them and guide them. And yes you get a lot of satisfaction out of this. But when they mess up it hurts too. But you can't show that, you know, you have to—
- TS: Right, right. You have to, like, stay—
- JK: But the best, I used to say, the best job in the Marine Corps, and men will say this all the time, is a battalion command—a company commander or a battalion commander because it's very rewarding and it's not easy. Sometimes you see people that have so much potential and you try so hard to get them to see this and they don't. You just—and there's nothing you can do about it. That's when it's disappointing.
- TS: That's something we talked about with Ginger yesterday, whereas in the military a lot of times you, even you, yourself might have been given something—assigned to do something that you're like "I'm not sure if I can do this," but the person that's giving you that assignment sees that potential or that possibility in you. Especially you're given a lot of responsibility at a younger age than maybe you would be in the civilian world. Did you see that?
- JK: Oh yes. Yes. My first assignment as executive officer that was a—really a large responsibility. Had I been prepared for that? No, not really. The Marine Corps tried, you know, in my leadership classes that I got but you really got more on the job training than what you get or really was ready to take over. And part of was because of the age. Twenty-one, 22 years old. Just like the enlisted people. They're 18, 19, 20, 21 years old they're out there squad leaders and various things. You kind of grow up fast I guess. But it's good for you. It's good for you.
- TS: That's interesting too whereas you said you weren't so sure about the high school teaching, controlling the classroom. After being an XO would you have had any problem in that classroom?

JK: No. I think I would have—oh it would have been so much easier.

[recording paused]

TS: Okay, since you had 23 years in the Marine Corps, we can't go through every single assignment you had so I wanted to see, we have some questions that we ask about—well for example what was your favorite assignment? What did you really enjoy the most? Or it can be more than one, maybe a couple?

JK: A company commander and training candidates and lieutenants at Quantico. The most demanding and enjoyable was my assignment in Naples, Italy with the Allied Forces Southern Europe which was a NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization] command.

TS: But that came near the end of your career. So we'll wait on that one for a little bit.

JK: Okay.

TS: So when you went to—you did the Quantico—that was kind of in the middle?

JK: Yes.

TS: In the middle of your career. So you did—in the beginning you were at Camp Lejeune then Parris Island. Did you enjoy that?

JK: I did. I was a series commander which means I kind of watched over the drill instructors and I had to interview all the recruits and things like—and hand out discipline if it was serious enough to get to me but not serious enough to get to the company commander.

TS: [chuckles] Well, what was most rewarding about this position then, at Parris Island?

JK: The same thing of seeing young ladies that have so much potential and you're able to bring this out or put them on the right—point them in the right direction. In recruit training at that time they had to have a high school education for a female to come in. The men didn't but the women did. Some of them—and I came from a small village town so I know what that's like. And some of these young ladies that were coming in that I saw in some ways they were very naïve. But they saw that this was an opportunity for them to be able to develop—help develop them and give them this opportunity was very rewarding. We did have to drop—you do—everybody that comes to recruit training is not going to pass. But to those that for various reasons had to be discharged, to be able to give them something to take with them and not make them feel like they were losers was also very rewarding.

TS: So letting them down easily and with something they could take back with them too.

JK: Yes.

TS: Well, that's an interesting way to look at that too. Did you ever—since, I mean, you retired as a colonel in 1981 and we had talked about how you were one of maybe three colonels at that time.

JK: At that time.

TS: Is that in the Marine Corps?

JK: In the Marine Corps, yes.

TS: Female colonels?

JK: Yes. Female. And I happened to be the senior one at the time. So that made me feel good too.

TS: When you look back and you think about all these young women that you were helping guide along the way, did you act as a mentor to any of them? Were they some of them that just stuck out, you thought, really I need to keep an eye on her and make sure she—

JK: Oh yes.

TS: How did you go about doing that? I've been curious about how that works.

JK: Well, and sometimes I didn't even realize that maybe I was until after the fact. And I have two come to mind right now and they happen to be retired as colonels. But I can also think of a warrant officer that—and you just—one of the things that when you see this potential you just require and keep pushing them. You know, you probably are more demanding on those individuals. Sometimes they didn't like it but that's too bad. Unless they grew—they also as they got older they realized what was being done and I think most of them appreciated it. At least most of the comments I've gotten back after I retired.

TS: They didn't want to mess with you while you while you still had those [unclear]. What about—what was it that you saw, I guess, in them? What was it that, you know, that spark that you thought this person is different from this group over here; that set them apart?

JK: It's hard for me to verbally answer that because sometimes, and I know this is not very ladylike, but it's just a gut feeling and I can't put that into words. But you just—there's a feeling there. That question I have been asked quite a few times and I've never really been able to answer it.

TS: Have you been asked that a lot? Is that right?

JK: What did you see in that person? Maybe sometime I should sit down and try to reflect back and figure that out, but.

TS: It's just when you're thinking about picking out leaders, how do you pick them out? Is that something innate or is it like a quality you see in the person or is it a potential?

JK: It's probably all—many things. But that's the same thing if whether you're in the military or whether you're in civilian life in business. You look at your people, you see what they're—where their talents lie and you try to put them in the right spot. Sometimes you make a mistake. I mean, you know, we're not all perfect, you know.

TS: At what point then did you think “Gee this is not too bad. I might stay more than three years.”?

JK: I was a major at the time I thought about that.

TS: Is that right? How long is that, ten years or so?

JK: I would have been in ten years and I thought “Oh my goodness, I've been in ten years.” [snaps fingers]

TS: Does it go like that?

JK: Yes, it did. It really did. Now I'm not going to say I enjoyed all the jobs. Or I'm not going to say I enjoyed all my bosses but I knew that one of those was going to change sometime in the next—where in civilian life you didn't know that. You're there. But I started looking and you know, I even did up résumés and I started looking at salaries and responsibilities and I decided, my goodness, I'm going to have to start all over. And I like what I'm doing, why would I get out? So I said well I'll stay.

TS: How did it compare to like what your friends back home were doing?

JK: My life was so much more exciting than theirs in my opinion. The people that I went to college with even they was[sic] always very interested in what I was doing and everything. I had down time too and I found time that may be my personal life had suffered because of my job because I had—it required more hours. You didn't really—if you're going to do a good job, and especially if you're working with people, you have to put them first and so my personal life suffered but I never let anybody know that.

TS: But what about the point of, in this time that you're in that you can't really have a family.

JK: No, that was— if you were pregnant you were discharged. In fact you couldn't even marry someone that had dependents that was[sic] under eighteen. And you had, you know—I made the decision that I wanted a career and I'm not sorry about that decision at all. Because I look back and I'm very pleased with not only what I've accomplished but what I think I've helped other people.

TS: But did you realize at the time that was a sacrifice you were going to have to make? I guess is my direction question on that.

JK: I think I did at somewhere along—about the time—

TS: That major point—ten year period?

JK: Major thing—yes. That's about when I started really looking at, you know, hey I'm not twenty-one anymore and all that but I had no regrets. No regrets. There's been so many changes now though. Oh it's just amazing, you know, what now the women can do.

TS: What do you think about those changes?

JK: I think most—I think primarily they've been for the best. I definitely do. I strongly believe that if women can do the job they should be given that opportunity. And we had some pretty ridiculous—I can remember one of the things, and I don't remember—when, I think when I was at Parris Island, a young lady had a tattoo somewhere, I can't even remember now where, and she was kicked out of the military.

TS: Is this like early sixties?

JK: Yes. They discharged her.

TS: Because she had a tattoo?

JK: Because she had a tattoo. Now, I don't like tattoos. I don't like tattoos, but I said “Wait a minute, the men have tattoos, now why can't a woman have a tattoo?” And from then on I felt one of my purposes was to fight for equality.

TS: How'd you do that then? How could you do that, I mean, because there's like—there's certain laws; women weren't supposed to be in certain fields and there's all these rules. How did you fight for equality?

JK: Those rules I couldn't. That took people up the line to do that but even when I was a colonel at Cherry Point in 1979 they were wanting to, they being the Marine Corps, wanted to send couple of women down in this particular MOS [military occupational specialty] and I was called in by the general to see what I thought. And I said “Why not?” And he said, “Well, the NCOIC [Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge] down there said that they didn't have the head facilities, or the bathroom facility.” And I said “Well if I'm not mistaken they have three heads down there; one says officers, one says staff NCOs, and one says enlisted,” you know, and I said. But I was very nice and he said “Well, let me think about it.” Well, I waited two days and I requested to see the general and I wanted to know if he thought about it. He said, “Well, you've made your point.” You know, that's a very small example but that—and that was in 1979 or '80.

TS: Right in that period of time.

JK: When I was at FMF LANT [Fleet Marine Force Atlantic] our general, who later became Commandant of the Marine Corps, decided that the headquarters of FMF LANT would go to the field and you know, pack up and everybody goes to the field like we're going to war. But the women wasn't[sic] going. And I'm the adjutant.

TS: And this is in—

JK: Seventy-seven, '77, '78.

TS: Okay in Norfolk, [Virginia].

JK: And I requested to see the CG [commanding general]—well, I went through the Chief of Staff and talked to the Chief of Staff first and he took me in—because I said “Sir, the morale is going to be terrible.” I said “These men set[?] in my office; there's three men and two women. Those men are going to go—and those two women are going to sit there. The men are going to give the women a hard time and the women are going to feel like, well, heck with this.”

And he said, “[mumbling],” and he was a southerner and very nice gentlemen and probably he's the one—probably my fitness report was so good I definitely made colonel.

I said, you know—

And he said, “Oh, let me think about this.” Then he came down to my office and had all these reasons why, and he said now—

TS: Reasons not to do it?

JK: Not to do it. He says “Now tear it down” which I did, and we took the women to the field. That was one of the first times that anything like that had been done. I didn't—I never had to qualify with a weapon until I was a lieutenant colonel.

TS: Is that right? How'd you do? [both laughing]

JK: I got a badge, or you know a medal, but I'll tell you this, the first time that I went out to the range there was a pilot, I don't know what rank he was, but see they fired the .38 and I had to fire the .45 which is a big weapon as you know.

TS: A lot more kick to that.

JK: Yes, and when I would sod in but then I would have to move it to get the safety off.

TS: So your sight's gone if you move it?

JK: My sight's gone. So we fired and we're walking down to the target and I hear he says "Somebody hit my target!" Well, you can very well tell a .45 leaves a lot bigger hole than—
And I said "Shh! Shh!" [laughs] That we were just firing for, I've even forgot the term now, I mean, we weren't counting the—

TS: Right, just like a live fire—training but not for counting. Not for marksman or something.

JK: Yes, we were practicing and I thought "Oh."

TS: You should say "Well, I thought that was my target."

JK: But the men brought me in to my office, and they brought a .45 in and they put a target up on the wall. I fired a pencil, you know. You put the pencil and cock the weapon.

TS: Oh really?

JK: You'd fire. And see, the pencil would show where you were hitting at.

TS: So that you were practicing with a pencil and a .45?

JK: I'm not sure if that would have been acceptable if it was known but that's how I practiced.

TS: Now did they do that to try and help you improve here?

JK: To help me.

TS: So it's not like a joke that they were—

JK: No. No. Because these were two friends of mine and I had a good working relationship with them and they knew that I had never fired before.

TS: Well, you're from Tennessee, my goodness.

JK: Well, I'd fired .22s but—

TS: Not a .45. Well, what—so there's like—outside the military in this political world there's the constant, at this time, idea that men don't want women in the military at all and you're inside the military. What do you, even though you have these laws and you have these little struggles and conversations but what is, what is—how is the atmosphere? How was it for you in the Marine Corps?

JK: There was[sic] a couple job positions, jobs that I would've liked to have had that I did not get. One there would have been two females in the same rank at this particular place and

they didn't want two women—the reasoning was that well you're both the same rank and that wouldn't be good.

TS: Does that ever happened to the men?

JK: Well, I asked how many male captains do you have, how many male majors do you have? But I didn't—I wasn't—since then I was so glad at one of the jobs I happened to know the person years later—she was a second lieutenant when I was a colonel—got the job that I wanted so badly.

TS: What kind of job was it?

JK: It was the CO of a recruiting district which anybody, you know if you were good at your job you could've done it. It wasn't—

TS: But they already had a woman so they didn't want another one?

JK: Yes. Of the same rank.

TS: Of the same rank. Were there any other, like, because you're a woman you couldn't do certain things that you wish that you would have been able to? Or even saw other women kind of not being able to?

JK: No. One of the bad things about when the change started with women getting to go into other—they were not prepared. They did not have the training to do these things, either physically or they just didn't have the knowledge of what this entailed. And I think that on a few occasions—well I know, don't think—that women were put in positions to fail; to get their point across that women couldn't do it because they did not have the background to do these things.

TS: So you mean like they would assign a woman without a proper training to a position to be unsuccessful to say, well, women can't do this job.

JK: Yes.

TS: I see.

JK: They would. But in a lot of things, and this is typical I think in any profession, the women got along well with the men that knew them and was accepted but those men that never, had never worked with women or been around women that was a total different thing. Also men being men, and women being women, when the men would get together they would make comments about the women that they didn't believe nor would they have made to their face. I think women probably do the same thing about men. That's just part of our nature, you know the nature of a human being. It has come a long way; they still have many problems of acceptance.

TS: Where do you think those are today?

JK: Pardon me?

TS: Where do you think those little problems are today that need to be fixed?

JK: Leadership. If you have a leader that will not tolerate any of this—and when you have young men and women together you're going to have some problems. You have that in high school, you have that in college but with the proper leadership those problems could quickly be eliminated, whether it's sexual harassment or whether it's not getting credit for the job that's being done. And it's entirely on leadership.

TS: So that's where it starts.

JK: Yes.

[end of audio file 1]

[beginning of audio file 2]

TS: Well, let's talk about [comments about watch redacted]

JK: Well, I don't—I just feel like I'm rattling.

TS: No, no, no you're not. You're not at all. I'm interested about in 19—late 1960s, 1970s you were at the Marine Corps Air Facilities in Tustin, California. What the heck did you do there?

JK: I was the adjutant.

TS: What's that, what do you do?

JK: What that entails is— [heavy sigh]

TS: Because you're out of the south and you're out of the east coast for— [chuckles]

JK: As an adjutant all the paperwork comes in to your—across your desk before it ever gets in to the commander at the air station. It's not a secretary job or anything like that. It's—in fact the army has the MOS or adjutant general corps which is basically what we have but we don't call it that. And you'd handle awards. You would handle disciplinary—you know the paperwork for awards; disciplinary problems; personnel. If people needed a particular MOS some place you would handle that paper work; work with the chaplain;

any and everything that—pertaining to paper-type work in administration. You would come across your desk and then you would either recommend or whatever and take it in to the CO and he or she would sign it and away it would go.

TS: Did you work a lot with people then?

JK: Yes, you did even with that, yes.

TS: Did you like that job?

JK: Yes but nearly as much as—

TS: With the training?

JK: As with the training yes.

TS: Is that one like—on all these jobs you had did you ever say apply for a particular place that you really wanted to go?

JK: When you get your—this is—I don't know how it is now, but this I'm talking about when I was there—every year you get a fitness report, evaluation, and on that dream sheet you put down three—you have three choices where you would like to go and three types of—you can even ask for positions or you can ask for schools that you want to go to. There's certainly no guarantee, and usually I would put down "as the Marine Corps directs" because wherever they sent me—

TS: You didn't put three things down?

JK: Well, I usually would put two and then as—

TS: For the third one?

JK: Yes. [laughs]

TS: Okay.

JK: I'm not sure I ever—I don't think—

TS: It didn't matter to you necessarily?

JK: No. and I surely never asked to go to the Armed Forces Staff College and I never asked to go to Naples, Italy. I mean, you know—

TS: Oh, you didn't; either one of those? And so did you get a lot of training during your career?

JK: Yes. I went to short schools on various things, even on personnel and all that stuff. To be an adjutant and to legal—I went to a few weeks of what we call legal school which is working with the uniform code of military justice. That type of school.

TS: Is that part of that checking off things on your career list to do?

JK: Not really. It just makes you better as an adjutant you know.

TS: But did you have that like vision of the things that you needed to do to go on—to proceed through your career? You know to make rank and—

JK: Not really. I didn't.

TS: No? You didn't have that—you didn't have somebody helping you along with that?

JK: No.

TS: I guess it would have been a whole different scenario, then.

JK: A whole different—back then. That I think you have maybe today but no. And I'm sure that some of the men that wanted to be generals had their checklist.

TS: But that wasn't even a possibility for you at that time?

JK: No, in fact a lieutenant colonel was the highest that I could possibly go. And my goal was major and I guess that's also why I looked at the ten year period.

TS: Oh, when you got to be major, it's like okay, I did this.

JK: Because the only colonel, female that you had would have been the director of Women Marines. And that was still in place until 1980 when they was[sic] phasing that out and they appointed a female as a brigadier; the only general we had, female in the Marine Corps. So they phased out that colonel position and went then to an appointment and then three years later they selected, actually selected a—in fact when I came in that director, that one colonel when she left that position as director of Women Marines, had to revert back to a lieutenant colonel.

TS: To stay in?

JK: To stay in and she didn't have enough time to retire. And she reverted back to lieutenant colonel.

TS: What'd you think about that?

JK: Well, I thought that was terrible. I mean I—you know.

TS: I know actually I think of all the things that about glass ceilings; that did seem to be one of the more egregious things that you'd have to step down in rank if you wanted to stay in. After being a—yes.

JK: I know—[speaking at same time]

TS: Yes that's an interesting one.

JK: But I used to get harassed a lot about women could be passed over twice for major and still stay in 'til she got her twenty, where a male couldn't. So they felt that that was very unfair but I pointed out, wait a minute, we're only a certain percentage, we can only have a certain percentage. So that cuts us down to where we will never be able to extend that until you change the percentage.

TS: Right, because there was only a certain percentage at, what was it, O-4—

JK: O-4.

TS: —and above. Well, to O-6 really then and then back down.

JK: Yes.

TS: Well, what about—how did you get to Naples? You said you really enjoyed that.

JK: I did. Somebody saw potential I guess.

TS: Obviously did.

JK: I was down in New Orleans—love New Orleans, love New Orleans.

TS: And that was at the 8th Marine Corps District?

JK: Yes.

TS: What did you do there?

JK: I was the adjutant.

TS: Oh, the adjutant.

JK: There too, I was the adjutant.

TS: That was after California then? Okay.

JK: Yes. And I was the adjutant and I went to New Orleans adjutant then to Naples, and then I went back to Norfolk as an adjutant.

TS: Well before we get to Naples actually you had told me earlier before we turned the tape on, that you were the second female Marine at the Armed—

JK: —Forces Staff College.

TS: And so that's what you did after New Orleans, right?

JK: Yes. The reason I went to Armed Forces Staff College I had been selected to go to Naples and that was a requirement.

TS: Oh, you had to, oh.

JK: To go successfully—go there, graduate, whatever.

TS: What was it all about?

JK: It was working with different services because I was going to a NATO command and so I had to learn about the Army and the Air Force and the Navy and—

TS: And the other services, like foreign services?

JK: Foreign services and even our government, different services within our—

TS: Like the diplomatic services?

JK: Yes.

TS: So that's what you learned at this school. And you were the second, do you know who the first was?

JK: Yes. The same lady that was my company commander here at [Camp] Lejeune that gave me a lot of good instruction.

TS: Oh, and what was her name?

JK: She's dead now, Ellen Maroni[?].

TS: Ellen Maroni.

JK: Yes. And I didn't appreciate her at the time.

TS: Is that right?

JK: No. She's pretty strict too. I appreciated her guidance and instruction but I didn't appreciate her strictness.

TS: Well, who does?

JK: As I progressed up the line I could see more and more of what she had done for me.

TS: Now were you a lieutenant colonel when you went to Naples?

JK: Yes, I was a lieutenant colonel.

TS: Okay, so that's in '77, so this is after they lifted that—they lifted that cap in late sixties but they didn't actually promote anyone until about the seventies.

JK: Yes. I think that—I think that's right.

TS: So you're really close to that time. You've had a lot of women from World War II who were in before you who were probably on that—

JK: Yes.

TS: So you're kind of coming right behind them. So how was Naples? Tell me about that story. That sounds really—like it was fun.

JK: Oh, that was— really, it was [an] unbelievable tour. Not just the people and all but being on the staff of a NATO command and I was the military secretary for the commander in chief.

TS: You finally got to be a secretary.

JK: Yes. [laughs] And I hated that, I said can't we change this?

TS: Can't it be executive officer again?

JK: Well, I was—even the assistants to the executive officer we sat in the same—and there was nothing that when you think of a secretary that that job entailed. Nothing.

TS: Well, what kind of things did you do?

JK: Some of the routine things was[sic] to go through all the traffic, message traffic and eyes only traffic, to brief the admiral.

TS: The classified.

JK: Yes. And then I read all the point papers and action papers.

TS: What's a point paper?

JK: I'm trying to think of a project. Oh, say the Air, U.S. Air Force wanted to do a particular exercise. They would write up a point paper or a summary of this—

TS: Here's reasons why we should do this. [simultaneously]

JK: Here's reasons why we should do this. [simultaneously] You just write out everything and I would read that over to try to make it more concise so it wouldn't take the admiral forever—

TS: To go through all the things. So you're summarizing things for him.

JK: And the XO— I mean the XO, the executive assistant and I worked hand in hand and we'd take time about on sitting on briefings. And I think probably the briefings were the biggest enjoyment to me because I learned about things I never even knew existed. And I—

TS: Like what?

JK: Well, just things about countries.

TS: Okay.

JK: You know, with—

TS: Protocol—

JK: Protocol and things of—about nukes and just all kinds—because most of the briefings were classified.

TS: Right. So you get some of the good secrets.

JK: Yes.

TS: Okay.

JK: And then in—

TS: And this is in—actually you would have been—Naples I'm trying to see. Well, you actually '74, '77, okay.

JK: And just like when Cyprus, there was an incident in Cyprus during that time and we all, you know, all the bells and whistles rung and everything and I found that to be very stimulating, you know. [This may refer to the October 13, 1977 hijacking of Lufthansa Flight 181 Landshut.]

TS: Right, to be in that kind of position.

JK: Yes.

TS: So it was exciting?

JK: Very exciting. But hours were long but I didn't mind. I—and a lot of times during the night I would get a call for something that had come in and I'd have to go to the classified place and get briefed and make the decision do I wake the admiral or don't wake the admiral. And that— aides were not given that responsibility because they didn't have the clearances and everything.

TS: So you had to decide and say go wake the admiral.

JK: Yes. [laughs] And then you'd just—once you—and I lived about thirty minutes outside of Naples and you know once you got in if it's two o'clock in the morning you just slept on the admiral's couch.

TS: Then stay through the day.

JK: Yes.

TS: Well that's—that's neat. Go ahead.

JK: And then the other thing I kept two long civilian dresses in the office, or in the locker, because I never knew when Mrs. Admiral would call—and all of the official dinners I usually went to with the aide. And I met General Hague and I met all kinds of people. And you know, for a little old girl from the hills of Tennessee that was doggone exciting.

TS: Yes, I bet. Well, that's a great picture that you're sharing with us coming out of the— I don't know if you're coming out or going in.

JK: I think I'm going in.

TS: Going in, yes. And you got the two—

JK: Carabinieri. Carbineri. [sic, Carabinieri, the national military police of Italy]

TS: Is that what they're called?

JK: Yes. They're—they're like the—

TS: They're saluting you as you're coming in to the—

JK: They're like, I don't know, the—

TS: Guards?

JK: Guards, yes. It's kind of like a mixture of state patrol, secret service—

TS: Official security. Okay.

JK: All that.

TS: Ah, I got you. So—are they Marine? Oh, there's the red strip.

JK: No, no, they're not.

TS: Are they Naples? Are they Naples [laughs].

JK: They're Italians.

TS: Well, they got that red strip just like the Marine Corp.

JK: They do. They do.

TS: Well that's interesting. Did you—that was—did you get to travel?

JK: I did get to travel with the admiral some.

TS: Where did you get to go? Oh you did only on duty then?

JK: On duty type things.

TS: You didn't get a lot of—not a lot of free time?

JK: Not a lot of free time. But I also went to a school there, a three month school there, up in Oberammergau, Germany and it was a NATO type school to learn [various other things?].

TS: That's a very pretty area.

JK: It was gorgeous. I went—well this has nothing to do with it—but I went back there years later. Ginger—I went over there to visit Ginger and another friend. Air force woman as a matter of fact. We went down to Oberammergau and I stayed in the same BOQ [Bachelor Officers' Quarters], 'course it had been remodeled, that I had stayed in years before.

TS: Oh, is that right? And it had changed some?

JK: The bartender said that he remembered me. I'm not sure if he did or not but it was the same bartender.

TS: Oh, is that right? Well, that's a good one, to say that he remembered you. Probably got a nice tip.

JK: Well, I was the only woman in the class of forty people.

TS: So maybe so. Maybe they did. Did you find that a lot that you were, like, the only woman?

JK: Yes.

TS: A lot?

JK: Yes.

TS: So was that tough at all? I mean—

JK: It got lonely, yes, in that sense but one of the first things I tried to do after I got up a little bit in rank was to meet the wives of all the men that I worked with. It didn't matter if it was a corporal or the general's wife. I tried to meet every one of those wives and I would even go to teas and those things. Just to get for them to know me.

TS: Like a preemptive strike.

JK: Yes. Yes. Yes. [laughs] And I think that was probably one of the smarter things that I did.

TS: Did you just do that on your own or did someone—

JK: No, I just did that on my own.

TS: Yes. So that could put them at ease and see that, you know, who you were and they know you personally.

JK: And see that I wasn't a threat or you know.

TS: Any of the things that they might have imagined that you were.

JK: Yes, but that I think really did help.

TS: Yes. That's an interesting way to go about doing that. Did you ever see or experience any kind of discrimination? Either, you know, not just for women but based—race too? Anything like that?

JK: I did see it but—to me once.

TS: To yourself? What happened?

JK: I was—and I didn't do anything about it because it didn't really hit me for a few weeks. I went in and [?] I was a colonel. And the Marine Corps used to require—and I don't know now—after you do—they write your fitness report, or your evaluation, you have—you look it over and they have to say you've been counseled, you saw it. And I had—it was an excellent fitness report but they rank all the people the same rank in a block and I was ranked number two out of X number of colonels. And he wanted to explain to me why. And he said the other person that's above—no, I was ranked three out of—yes—

TS: Were you ranked with other women, or men and women?

JK: Men.

TS: Okay.

JK: I mean, and here it happened to be all men.

TS: Okay.

JK: And he said the other two are commanders, i.e. one had the air station over here and the other one had the air station down at Beaufort [South Carolina]. And he said, "Do you understand why I must rank them higher?"

And like an idiot I said "Well, yes." But that, you know, that had nothing to do with it. And I've always regret it because if I had stood up for that, that means it probably would have helped people coming behind me. And that's why I regret it.

TS: Hmm. That's interesting. So was it that he thought these command—these men—because they were men and because they were commanders of these battalions that they—it would help them in their promotion or something like that?

JK: Well, if—if they weren't ranked up there—

TS: —then it would hurt them.

JK: —it would hurt them. If you had somebody that was better on your evaluation why aren't they the commanders type thing.

TS: I see. I see. Yes.

JK: And I could understand.

TS: So that was something that you went back and kind of mulled over?

JK: Yes.

TS: Huh, that's interesting.

JK: And—but as far as racial I don't think I ever really saw any of that. In fact when I was a platoon commander at Quantico we had our first two African Americans come to candidate training. I had one—I think there was two.

TS: That's in the early sixties then?

JK: It would have been—

TS: Was that Parris Island?

JK: No, that was at Quantico [inaudible]

TS: The Women's Officer Battalion, '67, '69?

JK: Yes.

TS: Okay.

JK: And—

TS: So you had your first two African American [unclear].

JK: Yes, and they did not complete the course but it wasn't because they were not capable. There was no problem; we never had one problem in either platoon. I think they were just wondering what it was like and saw that, hey, this wasn't for them. We had African Americans right here in the company in Camp Lejeune when I was here. Never had any problem—that I ever knew. And I don't think because you always saw them all together and enjoying each other—appeared to enjoy each other's company and all. I can't say that I did—I'm sure that—I'm not saying that it didn't exist, I'm sure it did.

TS: Right. But it didn't come across your desk or across something like that where you didn't have a disciplinary issue. Something like that. But I would say the percentage of African American women in the military at this time was very small.

JK: Very small.

TS: And in the Marine Corps might have—I don't know what percentage.

JK: It was very, very small.

TS: So you didn't have that many to look at really. To see what was going on.

JK: Yes.

TS: You might not ever had them under you. So, right?

JK: Yes.

TS: And you have kind of described your relationship with your peers, you know the men that you work with. Was it mostly men that you—

JK: Mostly men. Except—with the exception of the two times that I had the company here and had the company at Parris Island.

TS: I see.

JK: Then of course at candidate training. But there I even had men working for me drill—male drill instructors, some of our instructors that taught history classes and things like that were men.

TS: Did you find that any of the men were good at mentoring you too to help you along?

JK: Yes. Yes.

TS: Was there anybody in particular that jumps out at you?

JK: I had two as a matter of fact. One was one of the—he was a colonel—lieutenant colonel—I guess when we were in Naples and he did help a lot because here I was a woman and a Marine on this [U.S.] Navy staff, you know, and he did help a lot by trying to explain some of the things that were being done and—

TS: Showing you the ropes of how that operates—

JK: Yes. And there's a lot of that stuff I had no idea, you know, other than about what I had gotten—

TS: In the school?

JK: In the school, yes, you know.

TS: And then your life. It's not always the same as the books say, right. Did you have anything in particular that happened there that was like not a crisis necessarily—but you talked about some things happened in Cyprus—like anything that you can recall?

JK: Well, it got tense a little bit when Nixon—

TS: Oh, resigned?

JK: —was in the process of resigning?

TS: Why was it tense?

JK: Well, nobody knew for sure what orders might be coming down from the president.

TS: From him, from Nixon?

JK: From him, yes.

TS: Like was he going to do something crazy?

JK: Yes, well, you never know. You have to be prepared.

TS: Who was worried about it?

JK: Well, it came from higher headquarters then us there at Naples, so.

TS: Within the military?

JK: I'm sure it was—well through the Secretary of Defense, I think. That's an assumption, I don't know.

TS: No, right.

JK: So those are type things you have to be prepared for.

TS: Prepared for.

JK: But it was a little tense. We had some—these, and it wasn't—well I guess it could have tense. I wasn't smart enough to know. We had the Communist Party that was very active and they would hold rallies and things and right before I would get to my house they had—about every four months there would be a big rally down in the square. And—but they was— they'd just part wave like this and say, "Colonel Nella!." And you know I never thought one thing about it. And we kept saying well they're different than us. [They waved?]

TS: You weren't worried about somebody saying, well I wonder what she's doing in that crowd. Trying to get back home.

JK: And you know you—I knew that I had to be careful and the only place that I could really and truly relax was at my house, you know. I didn't dare have more than one glass of wine and things like that.

TS: Just because of the level that you were at.

JK: Yes.

TS: And everybody's eyes are on you. And plus you're a woman in the position. Did you feel that pressure?

JK: Yes. Yes. I told somebody after I was able to live off base that regardless of when I had anyone to the house, whether it was male or female, all lights were on, all blinds were to the top. So yes and, you know, you always felt that anything you did would reflect back on other women Marines. And so you—I felt like yes you were lived[sic] in a glass house so to speak.

TS: Yes. I think Ginger described it as a fish bowl.

JK: Yes.

TS: Yes. That’s interesting. Did you—did you feel that—because you’re getting promoted at a pretty good clip there.

JK: Yes.

TS: And in this era to retire as a full bird colonel that’s pretty amazing, you know. That’s pretty amazing. That you were—

JK: Well, and I did but it was as I say, it paid it—it took a toll on my personal life. But I don’t—I had fun anyway.

TS: That’s the sacrifice that you had to do. But you said there’s no regrets it’s just that’s what you—that’s what you had to do. Was there any—did you receive any medal or award that you’re particularly proud of?

JK: Well, the highest was the Legion of Merit, but I think that’s almost now a colonel’s retirement medal but at that time we hadn’t had that many women getting the Legion of Merit.

TS: Was that from your Naples [Italy] service or—

JK: No, that was really from retiring at—really from Norfolk [Virginia]. But I—and, you know, but I got it when I was at Cherry Point, and I—Naples helped I’m sure.

TS: Yes. After you were at Naples did a lot of people know who you were and then you could have your pick of where you wanted to go?

JK: No.

TS: No? You just got assigned somewhere?

JK: Yes. In fact when I—I guess after I was selected for colonel, when I was in Norfolk, the monitor called and said that I needed to get to the Pentagon or Headquarters Marine Corps and I said “Why?”
They said, “Well you need exposure.”

Well, I had made the highest rank at that time or you know, I had been selected for it and I thought “You idiot, you don’t have the vaguest idea.” And I had no desire to go to the Pentagon or to Headquarters Marine Corps.

TS: Why not?

JK: I just didn’t want that hassle—I mean I didn’t want the traffic, I didn’t want all that—

TS: The vehicle traffic?

JK: Yes. And I had my fun driving in Naples, Italy. I enjoyed that. But I just felt like my best job, the most exciting and the most interesting, had been Naples. And at the Pentagon I would be, even as a colonel, I would be down here doing work that was not satisfying.

TS: So you were going to take a step down, really, in something—

JK: Well, yes—

TS: And that ego issue again right?

JK: The general that was at Cherry Point was talking to somebody that knew me which—and said, you know, you might want to look at so and so and he had me come down for an interview—that never happened before I mean—

TS: No?

JK: No. And—

TS: You had to interview for the job?

JK: Well, I guess, yes! And even before I left he had called my boss in Norfolk and said, “I really would like to get her down here.” I didn’t know that probably he had [unclear]. But it—they’d never had a female in the position as director of personal services. And we had the clubs and special services and the organizations, the PX, and all that.

TS: Is that under your command then?

JK: Yes.

TS: Well did you feel like you were a trailblazer?

JK: I—I didn’t during the time but afterwards I do. And I know that one time after I’d retired I went to a Marine ball, a Marine Corps ball, and this one officer’s wife said to me, “Oh, you were a pioneer.” And I thought, I’m going to wring her neck. But I was and I think that’s one of the reasons I worked and put in extra hours because I knew that people would be judged by what I did.

TS: So you're trying to make it smoother for the women that came after you?

JK: Yes. And as I look back I know—and at the time I even felt to some degree I thought, you know, if I mess up here this is probably—another female is not going to get this job again.

TS: Did you feel like you had to work harder than the men in your position?

JK: Yes. Yes. One of the reasons—one thing is probably I didn't have a lot of the overall experiences of the Marine Corps that the men had and secondly, you, you as a female, and I don't think it's just in the military, have to work harder than your male counterpart does to prove yourself. Once you prove yourself you're okay.

TS: You don't think every time you went to someplace new you had to prove yourself again?

JK: Yes.

TS: Oh, you did. So but once you're there and you're—

JK: Yes. And—but yes, 'cause everybody's kind of watching and especially if there's never been a female in that position before.

TS: Do you think some—some of it is like the fear of the unknown, you know?

JK: And men they just [unclear] why they handle women differently than men, I don't know.
 They used—the men would call me and say “Well, you—her hair needs to be cut or her skirt's too short; would you talk to her.”
 And I said, “Well, if you send a man up with her that needs a haircut or trousers too short, I will.” And I—you know—
 “Well, they'll cry.”
 I said, “I have men crying on in front of me all the time.” And I did. And not as—well I didn't even have too many women cry but I had men that cried. I'd give them a Kleenex and pull it in two.

TS: Why would you pull it in two?

JK: Because that gave them two.

TS: Oh the two—the two ply Kleenexes, I got you. So you would—that's one of the little ways you said you were trying to work for the equality right?

JK: Yes.

TS: So and it also helped the men learn how to deal with the women too, you think?

JK: Yes.

TS: Was that like a training that you had to take on, like an on the side job.

JK: Yes. Sometimes you'd get very frustrated.

TS: What was the most frustrating part?

JK: Having to do the same thing over every time I went to a new duty station, about the women, you know, and yes you do have [heads down in?]. That head thing came up—

TS: Over and over?

JK: Over and over.

TS: It's like women use bathrooms just like men use bathrooms; is that pretty much what you were trying to say?

JK: And I said if you only have one then get a sign made, put a lock on the inside. If a woman's in there turn it. Now I don't think those type problems exist anymore but—and that was one of the things I used—I'd go, "God here we go again, that women's head."

TS: Did—did—with the policy now about—well they repealed it—but the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" did you have any of those issues with gays in the military sort of thing? Was that any concern at the time?

JK: Yes. Shortly after I got here at [Camp] Lejeune I had my first experience with that. In—

TS: That was in early sixties?

JK: Yes. And I—they were doing a big investigation; not just women but also there was another investigation going with the men but I had to go over to CID [Criminal Investigation Division] and if the woman wanted me—if the woman had the right to have another female—

TS: Someone with them?

JK: If they wanted me to be and most of them, most of the young ladies did not but then I would go in to a room and look through a glass, and I think we did end up discharging a couple, but most of it was a witch hunt at that time. At recruit training I had a couple of recruits that came in and said that they were homosexual. We had sent them to the psychic—

TS: Psychiatric?

JK: Yes, and I was not convinced about one of them but I felt she wanted to get out. That she just didn't want to—

TS: That that was a way for her to try to get out?

JK: Yes.

TS: Kind of a rough way to do it.

JK: Well, I thought it was too.

TS: Well, because you got a dishonorable discharge right?

JK: Well, not for the recruits they didn't.

TS: Oh, not for recruits? They just let them go then?

JK: Yes.

TS: What did you think about then?

JK: At the time I never questioned it. I mean, that's the rules. That's the way it's supposed to be. The last probably three or four, well the last five or six years, and I'm going to tell you when it really hit when they discharged out in Monterrey [California] a bunch of the linguist—

TS: I was there, 1980.

JK: And I thought, "What are they doing? What are they doing? Here we need these so badly," you know. And after and then other things came up that I started looking at it differently. And I'm Episcopalian and we've had a big problem in our church because a few years ago they ordained a bishop up in Massachusetts and we've had a split in our church. And we're having problems with staying in the Anglican community but after giving a great deal of thought I think it's the right to do. How it's going—there will be problems instituting this. I'm kind of glad I'm not a company commander because here again, this all goes back however the leaders present it and all. And there will be some problems but nothing like they think it's going to be, you know. Our young people are totally different and these hardheaded people can be changed in their thinking, you know, if the leadership is there. And some people are always going to be against it; just like some people are against African Americans to this day. I'm not comparing the two, I don't mean to do that but some ways it is similar.

TS: But prejudice. Discrimination is discrimination.

JK: That's right.

TS: We're almost done. Can you hang out for a little bit longer?

JK: I'm sorry, I can't believe—Ginger will never let me live this down.

TS: [laughs] Good!

JK: You were talking about [unclear]. You don't know about people that you have helped. And two years ago or last year, a lady that's been in the Marine Corps for thirty-one years retired, an African American, and I went up and she was at the Pentagon, I went up for her retirement. You had generals, you had other colonels, you had a female brigadier who was a pipsqueak when I was a colonel and she started talking, she said, "I'm not going to say a lot about everybody because I will forget somebody but I must mention somebody," and she started off and I thought, oh my god that's me. And I never had the vaguest—I mean we had stayed in touch, she would call me when different things would come up, we would visit every once in a while—just you know. But she would call me throughout the years and I almost fell off my chair. And I thought my gosh. Then I get a call from a warrant officer, who I knew hated me but said nice things, you know. Then I get an email the other night from somebody back in '62 who I discharged and saying that she understood why and all this. I thought [makes noise] maybe I should have never gotten on Facebook.

TS: So from '62, really?

JK: Yes.

TS: So, wow.

JK: So, you don't know.

TS: You make an impression.

JK: One way or the other I do. That is true.

TS: Well, that's really interesting. You know, one—I'm going to have to ask you this one question that is kind of going back in time a little bit because this is the era that you were in. But you were in during Vietnam.

JK: Yes.

TS: What—How did you feel about it when you were in and you were in the military in uniform. And everything that was going on in the culture about anti-war, all that stuff? Can you just sum that up?

JK: I'll try to do it briefly. I was on—during part of that time I was down in New Orleans.

TS: Oh right, okay.

JK: And I can remember filling in to go over to, to LSU [Louisiana State University] I think it was in Baton Rouge to—for Officers Selection [Type?]. And the football team lined up to escort us on campus.

TS: To protect you?

JK: To protect—to protect us. Yes. But I don't think anybody—they might have thrown something or they may have said something but—

TS: And this is like early seventies right?

JK: Ah, yes.

TS: Okay.

JK: I never was—And I would walk all over New Orleans in my uniform, even in California I did. I never had anyone say anything to me; I was never present when anybody was spit on or any—I never saw any of that. My attitude at that time was love us or leave—if you don't love—

TS: For the U.S.A.?

JK: Yes. Then get out. I was 100% behind the war effort and everything. In fact, in California there was some protesters led by an Episcopal church—clergy was marching and I didn't go back to church for a long time.

TS: Because of that?

JK: Because of that. After, and before I retired, I started looking at things a little differently because I learned more about the war; we studied more and I read more. I still support the fact of what we did but at the same time I don't think we should condemn those that protested against it. I do not have a great deal of respect, even still, for people that left the country.

TS: Deserted?

JK: Deserted.

TS: Or the draft; to avoid the draft, things like that?

JK: And so many people did, so many different ways other than leaving the country.

TS: What did you feel like when Jimmy Carter pardoned them all?

JK: It—At first I didn't care for that. And then I thought well—here again, after reflecting and even shortly after that I realized that to heal that this had to be done. And I think that may have been about the time I started going back to church. [laughs]

TS: After you reconciled that with yourself.

JK: Yes.

TS: So you forgave the church too?

JK: Yes.

TS: Interesting. And now you know we're involved in a couple wars and the women are in combat. How do you feel about that? I don't remember if we talked about this.

JK: Well, if they can do the job, I think they should be there. And if—Same way, if a man can't do the job then he does not need to be there. And we certainly have women that can do the job with proper training. And I think the women are getting that training now.

TS: You think that's part of it then is to make sure whoever it is gets the training they need, man or woman?

JK: Yes. Man or woman.

TS: That that would be the thing. Now you probably have had men and women come up to you because they knew that you were a colonel, I'm sure and say, you know, I'm thinking about joining the Marine Corps, or whatever part of the military, what kind of advice do you give them?

JK: I try to tell them what I know—what the training is like and everything. And I—and a lot of parents will ask me and mostly for their own—their kids are going in as enlisted. I tell the parents that they might want their daughters to look at the Air Force [chuckles], you know, because I think the quality—even though I know they've [unclear] problems in the past few years but I felt that the opportunities were greater, and that's even true for the men. Overall opportunities if you're looking for something to get some training and whatnot to go out in civilian life.

TS: To take it with you out. I—yes.

JK: There's not too many jobs for—well I guess there's jobs for snipers now in—but you know I think that—'cause used to in the military you would train people—in the Marine Corps you'd train people [in] mechanics, you would train them all different skills; electricians and whatnot. That's not happening that much anymore. You either carry a rifle or fly a helicopter. So you don't get that type basic—type training to help you out in the civilian world. And I—for a woman that goes in the Marine Corps or the [U.S.]

Army, they better darn well be sure that they're in good physical shape. And if as—the combat—you know, front lines doesn't[sic] really exist anymore. And I think—

TS: Not the way it did before, right?

JK: Yes.

TS: So anybody is susceptible to being killed in the action and has been; like the supply group in Iraq that was attacked.

JK: But—And just recently I think it was army or air force [unclear] when they—in some place that where they—Iraqi, I think it was Iraqi—pilot kind of went berserk or something and lined them up and shot eight people.

TS: Afghanistan.

JK: Was it Afghanistan? Yes. And—

TS: One of them was a woman.

JK: One of them was—

TS: That's right. I think she was a training officer of some sort. We'll have to look that up; we'll have to add that on the transcript now because we don't remember her name, but yeah, I just read about that too. So yes you don't know where your—where the front line is anymore.

JK: And it's, you know, if—it's like anyone that buys a gun for protection, they better be prepared to kill and if they don't, don't get that gun for protection.

And that was when we started having our women qualify for the rifle and the .45 and some of the women came in and said "Hey I didn't come in to do this. This is against what I believe," and I would encourage them to do their, finish out their enlistment. And they were right, you know. They didn't come in to do that.

TS: Right. But they signed the dotted line, right? They volunteered.

JK: Yes.

TS: We talked a little bit about, off tape before, that you didn't use the G.I. Bill for education but you did maybe for housing, is that right?

JK: Yes. I got a VA [Veteran's Affairs] Loan for a house. First house I ever bought probably, I think, was a VA Loan.

TS: Was that right? Have you ever had any experience with the Veteran's Administration?

JK: Not really. I have friends that have, but I never.

TS: But not yourself?

JK: No?

TS: Do you think that your life has been different because of your service in the Marine Corps?

JK: Yes. I think I—my experiences that I've had has made me a much broader minded person. And I think also I'm able to look at both sides of an issue much more than my contemporaries or my friends from college or whatever. Yes.

TS: So your world view is a little bit different because of that.

JK: Yes.

TS: Do you think that you were an independent minded person before you went into the Marine Corps?

JK: I think to some degree I was yes or I wouldn't—I mean you know either—and I don't think I was an idiot; I think I'm a relatively intelligent person but I think I was pretty independent before.

TS: Before? So it's not something that the military made you that way?

JK: No. It may have increased it, but no, I had those qualities to some degree much before.

TS: Before you joined?

JK: Yes.

TS: What, if I were to ask you, what does patriotism mean to you?

JK: Oh. It means probably something more now—different now than if you were to ask me the day I retired. I still believe in our country. I believe in the strong military. I believe—I've always believed that you needed diplomacy. In fact, diplomacy is the biggest thing in my opinion and the military just kind of helps that along. But I think I believe more strongly in diplomacy now than I did when I was in the military. You know, military can do any and everything.

TS: So you need them to work hand in hand?

JK: Oh, they have to work hand in hand.

TS: What made you decide to retire? Was there—

JK: Well, I was going to have to go back to—

TS: The Pentagon?

JK: To the [Washington] D.C. area and I had always said after my, you know, the last few years that when I stopped having fun and it wasn't a challenge that it would be time for me to go and I would know when that was. And I woke up one morning I think, you know, I don't really have a challenge anymore and I'm not having nearly as much fun and I don't want to move again; I wanted to find one place and settle down. And I talked with a couple of people, and I knew if I stayed another year and a half that my retirement would be better. The commandant told me if I stayed about two and a half years that there was going to be a one star general that—I thought about that for a little bit, and I thought I probably do have the best fitness reports 'cause I'd sit on promotion boards and I knew what my report was compared to my—

TS: Compared to theirs, huh?

JK: But I don't want to be a token. And that's exactly what I would be and would I be going out making speeches and I'm a horrible speaker. And I just—I knew I probably would've ended up—I probably better not say what I was going to say—I'd['ve?] ended up an alcoholic. [laughs]

TS: Is that—oh. [laughs] [noise in background] Here we'll pause it for a second. You want—wait is that your phone?

JK: Yes.

TS: Oh, okay. I'll turn it back on then. So you felt that if you stayed in and did go up another grade that you wouldn't have done the kind of work that you'd been doing before?

JK: Yes. I don't think I would have. It would've been probably public relations and that's not my kind of [unclear].

TS: That's not for you?

JK: No. Plus you have to really believe, you know. I wanted all my other promotions, I really did. I didn't have that burning desire to be a general officer. And I think it would have been very hard without that burning desire. And I don't know, I'm not saying I would have made it. I don't mean to imply that.

TS: Right.

JK: But I did not have that burning desire. Now, in hindsight, I may have that burning desire when I think "Oh, look at my retirement pay." But, no, it—probably if I had stayed in and had been selected it would've been the worst job I had ever done for the Marine Corps.

TS: And who knows what would have happened to you if you had gone to the Pentagon, right?

JK: That's right. That's—you know.

TS: That would've been in the early eighties.

JK: That's right.

TS: Gorbachev, you know? [laughs] So well what—is there anything that you would like to say on this transcript to civilians who may not understand what the military service is or what it's like just in the service. not necessarily as a woman, but to be in the service. That you don't think that—maybe they don't understand.

JK: I think one of the misconceptions is that in the military you are told everything to do and if you don't follow that then you get in trouble. You are not told everything to do; you are expected to use your initiative, and have your own ideas. It's just that you do have to work within a certain framework. Bu the biggest conception I think—

TS: Misconception.

JK: Misconception is that people think they're robots. People who do not know the military think they're robots and that nothing could be farther from the truth. Especially in this day and age. That's one of the things that bothers me the most I think.

TS: Well did—when you went—after you retired was it—did you have any difficult transition to the civilian world?

JK: Oh yes! Yes and I still do after all these years. [laughs]

TS: It's only been twenty years I think now.

JK: Yes. Because it just—I like structure.

TS: Okay.

JK: And I like to know who's doing what or what I'm supposed to do. Now I can do—give me the opportunity to do it but what do you expect the outcome to be? And it doesn't seem—I had trouble figuring out who's in charge—

TS: In the civilian world?

JK: —in the civilian world, yes.

TS: Like who do I go to that can make a decision?

JK: Yes, that. It was always—and I still to this day have a problem with this. I'm president of the Episcopal Church Women of the Diocese of East Carolina, and it drives me buggy in that when I ask somebody to do something or ask, you know, and oh yes, yes, and you have to remind them and remind them and remind them. And it still may not get done and this is a commitment for God, if you want to think of it in that way, you know. They may or may not. Military people that I have on my board are fantastic. And it was—it's the same thing on the board of directors for American Red Cross up in Virginia. It was horrible dealing and also trying to find out well, who do I go to to get this done or what, you know. But within twenty minutes of dealing with someone, I can tell if they have had more than two years in the military. [both chuckling]

TS: There's a sense of urgency in getting things done, you think?

JK: Yes.

TS: I've heard that more than once. Well we've talked about a lot, have I missed anything that you wanted to talk about?

JK: [chuckles] No. I talked about a lot of things that I never thought that we would be talking about and so I—you know, to me I think it's a waste of your time if you're doing an oral history on the military, you know, but—

TS: No, no, this is not a waste of time in any way shape or form. So if you—looking back is there anything that would have liked to have changed?

JK: I would have liked to have seen the equality of the women come about faster. That might be part of a personal thing because I think maybe I could have benefited more had these changes come about earlier. So there's selfish thing there and I'm impatient about change and I know it takes a long—it takes time when you have changes to come about.

TS: Do you think it's coming along?

JK: Yes, I do.

TS: Is there anything about the Marine Corps that you think there's a misconception about?

JK: This may not be the direction you're wanting to go but I think there's a misconception about the Marine Corps in that all Marines are killers. I'm thinking more towards the men that the women are going to be in the same position.

TS: That's fine.

JK: And that they think that Marines enjoy war and I think that is a misconception. You have anyone I think that has ever experienced any of this, they do not enjoy war. And I think we think that the military is just for that. And especially the Marine Corps has that

reputation as well as some of the Navy SEALs and some of your [U.S.] Army units. And that's not—I think is incorrect. Very few people enjoy killing anyone and if they do then they're usually not of the caliber that a military—that the Marine wants.

TS: The discipline and that nature.

JK: Yes.

TS: And so there's a small percentage really, and even though the Marine Corps is more known as a combat, that even within that combat it's still a small percentage of the overall Marine Corps. Lots of other things going on too.

JK: Yes.

TS: That's an interesting thing.

JK: And I think that all the services think that. And I believe this very strongly that if you have a strong military and a well-equipped military that it won't have to be used as much as it's being used now. And I, you know, sometimes there's a conflict in killing and being a Christian or probably even a—other religions, I shouldn't—but I can only speak for mine but I do strongly believe that there is justified killing.

TS: A just war?

JK: Yes. A just war. So I worked through that conflict.

TS: Have you? Well, it's interesting that you say that because of what just occurred this weekend with Osama bin Laden. You know, and there's that controversy now, so.

JK: Well, it bothered me a little bit and it still bothers me to see all the celebrating of the young people, you know, and all. I think they don't totally understand and that comes with experience.

TS: That may be true. That may be true. That's an interesting thing I might have to add to my questions. You're the first one I actually mentioned that to. Well is there anything you'd like to add that we haven't talked about?

JK: No. I don't think so because I didn't have any—my preconceived notion was going to be military [unclear], you know, but I hadn't put anything in my head or anything. If I had I would have known what dates I was where.

TS: Oh that's all right, that stuff we can always look up. That's no problem at all. So, JoAnne, I thank you very much I really appreciate it, meeting you and spending time with you today.

JK: Well, thank you, it's gone by very fast.

[End of Interview]