

Barbara Santee

For more than forty years she was a leading voice for reproductive rights and other issues affecting women.

Chapter 01 - 1:15

Introduction

Announcer: For more than forty years Barbara Santee was a leading voice statewide on abortion rights and other issues affecting women.

A Tulsa native and graduate of Union High School, she held a doctorate from Columbia University in New York, along with degrees from the University of Tulsa and the University of Michigan.

Barbara grew up in a tarpaper shack at 71st and Memorial and often slept on benches in her mother's bar. At an early age she was witness to her mother's abortion in her house and then experienced her own.

A former associate director of the University of Tulsa's Center for Health Policy Research, Santee was also a past executive director of Oklahoma NARAL, the state affiliate of the National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League, and had been a leader in other related organizations.

She received several awards for her work including those from the League of Women Voters, Oklahoma ACLU, and Planned Parenthood of Tulsa. The Women and Gender Studies Program at the University of Tulsa named its departmental library in her honor.

Barbara was 81 when she died on November 7, 2018. But now you can listen to Barbara tell her story of overcoming childhood obstacles to academic success and social advocacy on the oral history website VoicesofOklahoma.com.

Chapter 02 - 8:47

Alcoholic Mother

John Erling: My name is John Erling. Today's date is October 25, 2017.

Barbara, would you state your full name, please?

Barbara Santee: My name is Barbara Ann Santee.

JE: Your date of birth?

BS: Two, twenty, thirty-seven.

JE: So that would be February 20th—

BS: Yes.

JE: Nineteen thirty-seven.

BS: Yes.

JE: That makes your present age?

BS: Eighty.

JE: Eighty years old. Where are we recording this interview?

BS: At my apartment at the Montereau complex in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

JE: You actually grew up about a mile from here, didn't you?

BS: Yes, at 71st and Memorial.

JE: And our story today is going to lead from 71st and Memorial to nearly 71st and Yale or Memorial.

BS: [laughing] Yes, from a three-room tarpaper shack.

JE: Right.

BS: At 71st and Memorial to a, actually, a luxurious apartment about a mile away.

JE: It is very nice. Where were you born?

BS: I was born here in Tulsa at Morningside Hospital, which currently is Hillcrest Hospital.

JE: Did you have brothers and sisters?

BS: Yes, I have a brother two years older, his name is Dooley Douglas. My mother married three times, she married Victor Lee Douglas and had my brother and I. Then she married a man named Leo Sturgis and had my half-sister named Linda Sturgis. And then she married a third gentleman named Ray Cherry.

JE: What was your mother's name?

BS: Violet Barnes was her maiden name.

JE: Was she from Tulsa? Did she grow up here?

BS: Yes, she was one of four sisters. My grandmother's name was, well, I always called her Granny Barnes, but she and my grandfather Barnes died in a car wreck when I was about three years old. My Granny Barnes, I stayed with her quite a bit because my mother was an incurable alcoholic.

Two of the sisters died quite young; one died when she was only nine months old, and the eighteen-year-old daughter died in a fire. Her robe caught on fire. She was married, husband had gone to work. Robe caught on fire and she ran out into the snow and the neighbors rolled her in the snow to put the fire out.

They took her to the hospital and she died eleven days later.

JE: And then your father's name, again, is?

BS: Victor Lee Douglas.

JE: Tell us a little bit about him.

BS: Well, my grandmother got married when she was only fourteen years old. She lived in—

JE: Your grandmother married at fourteen?

BS: At fourteen, she and my grandfather. And they came down here from Kansas City. My mother, I think my grandmother had her when she was really young. And my mother had my brother when she was about seventeen or something, and had me when she was nineteen. So she was really young when she had the two of us.

My dad ran away when I was about a year old. Later I made contact with him and he said the only thing he had was an extra pair of shoes in a brown paper sack. And he ran away and sat on the curb and cried because he didn't want to leave his kids but he couldn't stand to be with my mother anymore.

He caught a train, you know, the empty cars that the hobos would—

JE: Boxcars? Yeah?

BS: Yeah, boxcar. He rode that around the country and he ended up in Arizona. And he worked at a place where he flipped hamburgers. He kind of had an affair with the woman who owned the place and she lived upstairs.

One day he left to do some business or something, he came back and she had been murdered. He thought that it would be pinned on him and so he left town. He went to California, and he stayed out there and made a pretty good living for himself. He bought a walnut grove. He ended up doing pretty well with these business.

I went out there about four months before he died. He married out there too. Didn't have any children with that woman. I got him and brought him to Tulsa. He died here. He was, I think, eighty-four when he passed.

JE: Well, tell us about the living conditions and with your mother and whoever was around there. There's a bar that she was involved with. Talk to us about that.

BS: Well, as I said, my mother was an alcoholic and she was incurable. There would be periods in my life when she was sober and she was okay. Before we were in that bar, I remember one time when I was probably six or seven, I heard on the radio that Roosevelt had died. She was hanging clothes up on the clothesline and I ran out and I said, "Mother, the President died."

And she said, "What you telling me that for? That's not true."

And I came in and they were giving the broadcast on the radio. She sat down and cried. And I remember that very vividly.

At one point, she did fix my hair. I had very long braids and she fixed it up and put a bow on top of my head and sent me off to Sunday school with somebody, 'cause she certainly didn't go to Sunday school.

There were periods where she sobered up and I guess she tried to fly straight, but that was when I was really young.

By the time I got to a teenager she had already fallen into the barrel.

After my father left, she married Leo Sturgis. They both were drinkers. They bought this piece of property there at 71st and Memorial on the northeast corner. There was a little three-room shack that had tarpaper on it that had this imitation looking kind of stone, to make it look like it wasn't tarpaper, but it obviously looked like tarpaper made to look like stone. It was ridiculous.

And there was a little creek that ran down there and a little wooded area in between. And on the other side, close to 71st, they built a little bar. It was just a concrete block little square building and a lean-to on the back where she had a grill and she made hamburgers for the customers that were a nickel or a dime, something like that.

When she divorced Leo, at one point, he got the house and she got the bar. And we had to live in the bar. It had these wooden booths. At night we pulled the tables out and pushed the wooden booths together, throw a blanket on that, and lie on those wooden booths. That was our bed for the night, and we woke up in the morning to the smell of stale beer and urine. And have to go to school with our clothes wrinkled and everything because she never paid any attention to the way we looked.

Then they built on another attachment, they put a shuffleboard in that went on for maybe a couple of years.

Finally, after they went through the divorce proceedings, Mother somehow got the house too and then we had the house. And it was a three-room house, at that point.

My brother and little sister slept on army cots in the little bedroom. My mother and stepfather slept on a bed in the living room. By this time, she was with Ray. And I slept on a sleeping couch in the living room.

JE: You're nine, ten years old, or?

BS: I was probably ten or eleven, I can't remember. But I remember they always came in late and they were always drunk. Huh (sighing sound). I remember one night I heard her groaning. I always heard when they had sex and this was not the normal kind of groaning when they did that.

She said, "You'd better get the bucket."

And I, I acted like I was still asleep.

He went out and got this bucket that we'd been using to patch the roof or something and it had tar on the sides of it. He brought it in and put it beside the bed. And she sat over the bucket and she groaned and groaned. And finally this big plop hit the bottom of the bucket, like a bowel movement. But I knew it was a baby and I knew it was dead.

Then he took the bucket back out and he was gone a long time. She cleaned herself up and laid back and just cried. And I went to sleep before he came back in.

The next morning, I saw the bucket on the back porch and it was cleaned up.

Chapter 03 - 6:25

Attempted Rape

Barbara Santee: That was my introduction to abortion. And then when I was eighteen, I had my own abortion. Back then, before abortion was legal, that's what women turned to who didn't want to have an unwanted pregnancy.

I finished high school.

John Erling: Your high school was?

BS: Union High School. It was a country school back then. It was only one big building. Finally, they had built another building for the high school kids. I loved junior—I loved school, because it was a respite from what I had to deal with. I always made good grades, I was the valedictorian and I was always popular because I had this outgoing personality and I played in sports. I was captain of the girls' basketball team, and debating, and you know, spelling, all that stuff, I was outstanding in all that.

JE: Nobody knew the conditions you were growing up in?

BS: Well, I never wanted anybody to know. They knew my mother owned a bar, but you know, some of those kids had the same kind of problems. I didn't know until years later that one of the boys I had a crush with in school, his mother was an alcoholic and he was dealing with the same kind of problem. I never knew that growing up because he never talked about it. Anyway.

JE: And nobody at home to tell you you got to get your work done or your studies or anything? You were on your own.

BS: I just did it on my own. My mother was not there to help me.

One time I wrote a poem and I gave it to her. She read it and she looked at me, and said, "You know, you're a damn genius." And that's the only compliment my mother ever gave me in my entire life.

It shocked me because she never complimented. My mother looked at me in terms of a sibling rivalry. She was jealous of any women who came down the pike, she was jealous of them. She had very large breasts. She was very proud of her breasts and she always wore these blouses with very tight buttons so you could see through and see her breasts.

I remember one time when I was in the hospital, I've had fifteen surgeries for different kinds of intestinal problems and so forth. I was down to ninety-eight pounds and I didn't know whether I was going to live or die, and I don't think the doctors knew either. I was lying on my back, she came in and my gown had been soiled from the discharges from the scar on my side.

And she called the nurse in and said, "Get that off of her, that's soiled," and so forth. And she took it off of me and just left me laying there naked. My mother looked down at my breasts and she said, "My God, you ain't got nothing, have you?"

JE: Hmm (thoughtful sound).

BS: I was small-cupped anyway compared to her. Lying on my bed, weighing ninety-eight pounds, sick as a dog, not knowing if I'm going to live or die, and then she says that. I just couldn't believe someone could be that cruel. But that was the way she was. She couldn't help herself.

JE: How long did she live? How old was she?

BS: I think she was in her late seventies when she passed.

JE: How did you feel when you were at her funeral?

BS: I didn't cry. Actually, they didn't have a funeral, they just had the interment. I went to that, I didn't even look in the casket because I really didn't care.

JE: Back to eighteen and your abortion.

BS: Well, I had left my mother's home with everything I owned, which was in a cardboard suitcase. I didn't have a car. I think I had about twenty dollars in my pocket. And when that door slammed behind me I knew I would never get any help from my mother for anything.

I went into Tulsa and started rooming with a friend of mine. We had a real cheap apartment across from what was then the Jericho Club on, I think, it was 3rd Street. That was a one-room apartment. We had a foldout bed that came out of the wall. And the people next door were drunks and they fought every night and screamed and threw things at each. Our kitchen was so cold because it didn't have any heat, it was awful.

But anyway, she decided she was going to get married, which left me with the expenses, so I moved in with three other girls in a three-story walkup.

So one night I dated a guy, I don't even know how I met him, he was on a motorcycle. So we whizzed around town. He took me to show me where he worked at this service station. Then we got back to my apartment and he wanted to come up and use my telephone.

I said, "Okay."

He came up and I went to my bedroom and took my coat off, or whatever. And before I knew it, he was on top of me. And he was going to rape me. I fought him and fought him and fought him and I ran to the other bedroom, holding on to the side of the door. He grabbed me and pulled me and broke my nails down to the quick. I had on blue jeans

and he kept trying to—he'd throw me down. He was a big, heavy guy, but I had played basketball and I was slender but I was tough.

And I kept fighting this guy off, and he kept getting the zipper about halfway down, and I'd get my hand down there and get it back it up. I swear I think we fought for over an hour. And I kept thinking one of these other girls would come home. But they never did.

Finally, he just gave up in disgust, and he left.

I think all women go through this deal where they're either raped or attempted rape. And that's one of the things that women go through.

The other girl who lived with me, her boyfriend, we were up three stories. It was a duplex building. He was climbing on the ledge up three stories to climb in our window to see what she was doing. I mean, these boys are insane.

After that, I moved in with another girl. She used my toothbrush to peroxide her hair.
[laughing]

JE: Did you have a job?

BS: Oh yeah. When I got pregnant I was working at a company called Black, Sivalls, & Bryson, it was at First and Archer, I think. They made valves and things like that. And I was the secretary to the executive director. But I wasn't making very much.

Chapter 04 - 4:50

Having an Abortion

Barbara Santee: And I started going with this guy, his name was Frank. And he was madly in love with me. I met him at the Cimarron Ballroom. I used to go there and go dancing, I loved to dance. I didn't really like him but he bought me a Mouton coat, so I was just gaga, like I had this Mouton coat. And then he rented me an apartment. So finally, I gave in and went to bed with him.

Well, I got pregnant by him and I didn't want to be pregnant by this man because I didn't love him, I didn't care about him. So I figured, "How am I going to get out of this? I don't know how to go about getting an abortion."

So I called a friend of mine who had been married, and asked her, "What can I do?"

And she gave me the name of a guy who does abortions. So I called the guy, and he set up a time for me to meet him and to have the abortion. It was in something what we called then "Niggertown," which is Greenwood area now. I worked right there, not far from what was the Niggertown.

So on my lunch hour I took off and I walked up in that area and I found the address. And it was an old beat-up house with the screen door falling off. I went up and knocked on the door, and this black man came to the door. I think he was as stunned as I was to see a white girl. And I was shocked to see this black man. Should I go in? Because, you know, a white woman has been brainwashed—black men rape white women, you know?

I went in the door, followed him like a puppy dog into the kitchen. And he said, “Take your panties off and get up on the table.” And it was one of those old enamel kitchen tables with chips in it.

I crawled up on that, took my panties off, and I spread my legs, and he did an examination. And he said, “You’re two months pregnant.”

My heart just dropped. I said, “How much?”

He said, “Two hundred dollars.”

Well, I only made three hundred dollars a month, that was a fortune. So I put my panties back on and I walked back to work and I just thought, “Oh, my God, what am I going to do now?” So I called my friend and told her.

She got me some pills, a handful of pills that I found out later were quinine and ergot. She said, “Take these and it will get you started.”

So I took this handful of pills all at the same time. Later I found out that if you take these pills, they’re both poisonous if you take them. I took them when Frank was out of town checking on some oil property that he owned. I got sick as a dog, I couldn’t hardly stand up.

And my brother called me. And I guess I slurred my words. He said, “What’s the matter with you?”

I said, “I don’t know, I just don’t feel good.”

And before I knew it, my mother was at the door. She knocked on the door and I answered and I was staggering. I went back and laid down and she sat on the edge of the bed, and she said, “Are you pregnant?”

And I said, “Yes.”

So she stayed with me for about an hour. And then I didn’t come through, didn’t come through, and I thought, “That’s it, I don’t know what else I’m going to do.”

So I kept going to work, still feeling kind of fuzzy. And I think it was that Wednesday I went into the ladies’ room and there were some blood clots coming through. I started feeling worse and worse and worse. So I went to my gynecologist. I gave him a false name.

He looked at me, he said, “Well, you had an incomplete abortion.” He said, “You need to go to the hospital.”

I said, “I can’t, I have to go to work.”

“No, you don’t understand,” he said. “I don’t mean tomorrow or the next day, you have to go right now.” He said, “If you don’t, you’ll be dead tomorrow.”

And I, “Well, I guess I’d better go now.”

So I went to the hospital, St. Johns, they cleaned me out and they put a—it seemed like it was a huge sign on me that said, “Incomplete abortion,” when they rolled me down the hallway. And I felt so ashamed with all those nuns and everybody looking at me. But they cleaned me up and I never told anybody about that for years and years.

John Erling: The abortion was completed there then?

BS: Yeah. They cleaned up the infection and took out the infected tissue and everything. I’m sure it wasn’t the first time those nuns had to do that.

JE: Um-hmm (affirmative). Let me ask you about your abortion, the feelings that you had about that afterward. Did it haunt you? Were you able to put it out of your mind or how did you feel about that as an eighteen-year-old, nineteen-year-old girl?

BS: I was glad to have it, I was very glad to have it. I never felt guilty about. To this day, I’ve never felt guilty about it. I sometimes have wondered if it was a boy or a girl, but I’ve never felt any pangs of guilt.

Chapter 05 - 8:06

Social Activist

John Erling: But you also received a freshman’s scholarship award at the University of Tulsa

Barbara Santee: Yes.

JE: Where does that come in relating to your story of abortion? Did you go to TU at that point? I don’t know if you went right out of high school or not.

BS: The thing is, my aunt contacted my dad and told him I wanted to go to TU. So I went to TU for two semesters, right out of school. The first semester was still home, the second I had moved in with my friend. So maybe I was nineteen when that abortion happened.

JE: But at the time, performing an abortion in Oklahoma, there was a penalty, a two-year prison sentence. Also a prison penalty for the woman.

BS: I know. I knew that. Dr. Henry was the one that a lot of people went to to have their abortion. I think Brian Henry.

JE: He spent two years in McAllister for performing abortions.

BS: Yeah.

JE: And he came to visit you. We’re kind of jumping ahead of ourselves on that.

BS: Yeah, he did.

JE: Um, but he came to you. So you had that abortion. You'd also gone to school but you were working as well?

BS: Yeah.

JE: You eventually married?

BS: Yes, I married John Santee when I was twenty-two. I had his son, Scott.

JE: How old would he be today?

BS: He was born in 1960, so he'd be fifty-seven.

JE: Is he living in Tulsa?

BS: Um-hmm (affirmative).

JE: But in 1968, you were about twenty-five years old, and that's when you kind of became politically aware. Because '68 was a very turbulent time in the United States.

BS: Yes, it was.

JE: We're talking about marching against Vietnam. We had assassinations.

BS: Yes.

JE: Of JFK.

BS: Yes.

JE: Robert Kennedy.

BS: Yes.

JE: Martin Luther King. The United States was kind of in an uproar at that point.

BS: Yeah, yeah.

JE: And that's when you became politically aware yourself in that year.

BS: Yeah.

JE: What did you do?

BS: I wrote to newspapers, I went to demonstrations. They had pro-choice demonstrations in Washington and here locally. Here in Tulsa I went to a demonstration on integration. We were supposed to end up at the courthouse. Anyway, we made a big circle around. We were on First Street, I think, and that was a slum area back then. And there were a bunch of bars where a bunch of drunks hung out.

I remember I was marching along with a line of ten or twelve people and I was marching next to a black man. This guy was standing there with a beer bottle in his hand. He yelled at me. I looked at him, our eyes met, and he yelled at me, "You *& nigger lover," and he pulled that beer bottle back like he was going to throw it at me.

And I thought, "He's going to hit me right in the head with that." I just moved my head and I just kept marching, and he never threw it. Because I think he knew if he threw it he was going to cause a race riot.

JE: This was a march for civil rights for blacks.

BS: Uh, yeah, yeah.

JE: So that's what that was all about.

BS: Yeah, yeah.

JE: And you worked for the Urban League too, didn't you?

BS: Yeah. Curtis Williams was the head of the Urban League back then.

JE: Your development then into social issues, you began reading material?

BS: Yeah.

JE: Maybe liberal? Radical?

BS: Yeah.

JE: I don't know, how would you describe it?

BS: Well, at TU I had a professor named Sharon Price. She kept shoving me to read this, read this, read this. She was the one who got me very interested in some of this stuff.

JE: In Tulsa then, you joined groups that were advocating for abortion?

BS: Yes.

JE: But you were a civil rights advocate?

BS: Yeah.

JE: And you didn't know which way your path was going to go, at that point.

BS: No, I just knew that it was wrong for women to have to, you know, hide and be ashamed and not get adequate care. Abortion was not made legal until 1973. So in 1970, I started a pro-choice group. I started speaking out on abortion. I actually went on a TV cast with Clayton Vaughn. He interviewed me about the abortion issue. I believe I was the first person in Tulsa, if not Oklahoma, to openly talk about that on television.

I left Tulsa in '72, so it had to be before then.

JE: When you were at TU it was probably one of the first times you spoke publicly at TU?

BS: Oh, the very first time. I remember that. I went to speak to a sociology class. This was Sharon pushing me. I wasn't a public speaker, I was very nervous and shaking. I had my cards with all the facts and figures. And there were some policemen sitting in the back. Policemen were starting to take sociology courses.

I saw these policemen and I thought, "Oh, my God, are they going to arrest me for talking about this issue?" I talked about it but my voice was quaking and I was just really scared to death. But nothing happened, so I just plunged ahead.

JE: And you wrote your papers in school about abortion.

BS: Yes.

JE: So you became known as an expert, I guess.

BS: Uh, I guess. I did my doctoral dissertation and my master's paper on abortion.

JE: You were the president of MORAL, that stands for what?

BS: Well, about a dozen of us met in the basement of the All Souls Unitarian Church, that's my church. And we wanted to start a group in Tulsa on the abortion issue. We talked about

it for a while and they chose me to be the chair because I was the most outspoken. They said, "Well, let's call it the Oklahomans for the Reform of Abortion Laws."

I said, "That spells ORAL and we already have an ORAL in Oklahoma that we don't need. So let's call it Modern Oklahomans for the Repeal (not the Reform, the Repeal) of Abortion Laws." And that's how that came about.

I began talking out and some of these women began talking out in their own churches about it.

JE: When you made the appearance on TV, channel 6, I guess it would be here, CBS, KOTV, were you afraid that people were going to see you in the street or whatever? And then, were you ever threatened with your life because of your stance?

BS: No, actually, when Clayton got through interviewing me, I stepped off the little riser and everybody in that room clapped. And that shocked me, it really shocked me, and I felt, "Well, I must be doing something right."

JE: You were bringing it to the open because, obviously, abortions have gone on—

BS: Yeah.

JE: ...for decades.

BS: Yeah.

JE: And it was always thought of behind closed doors, dark alleys, and that type of thing.

BS: Yeah.

JE: So the fact that this woman was on television in the open talking about it must have been the reason for the applause.

BS: He—yeah.

JE: And obviously, you did a good job. Don't you think that was why?

BS: Yeah, I think so. And it gave me the courage to realize that there are some people out there who do think the same way I do. It's not all this Christian Coalition stuff out there.

JE: What was your message then?

BS: I just gave some of the facts and figures about women who are hurt or women who die from it. And the kinds of methods that they use in order to abort themselves. Some women poison themselves. I even heard of one woman who shot herself in the stomach in order to get rid of the fetus. And they fall down stairs. They do all kinds of things to themselves to try to rid themselves of an unwanted fetus. It's unbelievable.

JE: So regardless of the law, women will get an abortion—

BS: Oh yeah, oh yeah.

JE: ...or another.

BS: It's like anything, if people want dope, they're going to go get it somehow. You know, why don't they legalize dope? It's so stupid, I mean, people are—well, anyway, it's off on another tangent.

JE: Right.

Chapter 06 - 2:50**Abortion Doctor**

John Erling: Well, that's when this doctor, Dr. Brian Henry, who spent two years in McAllister for performing abortions came to visit you.

Barbara Santee: He came to my house and he visited me and he asked me if I could help him get his license back. They had taken his license away.

I was just starting in this movement. I had no idea how to help a doctor get his license back. And he left extremely disappointed and I felt terrible. I didn't even know who to ask to help him to get his license back.

JE: You don't know what happened to him?

BS: I asked him, I said, "Why did you start doing abortions in the first place?"

And he said that women would come to him and ask him to do abortions and he wouldn't do it. And this very wealthy woman from Tulsa came and begged him to do an abortion because her husband was sterile and he couldn't impregnate her. If she came up pregnant he'd divorce her and she'd lose everything. The doctor said he was sorry he couldn't do it.

But then he heard the next morning on the radio that she'd been killed when she hit an abutment head-on.

JE: In a car?

BS: And that's how sh....

JE: Ended her life an....

BS: Yeah.

JE: The life of the unborn.

BS: Yeah. After that, he started doing abortions.

JE: But the group known as MORAL, I understand you were asked to step down because you were divorced.

BS: Yeah, after about four months, I was the only activist among the group and I was pushing us ahead. But they somehow thought that because I was divorced that it was a mark on the organization, so I stepped down.

JE: This is in the early '70s?

BS: Yeah.

JE: So we're thinking about divorce at that time as being really something to be looked down upon.

BS: I know! It's so archaic.

JE: And then, and obviously abortion had been the same way.

BS: Yeah.

JE: Still is, of course, in many circles, but back then, it was in the darkness.

BS: Yeah.

JE: So you were representing both sides here. [both laughing] You stepped down because you were divorced.

BS: Yeah.

JE: Is that, then, when you went to Michigan?

BS: Well, my friend Sharon, I went in her office and she threw this pamphlet at me and said, "Here, apply for this."

And I applied for this fellowship. They accepted me, so I put my kid and my stuff into my little blue Mustang and we took off to go to Michigan. And my kid, who at that point was about ten years old, said, "Mom, that sign back there says we're going to Dallas."

And I was like, [both laughing] and we were. I turned the wrong way on 75. [both laughing] I said, "Oh, okay." So I turned around and we went up to Michigan.

I took about a year to get my master's up there.

JE: Your master's in what?

BS: Public health.

JE: And that was at the University of Michigan?

BS: Yeah.

Chapter 07 - 6:53

Overseas Internship

John Erling: Then you have your master's, Scott, your son, is with you there. He's, what? Ten or eleven, something like that?

Barbara Santee: I think he was about eleven at that point.

JE: Yeah.

BS: I think I sent him back home for the summer to be with his dad. Because I stayed there through the spring and in the summer I sent him back.

JE: After you receive your degree, then what's your next calling?

BS: They had something called an overseas internship. They wanted to give me one of those. I had my selection of several different countries I could go to work on family planning programs. One of them was in Chile, Santiago, Chile. So I said, "I'd like to go down there and work."

It was supposed to be a one-year internship. I took off and went down there in August of '71. The escudo was not as valuable as the dollar, so I could get really good deals with my dollar.

I got a real nice apartment. I had a job working on an abortion study. I really had a wonderful time in Chile.

JE: Were you attached to the United Nations headquarters there?

BS: Yeah. Now, the main UN headquarters is not where I worked. I worked in kind of a little subheadquarters, down further in the main part of town.

JE: So you studied abortion issues there in Chile?

BS: Yeah, I was working on a study they had done and I was analyzing the data that they had done. It was a comparison of a longititude and a prospective study of women who had had abortions to see how much memory loss they'd had during a year they'd been studied. To see how accurate recovery of the data was in their minds.

It turns out that 34 percent of the women don't remember accurately whether they'd had an abortion or not during the year. That's a one-sentence capsulation of what the study was about.

Anyway, there was more and more turmoil because Allende was in office and he was a socialist. The right wing was not happy with Allende, he was more middle of the road or even a little bit to the left. So the right wing wasn't happy with him.

I was walking to my office, which was a couple of blocks away from my apartment building, and I heard these shots. It was a lot of shots and I'm thinking, "Holy cow, what's going on?" And I ran on to the office and everybody was gathered around this radio. They were listening to the announcer and there was a coup taking place.

Well, one of my best friends was an older lady who'd lived in Chile all of her life, but of European descent. Very sophisticated and quite rich and, at one point, about a month before, she had pulled up next to a car containing, I think, Pinochet, or one of the higher-ups in the regime. And she looked over and she stuck her tongue out at him.

Now, she's fifty years old, or so, she stuck her tongue out at him. And before she knew it, he shot at her car and put bullet holes in her car. He said, he got out of his car and aimed at her head and said, "Apologize or I'll blow your brains out."

She was scared out of her mind. Anyway, that was a month before, so things were a little iffy. So anyway, I'm walking and I hear these shots. They're listening and Allende, they're trying to overthrow him, and they said, "Everybody, go to your homes. There's going to be a curfew."

I ran back to my house and told my maid, "Go to your home." And these streets, there were people streaming back and forth across the river and at the other side of the river trying to get to their houses, because of the shooting. I could see from my apartment the

downtown and, all of a sudden, two jets were flying over my apartment building. They shook the windows and then they flew down low over La Moneda, which is the palace where the president is, and they shot off these bombs underneath the wings. And then they came back and came around and, again, the windows shake and they go again. And more bombs. I don't know how many times they did that.

And then they went up to his house up in the mountains, because we're at the foot of the Andes, and bombs his house. Then one by one, all the radio stations go off and it's just been taken over by Pinochet and his people. Then the television goes off, again, Pinochet. Then the news comes, "Do not leave your house. You will be shot on sight, no warning." They put, I think, it was a two-day curfew on us. We couldn't go to the grocery store, we couldn't leave our house, we couldn't do anything.

There were two older people who were hard of hearing who left their homes, and they just shot them dead. So when the curfew was up and we could go get something to eat, I ran to the grocery store and all that was left on the meat counter were bulls' tails and bulls' balls. I just grabbed what I could to eat and ran back.

But there were these soldiers behind these cars, aiming up to the second floor of my apartment. I said, "What's going on?"

They said, "*Terrorista*, I guess, on the second floor."

I ran back to my apartment and just hoped that they wouldn't come searching for Americans, because I didn't know if Pinochet was going to pick Americans or not to shoot at. You know.

Anyway, after about a week, the shooting died down. And Pinochet took control.

JE: Did you feel good about that? Did life change because of that takeover?

BS: Well, I was determined to stay there for another month because I had tickets to go to Easter Island. I was not going to let something like a little coup stop me.

JE: [laughs]

BS: From doing my assigned duty. So I got to Easter Island, and that was a wonderful experience. I stayed in the home of the man who would have been the king of Easter Island, had the royalty line carried forth. He and his wife were both big people and they were really nice. The woman was a wonderful cook. And I rode a donkey up a volcano. Don't ever ride a donkey up a volcano. Your ass will fall off anything. It hurts to high heaven. I just rode all over Easter Island, it's a gorgeous, gorgeous place, it's really pretty.

JE: This is at the tail-end then of your internship there.

BS: Um-hmm (affirmative).

Chapter 08 - 2:36**AIDS and Women**

John Erling: Should bring you up into 1973, I suppose, then you leave.

Barbara Santee: Yeah.

JE: Then you applied to Columbia University.

BS: Oh, I applied to Columbia to work on a master's there, and they accepted me, so I went to New York. And I was working there. I also was making some money working on some projects that they had.

JE: At Columbia?

BS: Yes.

JE: And then you get your master's there?

BS: Yes.

JE: And that brings you to about 1977.

BS: Yes.

JE: In New York, then you begin to do some volunteer work.

BS: Yes.

JE: Tell us about that.

BS: Well, AIDS was just really kind of coming down the pike, you know. The first case was found in 1981, and it was getting to be full-blown. So I started working with different AIDS groups. There was the American Foundation for AIDS Research, the Women and AIDS Resource Network. I served as officers on their boards and did various things with them. And you know, when you're working on a board it's hard to describe the kind of work that you do.

I did write a paper for the Women and AIDS Resource Network. The thing is, people for a long time thought only men got AIDS, gay guys. But women were getting AIDS and nobody was paying that much attention. So I wrote a little booklet for the Women and AIDS Resource Network, it set out what the issue is among women and gave the numbers and statistics. I had to find those number in a lot of different publications because they were just kind of hidden, as an afterthought, after the men had been looked at—oh yeah, here are the women. So I put that all together in a booklet. I started distributing that and people around the United States, AIDS groups were just gobbling it up. We were getting requests from other countries for this little booklet.

JE: Because you had centered it on women.

BS: Yes. That was the first one that was centered on women.

JE: So in the '80s, that too was another topic that was taboo, AIDS.

BS: Oh yeah, very, very much.

JE: People looked down on that.

BS: Yeah, one of the guys I worked with at the center came down with AIDS. I went to see him in the hospital and he said, "Don't touch me and don't kiss me." You know, you kiss people on the cheek. He said, "Don't kiss me."

I said, "Okay," and he died a few days later.

JE: Hmm (thoughtful sound).

BS: So many people died before they found any kind of remedy or something that would at least lengthen their lives.

Chapter 09 - 6:04

"Trespasses"

John Erling: You wrote a play, produced off Broadway. What the name of the play?

Barbara Santee: "Trespasses."

JE: Trespasses?

BS: Yes.

JE: And what was that about?

BS: When I was about two years old until I was about eight my uncle sexually molested me. This was my mother's sister's husband. I had told my mother about it at some point and I asked her years later, "Why didn't you stop it?"

And she said, "Well, I talked to Virginia, I thought she would stop it."

But because my mother drank she always dumped onto Bill and Virginia because they had an only child. And she wanted to go drink; she didn't care really what happened to me. So he continued to molest me and he would find ways to do that.

I remember one time they were having a party at my mother's house and they were playing some music and he wanted to go get his drums. My aunt was going to go with him and I got in the backseat because I was wanting to go and I was about five or six or something. Because I was always wanting to go somewhere.

Well, he found a way to pick a fight with her. She jumps out of the car and slams the door, and he takes off with me. He had set it up so he could be alone with me. Takes me to their house and molests me and the.... you know, he was always setting up situations where he could have me by myself.

And I remember after I was married and had my son, who was about five, Bill wanted to take him to get some ice cream. And I said, "No, he doesn't need any ice cream."

He said, "Come on, I'm going to get him some ice cream."

And my son said, "I want ice cream."

I said, "No, he's not going to take you to get ice cream."

Bill got mad at me and he said, "I wanted—"

I said, "I don't care what you want, you're not taking him." And I think everybody in that room knew what I was doing. I was protecting my son.

And Bill, I think he didn't molest little boys, but I wasn't going to take the chance.

So I said, "We're going anyway." I said, "We're going now."

And my husband didn't even know, I hadn't told my husband.

JE: As an adult, you never did face him with what he had done to you between the ages of two and eight?

BS: No.

JE: Okay.

BS: But you know, he always liked new cars, Cadillacs and stuff like that, gold watches. He came to New York with his grandson, who is really a great musician. They came to New York twenty, twenty-five years ago. They were going to a jazz concert. They came up and I went to see them down in Central Park. I could tell that Bill wasn't happy, he seemed just really depressed. It was kind of misty and when they got up and walked away it was almost like a postcard. He walked away and I thought, "I'll never see him alive again."

About a month later, I got the phone call that he had driven to the lake in his new Cadillac, left the door open, he couldn't swim, he walked out to the middle of the lake and drowned himself.

So I guess there was some heavy guilt there.

JE: Yeah. So this play "Trespases"—

BS: Tres—

JE: ...is that an outest [indiscernible time 3:36] experience you've talked about?

BS: It was my experience of a little girl being molested. It was really difficult to show on stage, a molestation of a child. So I decided to go with an invisible child. I had the adult—Maggie was the name of the child—off to one side and she was relating her memories about her childhood. She talked about the molestation scene. The uncle says, "Now here, Maggie, take your panties off," and then he freezes. She is talking like a child. And she says, "Why Uncle (I can't remember what I called him, Uncle Whatever), what are you doing?"

If someone in the audience has been molested they don't have to see they child, they identify with it. I did it at the TOMI Theater in New York. And TOMI stands for Theatre Opera and Music Institute, it's a little off-Broadway theatre on, I think, 73rd Street behind the Dakota Apartment House where John Lennon was killed.

We ran there for sixteen performances. I came out of one of the performances and I saw a woman lean against the wall, white as a sheet. I said, "What's the matter?"

And she said, "I know this has happened to me." She said, "I can't remember it but I know it's happened to me." And she was just bawling.

JE: Hmm (thoughtful sound).

BS: There were so many women who told me, "Thank you for writing this," and I felt so grateful. It was filled up almost every night.

JE: Hmm (thoughtful sound). How did you get it produced? It takes money to do that.

BS: Well, I had a friend named Don Senore, who is a director. He had plays produced before and somehow he came up with twenty-five thousand dollars. I don't know and I didn't ask and it just fell into my lap. So I said, "Let's go with it."

So he did it. It was just wonderful.

JE: It ran sixteen times.

BS: Yes.

JE: Was that more than you thought it was going to run?

BS: In New York, the theatre requirements are very stringent. If you have a ninety-nine-seat house you can only do sixteen performances. If you have a hundred and some odd you can do so many performances on and on like that.

So that was the most that we could do. Don Senore was a wonderful cook and he had been a dancer and was very svelte. He added music to the background. Unfortunately, he died of AIDS because he was gay.

Chapter 10 - 2:38

Billie Letts

John Erling: Well, you have writing in your DNA because your cousin is Billie Letts.

Barbara Santee: Yes.

JE: She was born in Tulsa.

BS: Yes.

JE: How did she become your cousin?

BS: Her mother and my mother are sisters. Billie is my mother's sister's baby.

JE: Um-hmm (affirmative).

BS: Virginia only had one child, my mother had three. Billie was about a year younger than me, but we were very close, and really more like sisters than cousins. She would come to the Union ballgames and she just loved the people at Union. Finally, I convinced her to change from the Tulsa schools to go to Union, and she did her last two years of school.

She loved it because she was more like a small-town kid. She really loved the kids out there and became fast friends with them.

JE: Did you know anything about her writing abilities at that time?

BS: No. Never occurred to me. She wrote *Where the Heart Is*. Her books are up here; she wrote five books.

JE: *Honk and Holler; Shoot the Moon; Made in the USA*.

BS: Yes. She married Dennis Letts. I can't remember how old she was, but they got married and they had Tracy Letts. And Tracy Letts followed in her footsteps.

JE: He received the Pulitzer Prize for drama for *August Osage County*.

BS: Yeah, *August Osage County*.

JE: The only Oklahoman to win a Pulitzer Prize for drama.

BS: Yeah.

JE: Tony Award for his portrayal of George in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Wolfe?* Yeah, he was very talented.

BS: Yes.

JE: A writer and all. Were you around him? Did you get to know him at all?

BS: No. They lived in Durant, Oklahoma, because she and her husband, Dennis, taught at the school down there. They both taught English. And they finally moved up here, ten, twelve years ago, something like that. The boys, at that point, Shawn went to Singapore.

JE: Shawn is?

BS: Tracy and Shawn are brothers. Billie's two kids. So Shawn, he's a musician, a really good musician, he went over to Singapore, met a girl over there, married her and that's where he's lived for twenty years or so. And—

JE: Well, they've got a lot of talent because Dennis became a Broadway actor.

BS: Yes.

JE: They had all this talent come dribbling down to them.

BS: I know, I know.

JE: They couldn't help themselves, could they?

BS: I know.

JE: Billie died in Tulsa, she was seventy-six years old in August of 2014.

BS: Yes.

JE: Tracy, of course, was born here in Tulsa. We mention all that—

BS: Yes.

JE: ...because you inherited some of that writing ability yourself.

BS: Well, I'm not sure, not as good as she is.

Chapter 11 - 5:00**Silent Scream**

John Erling: In 1985, you became the executive director of NYS NARAL. Can you explain that to me?

Barbara Santee: Yes, New York State National Abortion Rights Action League. I held that job about three or four months, basically because the two women in the office didn't like me. [laughs] It was a shoe that didn't fit, so I left that pretty quickly.

JE: You know, about this time as you were promoting women's rights the film *The Silent Scream*, was being shown.

BS: Yeah, yeah.

JE: Tell us about that film and the ramifications of it.

BS: Well, that was really something that hit us blindsided. It was a film made by the opposition where they filmed the sonogram of a fetus being aborted. They purported that the mouth was open and, therefore, the fetus was screaming in pain.

And I thought, "How in the world could these people, they're talking against abortion, and then they go in and do something like that?" I never seen it but they just will do anything. It's disgusting.

I used to go out to the abortion clinic every Saturday morning. We would do clinic defense, we called it. There's a concrete slab there that the antiabortion people wouldn't cross because that was clinic property, but they would come as close as possible. They would put their signs up showing aborted fetuses. And when the people came in they tried to stop the cars and so forth.

And I saw one of the men was driving his wife in in a pickup, and this guy stopped them and said, "You're killing your baby."

And this guy threw a cup of hot coffee in his face, which I thought he deserved.

Come rain or shine, at one point, I had hand-warmers in my coat and electric socks and my coat caught on fire from hand-warmers.

JE: Hmm (thoughtful sound).

BS: But anything for the cause, right? [laughing]

JE: [laughing] Wow.

BS: We used to have quite a few people out there at Reproductive Services.

JE: Here in Tulsa?

BS: Yeah.

JE: What were your talking points or arguments? Those who were right-to-life, the discussion is when does life begin?

BS: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

JE: Is one of the points.

BS: Well, the thing is, it's hard to discuss anything with people who scream at you and are fanatical. There are one or two people who would talk. There was a guy on our side who would talk with them. But I'd get so riled up that I couldn't, I just couldn't, uh, have a decent conversation with them.

But, you know, if a woman doesn't have a right to her own body, what in the world does she have a right to? Is she a slave? I mean, it makes her a slave to her uterus. I mean, would a man feel like that if he could get pregnant? I'm sure those men would be running down to that abortion clinic as fast as they could go. It's not right.

JE: So it's not the issue of when life begins, it's the right of the woman to make that decision herself.

BS: Yes.

JE: Did you ever talk about adoption as an alternative to abortion?

BS: Oh sure. Yeah, adoption is an alternative. I guess, most women have thought about adoption, but for a lot of them it's not an alternative because it would totally mess up their lives in many ways. It's up to individual women what they decide. It's not for me or for you, it's for them.

JE: So your argument was not when life begins, it was about the rights of a woman to decide that.

BS: Yes, yes.

JE: And that was you.... ?

BS: Yeah.

JE: Yeah?

BS: Yeah.

JE: More and more clinics were being bombed.

BS: Yeah. We went there one morning and a bullet hole was in the front window of the clinic. Another time, someone had put a hole about that big in the executive director's office window and poured some kind of noxious fumes in there. I don't know what it was. She had to have that fumigated out.

They were constantly doing things. One day I got there early and this guy was going through their trash. Had the lid up on one of these big trash things. I pulled up behind his car so he couldn't get out.

And he kind of panicked. So I let him get out. And then I followed him. He pulled into the service station and I kept following him, and I thought, "What are you doing? You don't know if this guy's got a gun or what." So I went back to the clinic.

And the thing was, she had had a lock on that thing and she'd had the back of it welded shut. Somehow he had gotten it loose and had been going through her trash. She didn't know how long. Getting the names of patients and things like that.

Chapter 12 - 4:47**White House Demonstration**

John Erling: A stray bullet was fired through Justice Harry Blackman's living room window. He, of course, had written the Roe Vs. Wade opinion.

Barbara Santee: It didn't just go through his window, it went through the back of a chair that he normally sat in.

JE: He was from Illinois, he was a Republican. Seemed to become more liberal the older he became.

BS: [laughs]

JE: And he was ninety when he died.

BS: Yeah.

JE: So clinics were bombed, clinics were attacked. You were standing in front of the White House March 9, 1986, holding a thirty-foot banner and tears were in your eyes.

BS: Yes.

JE: Tell us the story about that.

BS: Well, I made the banner myself and I was—how can you not have tears in your eyes when—

JE: What did the banner say?

BS: I can't even remember. I've got a picture of it somewhere. I think it was in the *New York Times*. Maybe "Abortion Rights for All," or something like that, I don't recall.

I'd gotten these big blocks of wood like this that were six feet tall or five feet tall. They were big. I put three of them and then put sheets across. You know, it's okay to buy those but carrying them, they were heavy. [both laughing] We just felt the need to let the president know. We started out on that big lawn and—

JE: The Ellipse?

BS: Yeah. Marched all the way down and up to the White House. If I remember correctly, it was hot, but, you know, I don't even know if the president was there or not. Of course, we were doing it for the media. We had to get the media to focus on what we were doing and put our word out to the country that there were a lot of women involved in this. And they did.

So we got what we wanted with the media attention. I accomplished my goal.

JE: Did—right, but it was a very moving experience for you, obviously?

BS: Oh yeah, yeah. I started collecting pro-choice buttons back in the '70s. I think I had four hundred. I started putting them on this skirt and everything. And when I went to pro-choice meetings everybody would say, "Oh, my gosh, let me take a picture of you," and I loved that. That was so great.

JE: So you wore them all over your sk—

BS: Yeah. I've donated all those buttons to University of Tulsa.

JE: Okay. You returned to Tulsa in 1989, associate director of the Center for Health Policy Research at the University of Tulsa.

BS: Yeah, with Mike Lapolla, he was the head of that.

I wrote a paper about abortion in Oklahoma. It was thick and it was bound, I think it might have been the first one done.

JE: You were the founding member of several organizations, Oklahoma Progressive Alliance; Tulsa Interfaith Alliance; Women and Children's Committee of the Tulsa AIDS Coalition; and the Tulsa Teen Pregnancy Prevention Coalition; to mention just a few.

BS: Yeah.

JE: Were you, were you busy?

BS: Ah, yes. [both laughing]

JE: Wow!

BS: Well, I saw the need for these different areas and I couldn't believe people hadn't seen the need before me. I saw it and I just called people together and said, "Let's do this," and they did it.

JE: Each one of those, Teen Pregnancy, Tulsa Interfaith Alliance, Women and Children's Committee, and the Tulsa AIDS Coalition, they were all very, very important. Were you chairman of all those boards or did you sit on them o.... ?

BS: Well, I was either chair or vice chair or something, but I was pushing people. My problem is I've got this kind of pushy personality, so whenever I come up with an idea everybody says, "You do it."

And I, "Come on, people, why can't you peopl.... ?" People are lazy [laughing]. "Why do I have to do everything?" And so I end up doing stuff.

I finally got disgusted whenever I would call people and I'd say, "Can you do this?"

"Well, I can't, I'm going to have a birthday party."

"Can you do this?"

"No, I can't because my sister-in-law's blah, blah, blah."

And I finally just said, "Hell, this is not worth it." Nobody is willing to give up anything. I'm giving up everything. I guess that's just the frustration of somebody who is an activist.

JE: Um-hmm (affirmative). But you had people who joined you, I mean, you weren't by yourself, they came.

BS: No, there were some people who stayed true blue but it was not easy, trust me.

JE: The Women and Gender Study Program at TU has named its library in your honor.

BS: Yes, it did, I was very proud of that.

Chapter 13 - 5:36**In Reflection**

John Erling: There were people in Tulsa who pushed back. And you, did you hear from them as you were such an outspoken advocate?

Barbara Santee: Uh, I got a phone call from somebody who told me to stick it up my—I can't remember. Only one phone call I can remember that was negative.

JE: Churches didn't reach out to you or didn't say anything to you? Did you ever feel through this whole journey your life being threatened?

BS: I always had pro-choice bumper stickers on my car. And when I was out on the freeway a couple of times I felt like people were trying to run me off the road. But I just let it pass.

JE: You were selected as one of the One Hundred Women of Moxie. These were women, who during the last one hundred years, have been strong advocates for bringing opportunities for women's growth, leadership, and power.

BS: Yeah.

JE: You must have felt good about all the honor that has come to you.

BS: I do, I did.

JE: Oh, and I want to point out, the ACLU of Oklahoma awarded you the highest honor, the Angie Debo Award. Angie Debo is probably the greatest historian Oklahoma has ever had.

BS: Yes.

JE: And it had to make you feel proud.

BS: I really felt honored by that.

JE: Yeah.

BS: It was wonderful.

JE: About pro-choice today, back when you started talking about it compared to today, what's the growth? Where does it stand?

BS: I think it stands that it can't be turned back. They keep trying to shave it off little by little but I think women are so accustomed to having freedom of choice that by now I just don't think anybody is going to be able to take it away.

JE: So Roe Vs. Wade will never be overturned?

BS: I don't think so.

JE: Yeah.

BS: I think if anyone tries it that they're going to be castrated. I hope. [both laughing]

JE: And so, I guess, maybe we know the answer to this, why did you dedicate, really, your entire life to this one issue?

BS: For me, for the women who came before me, and for the women who will come after me.

JE: As you look back, what are you most proud of?

BS: The work that I've done in that area, in the abortion area.

JE: You know, if you'd been born into a different situation where you were not confronted at twelve with abortion, your mother had been a different kind of person, and maybe even if you hadn't had an abortion, it's likely you might have chosen a far different career path. Is that true?

BS: That's an if I'll never know. [laughs]

JE: And you don't want to go down there. Did you ever wonder about that? Because you could have been a professor. You have your PhD, you're a doctor, Barbara Santee, PhD is in what?

BS: In sociomedical sciences.

JE: Right. So you could have been a number of things.

BS: But I am a number of things. [both laughing]

JE: I like that.

BS: You act like, "Oh, you're a failing slob." Oh! [both laughing]

JE: No, I didn't mean it to come that way. It was your circumstances in life put you on this trajectory, speaking out for women's rights. [both laughing] I'm not, [laughs] I just wondered if you had ever had a wonder? I think what I'm pointing out more, yes, you could have even left all this and gone on to whatever. But you didn't, you chose to stay for the cause. Did I redeem myself there?

BS: Yes. [both laughing] Redemption granted.

JE: So advice to young women that are listening to this, in your experience, what advice do you give them?

BS: Follow your heart. Follow your heart.

JE: Well, that's what you sure did.

BS: Yeah. Do you wonder why I have a spoon collection?

JE: I was going to mention these artifacts on this wall here. Yes, you have this spoon collection, tell me why.

BS: Because it's the most common utensils used by women around the world. Is it not?

JE: Yes, I hadn't even thought about that. Cooking—

BS: Giving medicine to their children. Bonking them on the head occasionally. [laughs]

JE: Yeah. Did your son, Scott, turn out all right?

BS: Well, actually, no. He got into drugs and ah (sigh) and other kinds of things. And we, unfortunately, aren't close. That's the biggest pain in my life.

JE: So as Sinatra sang, "Regrets, I've had a few," that's one of them?

BS: Yes, yes.

JE: When you're gone, how would you like to be remembered?

BS: That I tried. I tried the best I could with what I had.

JE: Yeah. The University of Tulsa was really good for you, wasn't it?

BS: I think so. I look back, I went there when I was a teenager. And then I went back and TU seems to run in and out of my life like kind of a thread. And I donated all my papers to TU and my button collection. So I guess my stuff will be there long after I'm gone. I don't know that anybody will ever look at, bu....

JE: Well, maybe as a result of this story you've told. I've enjoyed listening to you. Thank you for your story and your details. Now it's preserved forever and ever for the future generations. That's why we do this, so thank you, Barbara, I appreciate it.

BS: Well, thank you for doing it. I think it's a valuable project.

Chapter 14 - 0:33

Conclusion

Announcer: This oral history presentation is made possible through the support of our generous foundation-funders. We encourage you to join them by making your donation, which will allow us to record future stories. Students, teachers, and librarians are using this website for research and the general public is listening every day to these great Oklahomans share their life experience. Thank you for your support as we preserve Oklahoma's legacy one voice at a time, on VoicesofOklahoma.com.