

**ORAL HISTORY T-0115**  
**INTERVIEW WITH ELIXABETH METZGER**  
**INTERVIEWED BY IRENE CORTINOVIS**  
**WOMEN IN THE SEVENTIES PROJECT**  
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CORTINOVIS: As you are quite familiar already with what we want to do and what we think about doing, as we spoke of before, I always aim to get people's ideas of what is it about Women's Liberation, either structured or unstructured which interests you, and how you first got interested in it. Before that, let's start with a little background of your family. Could you tell us a little bit about your family, where you are placed in your family, and what kind of family you came from?

METZGER: Well, I was born May 30, 1945 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. I lived most of my life in the eastern United States in Pennsylvania. I have an older sister, just about two years older than I, and a brother, who is five years younger than I. So, I'm a middle child. I grew up in what you might call a white, Jewish, middle-class family. I never really had to worry too much about things like financial security and didn't have to pay my way through college. So, financially, I was always secure. As is natural for middle children, I have gone through certain stages of sibling rivalry...which come now, even as an adult. I never had any kind of feelings that my parents treated my sister and me differently from the way they treated my brother, in terms of encouraging us to do certain things; we were all encouraged to go to college if we could and, I, unlike many of the students who went to school in the early 60s, never felt definite pressures from my parents to run off and get married or to go to school solely to get a man. They always encouraged me to learn things that would make me independent. In other words, I don't think I was treated in any particularly feminist way when I was growing up.

CORTINOVIS: Are your parents college trained?

METZGER: My father is a photographer and he more or less is self-educated, because he has always read a lot; in fact, he's very interested in history. My mother grew up in a farm family, and she wanted to go to college; she did very well in high school, but they [her parents] simply couldn't afford college. In fact, interestingly enough, my father didn't go to college, so that his parents could- send his two sisters to boarding school, and there wasn't enough money left over for him...which was awful. They still live in Allentown, Pennsylvania, so I don't really get to see them a lot. I went to school and got my B.A. at the University of Pittsburg in Literature and History and my master's degree here at the University of Missouri in American History. I'm currently, well, in the last few years I've gotten very interested in doing research on women's history, and I have worked closely with Susan Hartmann on this matter and plan on going on for my doctorate at the University of Pittsburg in American History doing my research in women's history.

CORTINOVIS: There isn't anything about your family background that led to your interest in women's history, in women's rights or feminism?

METZGER: Well, actually, I have always been influenced by very close frier and the way I got into women's history was through a close friend of mine who is right now finishing up her doctorate at Pittsburg. I knew at Pittsburg and her name is Susan Kleinberg and she, in fact, when I got married [I was married for two years]...she tried to encourage me to keep my maiden name. At that time, I didn't see the point in it, and she was one of the early woman libers...she was very much into thinking about problems of women...pretty much before a lot of people got into it, I would say...and I corresponded with her quite a bit, even though she was in Pittsburg and I was in St. Louis. I think that I was gradually much more influenced by her than by my family. Probably I got interested in it after I got married, because I felt somewhat trapped when I was married; I suddenly adopted a small stepson and was not really used to having this responsibility and began to think about personal problems. Women's Lib to me has always been one of personal liberation more than a mass revolutionary movement and, in fact, many of my leftist friends have criticized me for this. But I think that first of all, women must do their own liberating; they can't wait around for men...or other people...to do things for them. A lot of it is getting one's self to become actively participating in what happens to one's self. Speaking for myself, I think this is one of the problems of getting over a kind of passive tendency that, I think, I probably had growing up and tend to fall back into now. I think that when I found myself in a role of a wife and mother and also a graduate student, the kinds of problems that many women have in this kind of position became much more clear to me, because I was personally experiencing them. I went through a lot of hard feelings about this myself. So, my influences came from my friend, Susan Kleinberg, as an early influence, and then once I was married and began to experience hard conflicts within myself...about who I was, I think that sort of cleared things a little more for me. I guess I tend to stay away from organized kinds of women's groups.

CORTINOVIS: Do you belong to anything at all?

METZGER: No, I don't now; I belonged to a small women's rap group this summer in California and found that it was very interesting and very good. But I tended not to want to get involved in one here in St. Louis...mostly because I was spending a lot of time trying to look for a job and support myself and didn't really feel that I wanted to get into another one right away.

CORTINOVIS: Of course, knowing your husband, I always got the impression that he was interested in women's affairs and women's rights, and a few times on campus when I had gone to meetings, I had seen him.

METZGER: Well, yes. Steve is very intellectually interested in what happens to women. I think he's talked quite a bit about this and, in fact, when we were married, we split most of the housework, not because it had anything to do with women's lib, but because we were both very busy and it seemed like the fairest thing to do. I suppose I could talk more honestly with him than with a lot of other men about the Women's Liberation Movement. But he's like everybody else, he slips a lot; there's quite a bit of chauvinism in him in many other ways which, I think, I thought about a lot over the past years since we've been separated. But since I've been living alone again, I've learned more things about being liberated. A lot of it has to

do with just basic confidence in learning to handle... I've gotten interested in learning about my car, for example; I didn't know how to drive before September, because I didn't think I was capable of learning how to drive and, since Steve drove, there wasn't that much pressure on me. Now I am trying to overcome what has been a very strong tendency in my life...namely, a total lack of interest in anything mechanical, and I've found that even for women who never looked at machines, they can learn about their automobiles. Just supporting myself was completely a new experience for me, too, as I mentioned earlier. All through college, I never had/worry about financial security, and I always seemed to be able to get some kind of help. This is the first time I have ever been completely on my own at the age of twenty-seven! I find that fairly amazing! But it has been very good for me, especially when I couldn't go out with a master's degree and find a decent job. I think that one thing that I thought quite a bit about and talked to friends about, the whole socialization process that goes into women thinking about themselves and what it is they should do with their lives. I think the area that I am probably interested in...well, I'm interested in a lot of different areas; I'm interested in law, women in law, I'm interested in women's history, and I'm interested in the whole array of human relationships, in terms of men and women. It's a very frightening thing, and it gets down to the guts of the issue, because so many women, really, become...well, they don't really think of themselves as being full human beings and find that they really need to have a man around all of the time, whether it's their father, husband or boyfriend...to do things for them...to think for them...and they don't really live their own lives.

CORTINOVIS: Do you think that this is a part of their socialization?

METZGER: I think that in many ways it is.

CORTINOVIS: Or is it the end result?

METZGER: Yes, I guess I see it so much that...

CORTINOVIS: Conditioning?

METZGER: Yes, it's very, very hard, because what happens with me and with other people I know...you see a lot of chauvinism in yourself, female chauvinism, too, in reverse. And it's sort of an interesting thing when you get very sensitive to it...like sometimes I have very bad feelings about other women and start characterizing them in very chauvinistic terms. I have to catch myself, because here I am doing what I don't think other people should do.

CORTINOVIS: As an example...

METZGER: Well, like the whole kind of gossiping thing that women often get into...talking a lot about their personal problems. I've become very irritated I at that...or, if I'm driving along and a driver does a very stupid thing, I immediately think that it has to be a woman driver! I know that I would be very annoyed if someone else thought that it was a woman driver since I consider myself a pretty good driver. The problem of preferring to be with men than to be with women in certain social situations is probably some chauvinism there, too...finding women uninteresting or boring, not going a step further and thinking, "Why are they like this and why is it that they can't very often talk about intellectual things," or

whatever it is that I happen to be interested in at that time.

CORTINOVIS: Do you find this very different with groups of men?

METZGER: Well, I think maybe what I'm getting at is that I tend to often categorize people often, according to certain sexual preconceptions that I have, which I think is one of the things that women, or people who are involved in the Women's Movement are trying to get away from. These habits are so ingrained that, you know, people who even claim to be very sensitive...

CORTINOVIS: I agree with that. After all, we are brought up by our total experience, and if our total experience is...most people have included this cliché assignment of not only role but attributments and traits...really the whole conditioning process...why, then, we can only follow along with society.

METZGER: One thing that I found that was interesting...I don't know if you found this when you went to graduate school...but one...when I was in graduate school, I found myself really wanting...well, I was very much aware of the kinds of image that women graduates (women) often have...very passive, very quiet, smiling a lot, and never really challenging anybody, especially if they are men. I found myself consciously becoming more aggressive...especially the second year...knowing that I never really was this way before, but actually having a very secret delight in putting down people, especially if they happened to be men! So, I think that happens to a lot of women, and it may be one of the dangers, the so-called masculine characteristics like aggressiveness and toughness...well, they are the sort of things that seem to get people ahead in their jobs and obtaining success. It's very tempting to take on these things, too, and I think that there needs to be a whole re-evaluation as to whether these things are really commendable to have.

CORTINOVIS: There are several areas that I want to be sure to cover. One is if you don't feel that there has been anything in your early family life which has led you to some of your present attitudes, are there some other things...have you felt, for instance when you went to Pittsburg to get your B.A.?

MKIZGER: Well, discriminated against...meaning...

CORTINOVIS: Do you feel that anything would have been different if you had been a man? At the University of Pittsburg?

METZGER: Well, not in the academic sense. I think I pretty much chose what I wanted to do. I never felt that any of the professors that I knew prevented me from doing what I wanted to do. I think that the whole social life in college, in the early 60s, was very damaging for both men and women. If anything the thing that stands out in my mind most is that whole atmosphere of college life. I don't know if it's still that way, because I have been away from it for a long time. But when I recognized it and began to talk about it...what did it mean to spend hours and hours, you know, putting on a griddle, and make-up, and trying to look very, very good...feeling depressed, you know, if you didn't have a boyfriend, or if you didn't feel that you were attractive to men, and I can remember going through some very futile things and feeling depression because I, you know, felt complete failure as a person because

people weren't asking me out, and I think that that whole teenage, college depression...you know, so much energy you put into that kind of thing that I see it as a very tragic result of the socialization process. I think it happens to men quite a bit, but I think that I would argue that for women it is a lot more harmful, because women really are often told that this is what it means to be a successful person. If you're not attracted to the opposite sex, then there is really something wrong with you. Again, it's very hard to overcome that. It's easy for me to speak like this now, but when you're younger, it's not.

CORTINOVIS: Well, I think that there is a lot of that still present. But I have thought about these things for a long time, too; I have two sons, and they have...they are in their twenties... and one of the differences between men and women in these social situations is that, although men can be rejected and feel rejected, they still have the option, under our present structure, of doing something about it, and girls are still restricted; it's still because we are in this more and this, you know,...the hunter and the hunted...and I think it is this atavistic throwback, really, from earlier social setup, but I still think it's depressing. How about in your marriage? You said that you were still able to talk to your husband in really serious terms about some of these things. Do you think that in this you were not an equal?

METZGER: Well, again, this gets into a very subtle process...most of which I may not have realized at the time that I was living with my husband...and I think the thing that I was thinking about was this thing about competence. I (women) think that often men think that they aren't able to do certain things...sometimes there is almost a parent-child kind of setup...and I think that probably state that I don't think that Steve felt that I was competent to do certain things that he was. I think this came up quite a bit, and even though I thought of my marriage as a fairly equalized one in terms of task-sharing, when it came down to very subtle things, I was...

CORTINOVIS: Did...

METZGER: It was probably a more traditional marriage than I could admit at the time. That's why one of the unexpected things of my splitting off with Steve which I didn't expect was my really feeling that, "My God, what am I going to do? I'm going to have to take care of the car and take care of all the things like my car insurance and taxes and things like that that I never bothered to do. I think that that was much more subtle...I think that when people talk about liberated marriages, they have to be more than just sitting down and deciding who is going to do the washing and who is going to do the dishes. A lot of it is just an attitude.

CORTINOVIS: Oh, I couldn't agree with you more. I think there is so much nonsense written in which someone's life style is detailed for your edification, as a so-called "liberated" marriage. Well, to me this is simply the top...the window-dressing...there are so many other facets to living with a person which are far more important than the dishes, or something.

METZGER: The other thing in our marriage, a matter of whose life work is more important. I don't think that either of us, including myself, really felt that my work was not secondary. I don't know if it was only because I was behind in my graduate work than Steve was, I think it was that we both knew, at least up until the end of our marriage, that if Steve got a job that was where we were going to go. In many ways, this is always a problem with academic men and women. But I think that men and women...many women work very hard, and yet they

always feel, "Well, I can't imagine moving any place because I got a job, and saying to my husband well, you work around it." It happens more and more with the job hunt. I know of cases in which the men and women decide whoever gets the good job, you know, they will live there, and that sometimes works out very well, depending on how they get along.

CORTINOVIS: Isn't the crux of that problem really one of permanent responsibility...in the sense that women, in their child-bearing years especially, are still considered by both parties to be the temporary worker?

METZGER: Well, in my case, I never thought of myself as wanting to work temporarily...but, yes, you're right. I mean, this does happen quite a bit. I think in my case it was one of ambition. I mean, to this day I do not think of myself as being one of the, you know, one of the top women historians in the country with so many complications. I think that I am much more interested in the teaching aspect than in wanting to be "a name." But Steve was always much more ambitious and aggressive and involved in this feeling. I think that there was a difference in temperament. I think that many women do often think of their jobs as temporary, often because they are not that crazy about their jobs, but unfortunately, it is often used in deciding when certain women do not get jobs because it is assumed, you know, in particular cases that in general women think this way. This isn't true at all. I've had arguments with people about this. This is one of the dangers which has led to quite a bit of discrimination in jobs. In other words, it should be assumed that because one is a woman, it is a temporary job (she thinks of her job as a temporary one) and there certainly is enough variety...

CORTINOVIS: The fact is, that it has worked out that way, very often.

METZGER: Often it has, but it should never be used against a woman. I think that I know that I don't really believe in the concept of sisterhood, because I think that there are too many women that I would not want to work with. It seems to me that I would probably want to work with a more, say, "liberal" male on certain issues than I would before I would want to work with someone like Martha Mitchell or Mrs. Nixon just because they are women. I don't know if I could get that excited about fighting to get 51% in congress if so many of these women are so far from me in other ways, politically, and other ways. So that, there is just a lot of variety in women, in terms of experience and political beliefs, and I think the value...I guess I feel a little skeptical when people, like the political caucus here in Missouri, put a lot of energy into getting women into office, often because they are women. My question would be, "Well, how are they on, you know, issues that have to do with women, or black people, or the war?" Simply because they are women, I don't know if that would make my any happier, and it's a problem. And I know that it is one that divides a lot of women, too.

CORTINOVIS: Isn't it a fact, about women...like the blacks, they have to start somewhere? I believe that is some of the thinking behind what the Women's Caucus is trying to push...for more women into political office...that just the fact that they are women...I can agree with you. I can see your point. I'd rather have someone in office whose aims and principles I agree with than the fact that they were men or women. But, also, I can see the thinking of the Women's Caucus...to get more women into office. And, in some ways, there are some parallels. You know, before I go on to more general things, I want you to just describe briefly your idea is far as suing for legal use of your maiden name while you were still married.

METZGER: Speaking about it now, it is often difficult for me to...

CORTINOVIS: The dates, and so forth...

METZGER: ...yes. Well, when I got married in 1969, my friend, Susan Kleinberg suggested to me that I try to keep my maiden name, and at that time I thought it was silly. A lot of it was because I thought that "Norris" was a nicer name than "Metzger!" I always disliked the name "Metzger." And I don't really remember right now what made me think about trying to get my name back. I think that Steve and I were just sitting around talking, and I called up the courthouse and asked them what the procedure would be and found out that anybody can change their name. You have to have a lawyer and there was a certain fee, which was about \$100, and there wouldn't be much of a problem at all. And I didn't really do that much about it. My name was changed last summer in 1971, but we started to seriously think of doing this the year before.

CORTINOVIS: This was a joint project?

METZGER: Yes, he was very interested in it.

CORTINOVIS: Why do you think he was? (End of Side 1)

METZGER: Well, I think that Steve had a kind of curiosity about it...how the legal system would go. His father is a lawyer and he was really curious if he could do this. And he didn't have any kind of hang-up about -it, like, "Oh, she doesn't want my name." Or anything like that. And the reason why we started doing this about a year before I went to court about it was that it took a whole year to find a judge who would agree to even take the case. We had hired a lawyer, Frank Susman, currently involved in trying to get abortions legalized here in Missouri, and there was a fellow in the sociology department who knew him and put me on to him, and I called him up, and he seemed very interested in the case. I don't think that any of us ever hoped to find a judge who would listen to what...

CORTINOVIS: What level...?

METZGER: Well, in the Domestic Relations Court, I guess it was...it was a lower court and the procedure was as follows: Frank Susman knew that this was an unusual case; he knew that nothing like this had been done in the State of Missouri. A woman in the State of Washington had her name changed earlier, but he wanted to talk to the judge first, to feel him out, since there was no point of going to court if it might be rejected. The first judge, whose name I have forgotten, said, "No. There are enough things going wrong in the world, and I don't want to contribute to them." So, he did agree to transfer the case to any judge who would be willing to take the case, and throughout the year, Susman would call me up and say that he was still trying and "Don't give up!" At one point, he said that he did find a judge, and we were all ready to go to court, but then a few days before, the judge changed his mind. We figured that he had been hassled! I was actually pretty surprised, because I had grown up with the feeling that the judicial system was a very fair one and that judges weren't really biased people. I found out that certainly wasn't true at all, because as far as I know, there is nothing written down that women can't change their name. The judge who finally did agree to take the case knew this, and even though he himself was always very puzzled and amazed

about our request, he did not allow his own feelings to interfere with what he knew was not against the law. So, we went to court last summer and submitted the papers and so forth and so on, and by the time, it came up, I wasn't too excited about it anymore. By that time, my marriage was not, you know, going as well as it might have and in a way, it was almost unfortunate that that happened, because we wanted people to...we didn't want people to think, "Oh, well, you gave her your maiden name back and then she decides that she didn't want him either!" The two certainly were not related, although I know that there was something in the paper about the divorce, too, to the effect that...I still haven't seen the article...but she got rid of the name and then she got rid of him! (laughter) I think that it was important that we set some sort of precedent here. I think women should have the option of keeping their names, or changing their names, if they want to. I found that there really wasn't any reason why women shouldn't keep their names, since people...always ask, "What about children?" But, certainly, in many families different children have different last names. And, even though, it was a truly a legal matter and much too costly for many people to be able to do this, I would like to see women who chose to get married, keep their maiden names if they want to.

CORTINOVIS: What do you think this means? Why do think this is important?

METZGER: A lot of people might say that this is silly, but I think that keeping one's identity is important. Many times women, when they give up their names, actually lose their identity in a lot of other ways, too. They go around thinking that they are "Mrs. Johnson" and it almost encourages them to become appendages to their husbands, and this is one reason...why change your name to your husband's? Why be "Mrs. Johnson?" More, you know, a negative compromise. Some of the reactions that I got were... everything from surprise that we couldn't find a judge, to amazed and shocked that I would not want my husband's name. I wondered a lot about what people's reactions would be during this time.

CORTINVOS: If you had any children, do you think that would have made any difference to you?

METZGER: Oh, I don't think so. At that time, I didn't...

CORTINOVIS: What would you expect them to be named?

METZGER: I suppose, legally, they would have to take their father's name. I don't know that it would make all that much difference. At that time, I was told, you know, you really don't want children...and this is one of the questions that the judge asked, as a matter of fact.

CORTINOVIS: And what bearing would that have?

METZGER: Well, I suppose, that the judge wouldn't have felt this was ideal; I mean, these judges are very...they think along very traditional lines, and I suppose he would have thought it would cause a lot of problems. Again, I don't know that he would, because, as I said before, there are families with children...different children living in the same house with different names.

CORTINOVIS: I can't see that that was any of their business.

METZGER: Well, it was, so they felt. I mean, you can feel reasonable about this, but these

judges are...like they are in a different world! (laughter) I found it actually very frightening. It made me very pessimistic about legal reforms.

CORTINOVIS: On to more general things...as far as what you would like to see done and in the realm of women's rights, women's separation, if you will, what would you like to see...what concrete, and not-so-concrete measures?

METZGER: Well, I think that on the concrete level, all the kinds of things that organizations, like the National Organization of Women, are trying to get, and other people are trying to get, are good. I think it is important that women be able to go into whatever profession they choose to, not to be discriminated against because they are women. I think that the whole realm of legal reform is an important one. I think it is important that women be able to have control over their lives, and in this matter I would certainly like to see abortion legalized. On a personal level, it is much more difficult than I sometimes...I sometimes ask myself whether there will be a lot of change. I would like for women and men to treat each other as people, and as individuals, and certainly you can't do away with things like basic sexual attraction. I think that for people to get along, and for there to be less jealousy among women and certainly hostility between the sexes...and I do think there is a great deal of hostility between the sexes...it is important for men and women to re-evaluate who they are, what they are, and simply try to not think of people in terms of what sex they happen to be, and if this means that men will admit that they prefer to be...to spend their lives with men...that that's fine, too, so it's a complete human liberation really, I think that women, which has often been true in the past with women, have to do a lot of the moving. I think that the initiation will have to come from women. I don't think that women should wait for men to grant them favors, and I think that women have to be much more active in change, also. All this sounds very, very general because it's very complex. I don't see Women's Lib as just Women's Lib. I think it will affect all people. I mean, in this way, it is a very interesting problem, because it affects everybody...every man and woman is somehow involved with, you know, with what is known as Women's Liberation.

CORTINOVIS: I think, too, that men...very often...many men do not see themselves in that kind of a light, but I believe it's because they haven't thought it through. In the realm of academics which is what we have had together, have you felt that your potential has been evaluated in a different way than, say, the young men in your classes?

METZGER: Well, I think that a lot of the things I have had to overcome in the academic world have been thinking of myself in terms of a successful academician and successful historian. I found it very easy to slip back into the kind of, you know, woman that I think of when I think of academicians, and in Missouri, most of my encouragement has actually come from women...like Susan Hartmann, and I would say that she has helped me overcome quite of this, although I certainly can't say that I've overcome it completely. I think that right now, it's probably a very good time for women to go to graduate school. I know that where I'm going, I've been told that most of their top graduates have been women, and I probably got my fellowship because I was doing Women's History. I think that there is always going to be a problem for women to be working in male-dominated fields, such as most academic fields are; history, generally, isn't as much as other areas, but I expect to confront lots of problems in...where I'm going...and I'm not quite sure how I'm going to handle them, but I'm not naive. I think that there is a great deal...

CORTINOVIS: Not now.

METZGER: Yes. I think that there are a great deal of hard feelings about women...it's difficult for men to accept women as their equals, equals in jobs, and I don't think that \_\_\_\_\_ is the exception. I certainly don't expect things to be any different.

CORTINOVIS: The encouragement that I received around here always came from men. For one thing, there are not that many women in the department, and I'm ...I wasn't in contact with them, because they didn't keep...teach the hours I was taking, except for Susan. I think that she was so much younger than I am that she wasn't as interested in me. But I do think that men, at least in the History Department, who seriously, who took me seriously as a scholar, could be counted on one hand. There are some who give lip-service to the idea, but I consider them as Johnny-come-latelys to the cause. Now, you know, it's a little bit "in"...you know, it sounds very broad-minded nowadays for men to speak kindly of Women's Lib ideas, but I consider at least several of them to be quite insincere, and they have...there has been only a couple of them who consider that women could do the work that men were capable of, academically.

METZGER: I think that perhaps one of the things that I have run up against more so than a kind of, well, the thing that I have run up against a lot in this department is simply really not being talked to by men...that is, being virtually ignored by many men in the department...and I don't know that this was ever true with the male students who I never considered to be a whole lot better than myself, in terms of being a student, and perhaps this is one of the things which is hardest for women. Fortunately, with the way the job market is and the way fellowships are, students often get these things and they know people and have people working for them and what does this do for women? There are many men who simply ignore them or don't take them seriously, and then I think I don't know what to say about that, except that I know this happens to me a lot...I don't even get to know many of the men in the department. I don't know that there was any time that I felt eager, because I think that after my first year, I wasn't all that shy. I wasn't afraid to go up and talk to people.

CORTINOVIS: I'm not either, and I never have been, and I think that our situations are not the same, because for one thing, I'm so much older, and this is given me the poise that I might not have had when I was your age, although you have a great deal of it. But I have never been timid, and I feel a few people in the department are my friends. I don't think that you can make all that many good friends.

METZGER: Well, I still think that for women to stand out...to be noticed... that they have to be much better than the men...male students in the department. Certainly this is true in other fields, such as medical school. I have heard that women have to be much, much better than men to get into medical school. And, as a result, many of the very top people in medical school, are women. I think that this is probably true in the academic world, too, and it gets back to the whole thing about wanting to be aggressive, you know, take on so-called masculine characteristics simply to be noticed and recognized as a competent scholar.

CORTINOVIS: Yes, that's one of those loaded words...that's a compliment to a man and virtually an insult to a woman. But it shows attitudes that we've all accepted more than anything else. Well, I think, in terms of jobs, that the academic field has a long, long way to

go, because one of the attitudes that we long ago accepted, in the 19th century, was that women who taught, taught small children. (Period!) But I admire women like Susan Hartmann who can and have been outstandingly successful. But if you'll notice, there is no other professor (associate professor) who has publications that she has, and I think that your idea of being twice as good...no one has published as many books. Other people have articles or little readings...compilations...which, you know, after all, do not amount to much. And they look nice on a resume just naming them, but she has written books which have attracted a lot of attention.

METZGER: One of the things that I know I don't want to fall into is becoming too involved with myself as an academician and sort of coping out on the Women's Movement generally, I would like to remain sensitive to women's issues, as I think I am now, and become more active, perhaps, decide where I really want to put my energies, in addition to research and teaching.

CORTINOVIS: What are your long-term plans for yourself?

METZGER: Well, again, when I think about them, I think of myself as very, very involved, perhaps, at least for the next few years, in trying to get a Ph.D. But I'd like to work on such things as, perhaps, a free women's clinic, trying to learn a little bit about the law and, perhaps, working in the field of legal counsel helping women who can't afford to get divorces, to help them see how they probably could arrange to do their own divorces. I think that it is important, in other words, to not isolate one's self because, you know... middle-class person...from women who are in the working class. I really don't know what kinds of things are going on in Pittsburg. I think I will probably want to tend to feel my way around first, moving into a new community, but legal aspects of the Women's Movement attracts me very much, simply because it's so diverse! (laughter)

CORTINOVIS: But you said that you really would like to become a teacher at the college-university level.

METZGER: Yes, I would like to teach and do my major research in the aspects of women's history, and eventually teach Women's History in a Women's Studies Department, or start my own. I don't know what the job situation will be when I get out... I may not be able to get a job. (laughter)

CORTINOVIS: Yes, yes.

METZGER: Those are my professional aspirations.

CORTINOVIS: And as far as your personal plans...would you want to get married again?

METZGER: Well, I don't know. The idea right now frightens me, mostly because of the legal bounds, I see, in getting married again. Right now, I think I'm enjoying the kind of mobility that I have, not being legally attached to someone else. It's difficult often because you can be very lonely living, but I've gotten to know quite a bit about myself this year, and don't feel particularly anxious about doing it over, or being an old maid, or anything like that...the Women's Movement certainly helped me in this, and this is very personal.

CORTINOVIS: To still think of yourself in that role in a constructive way...and you spoke about never wanting to have children...not having children, does this mean never?

METZGER: Well, I think I'm very frightened of having children. I've seen too many parents who are very uncomfortable with their children...maybe didn't think a whole lot before they had them...who seem very resentful of their children, and I think right now that frightens me a whole lot. I think it is a tremendous responsibility, and I know that I wouldn't feel ready. I don't know that it's the most important thing and, certainly, it is important to be honest with yourself...and it's very difficult, especially since there is so much pressure on people to have children today, who really don't want them. I don't know...I tend to be a very moody person, and I guess I've always been convinced that if I had a kid, it would turn out to be some kind of neurotic into because my moods would kind of sink/them. I guess right now I have too much to do, so I don't spend that much time thinking about kids. CORTINOVIS: It seems a little bit incongruous...having come from a very happy home, apparently...sometimes these attitudes come out when you have had a difficult childhood, but you don't seem to have experienced anything out of the ordinary at all. METZGER: Well, I think that my mother was very comfortable with us. I think that she had a genuine love for children. But if I think about my father, whose temperament I share, quite a bit, he really was not a very good children-type of person. I'm not saying that he was a bad father, but he himself isn't all that comfortable with children. I think that, perhaps, if it had been left to my father, or if he had married someone who didn't like kids, maybe it wouldn't have turned out that way. Perhaps, I am speaking more of my mother now, so that I don't know that I think that much about having children, you know. I don't go through the whole thing or whether I should have children or not. CORTINOVIS: Well, you're simply not ready. But my question was, I suppose, bound up in the fact...was there any significance in your interests that you connect with having children? You know, some people say, that they subscribe to a zero population idea, but there's nothing like that in your thinking? METZGER: Oh, no, no! CORTINOVIS: As a person, you are simply not ready...Another question... METZGER: Yes, it's more of a personal thing. CORTINOVIS: If there is anything about your Jewishness that you think has led you to be interested in the Women's Movement, Women's Rights and so on? METZGER: Well, no, I've never been involved in Judaism, either as a religion or a culture. It's interesting that many of the radical women in the past have been Jewish. People like Emma Goldman, for instance. Well, really, I haven't thought a lot about that, mostly because I really don't identify that much with Judaism.

CORTINOVIS: Well, of course, a great many men radicals have been Jews. I don't know that that has ever been satisfactorily explained. I don't know that much about it. But, certainly, a great many radicals [romantic radicals] have ... or people who fed on radical minds, like Marx...and, of course, so many of them studied together...I think that the great majority of the 19th Century radicals were Jewish.

METZGER: Yes, many of them were.

CORTINOVIS: Well...

METZGER: Well, I can't really... (laughter)

CORTINOVIS: Is there anything else that we haven't covered that you would like to cover?

METZGER: Oh, sure, there is, but I can't.... Mostly, I think, that the whole question of Women's Lib is a very difficult thing...an entity to analyze...I think that I learn much more about this as I experience just living, and I've often wanted to sit down and write about certain topics...A few months ago, I wanted to sit down and write an essay on the male ego, but I found that the more I read and the more I thought about it, the more confused I became. I think that I feel fairly optimistic that the Women's Movement isn't going to die out...that this isn't a phase...this is often know as the Second Feminist Movement of the earlier Movement for Women's Rights and S ufferage, and I think that this phase is a much more complex and interesting one than the earlier one. And I think that there are just major just so many things to.work out, that the/problem is there is/not enough time in one's lifetime.

CORTINOVIS: Have you read the \_\_\_\_\_ book?

METZGER: Yes.

CORTINOVIS: Well, I think that some of things that she points out is along those lines...that the early struggles were for our legal rights whereas...I think you are perfectly right...now it is much more psychological, social...and employment...but, I think, it's all connected. It is what interests a great many women more than anything else...equal opportunities in employment, and so on.

METZGER: Yes.

CORTINOVIS: I think that's all that I thought to cover...but it appears to me that your lack of interest in working with women in a group is far more typical of women who are interested in this than atypical. I think...this is a personal opinion...that a genuinely grassroots movement in which women do not tend to amalgamate very much, at least at this stage. Don't you feel that?

METZGER: Yes, this is actually a problem...getting women together for reasons other than to play bridge or talk about their children. I do think that there is a lot to be said about the small women's rap groups. The reason why I have... or had a problem this year getting involved with them...is that I felt a kind of commitment to my group in California and had put quite a bit of energy into that, so that it would be...almost...a form of adultery to join another group right away, and found that I wanted to do a lot of reading and a lot of thinking ...a lot of more personal kinds of things than I could do with a group...but I do think that the smaller women's groups are...as much as there are problems... are probably a good first step for women to get into.