

An Interview with
Carol Losos

at the Historical Society of Missouri St. Louis
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Oral History Program

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PREFACE

The interview was taped on a placed on a tripod. There are periodic background sounds but the recording is of generally high quality.

The following transcript represents a rendering of the oral history interview. Stylistic alterations have been made as part of a general transcription policy. The interviewee offered clarifications and suggestions, which the following transcript reflects. Any use of brackets [] indicates editorial insertions not found on the original audio recordings. Physical gestures, certain vocal inflections such as imitation, and/or pauses are designated by a combination of italics and brackets []. Any use of parentheses () indicates a spoken aside evident from the speaker's intonation, or laughter. Quotation marks [""] identify speech depicting dialogue, speech patterns, or the initial use of nicknames. Em dashes [—] are used as a stylistic method to show a meaningful pause or an attempt to capture nuances of dialogue or speech patterns. Words are *italicized* when emphasized in speech or when indicating a court case title. Particularly animated speech is identified with **bold** lettering. Underlining [] indicates a proper title of a publication. The use of underlining and double question marks in parentheses [(??)] denotes unintelligible phrases. Although substantial care has been taken to render this transcript as accurately as possible, any remaining errors are the responsibility of the editor, Josephine Sporleder.

STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MISSOURI-ST. LOUIS

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S FORUM ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

DECEMBER 29, 2014

CAROL LOSOS INTERVIEWED BY BLANCHE TOUHILL

Blanche Touhill: Introduce yourself.

Carol Losos: My name is Carol Losos.

Blanche Touhill: Would you talk a little bit about your childhood: your parents, your neighbors, your cousins, your grandparents, your brothers and sisters, anybody that influenced you. Did they ever say, "Carol, you really are strong and this quality, your personality" or "You should go to college" or "You can be whatever you want to be" and then talk about elementary school and secondary school. Did you make life-long friends? Did a teacher say you have ability? Do you write well? Just talk and ramble.

Carol Losos: Okay. So, I grew up in suburban St. Louis, in Ladue, so in an affluent neighborhood. I guess now it's significant that it's suburban because I don't live in the same kind of neighborhood anymore but in terms of influences, I would just say it's my parents. It was always assumed...and I don't know how much it was ever said...but that I could do whatever I wanted to do. College was just always the pathway that I was headed for. There was no question that I would and I should go to college, that there was really any other choice. I would have considered myself a shy child but somebody who was always told...I was always told I was smart and I was good at things and I always did well at school. So in my neighborhood, we lived at the top of a hill and there weren't really friends right around. By the end of elementary school, there was one friend I had who I could walk over to, but usually we were driven on what are now called "play dates" to go over to other people's houses.

Blanche Touhill: Talk about play dates.

Carol Losos: Well, they weren't called that then. I don't even know what they were called.

Blanche Touhill: Maybe they didn't have a name.

Carol Losos: I don't think they had a name. You would just go play with friends.

Blanche Touhill: The mothers would arrange it or the kids would arrange it?

Carol Losos: You know, I can remember the point at which I would arrange it, somewhere towards the end of elementary school, I would say. I was in Girl Scouts because my mother, she was very into Girl Scouts. She was not my troop leader but that was kind of another assumed thing, that you would get involved in Girl Scouts but that was through school anyway. Every girl did Girl Scouts in my elementary school. That's where you met on whatever day of the week it was and a few people's mothers would be the troop leaders. So I would say I don't really remember how they got made before I would...

Blanche Touhill: But you would just go to somebody's house?

Carol Losos: Yes, and my life wasn't really structured after school. I took piano lessons for a long time. I was somebody who had trouble putting an end to things. I just kept taking piano lessons until I was in high school and I would say I was very influenced and, in hindsight, wanted to please my mother or just assumed that I would do that and she liked piano so I just kept taking piano lessons. I was no talented.

Blanche Touhill: Is it something, though, that you play today?

Carol Losos: No. Once I left, I would say I never played the piano again, though I stayed in touch with my piano teacher.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, how nice!

Carol Losos: And would go and visit her all the time until...I know that my husband met her at some point. She lives in this kind of dark apartment somewhere...Clayton, and we would go visit her.

Blanche Touhill: But she must have been a good teacher.

Carol Losos: She was, she was older. I think I probably thought she was 100 when I was 12 which she clearly wasn't but she had taught some of my mother's friends.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, how nice!

Carol Losos: And so she had been teaching to multiple generations as well. A memory I have is freezing up at a recital and then I never did a recital again for years and I just wouldn't do it. But then I did it again and that was, in hindsight, of course, good.

Blanche Touhill: I don't think that's unusual, to freeze up at a recital.

Carol Losos: No, I don't think so either.

Blanche Touhill: No. It's very hard for a child to perform in front of a group.

Carol Losos: Right, and I was doing a duet. The other girl kept going but then we went through it again and I think I played the second time around. But I didn't have a lot planned after school. I had piano lessons, Girl Scouts. I wasn't really into a lot of things that stuck. I wasn't athletic. I didn't run off to sports leagues and all of those kinds of things.

Blanche Touhill: What did you learn from the Girl Scouts, or why did you join the Girl Scouts? I know your mother was big on Girl Scouts...

Carol Losos: Right, she was big into it.

Blanche Touhill: She was the president of the board, wasn't she?

Carol Losos: She was and, as I said, you just did it.

Blanche Touhill: But you stayed in it.

Carol Losos: I did stay in it. I stayed in it, quite honestly, mostly for my mother but I was with a group of girls, there weren't a lot of really close friends so it didn't stick a lot but it was to do things and it made me do things that I wouldn't have done otherwise.

Blanche Touhill: Like what?

Carol Losos: Camping, and we went off and we learned how to sail one summer in Mystic and so I wouldn't have done that.

Blanche Touhill: In Connecticut?

Carol Losos: Yes.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, how wonderful! Well, that was a thrill, wasn't it?

Carol Losos: It was a thrill.

Blanche Touhill: Because that's Long Island Sound, isn't it?

Carol Losos: It is and I would say it was all part of just, I assumed you did...I never thought any of this was unusual. I would have to say I never thought that it worked any other way, that you did well in school, you did whatever you wanted, you joined these activities and that primarily came from the home, I realize, but I don't feel that there was ever any question...anybody ever threw a wrench in school in my way either. I think I must have tested well and all of that because my teachers that I remember always labeled me as a smart kid, even if I was quiet. From elementary school on, academically I did well and would get involved and then I would say that I did things once I got to high school, like debate.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, that was hard.

Carol Losos: That was hard but my older brother and sister did that and so some of it was following in a good way after my siblings. So I did debate and did well and led the debate team.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, well, that's a leadership role.

Carol Losos: Yes, so that was a leadership role and I would say that that was a big deal also.

Blanche Touhill: Yes, you have to think on your feet.

Carol Losos: You had to think on your feet and I really learned that it was okay to be a public speaker, you know, to get up and talk and I really, even now, that I can get up and talk in front of people probably goes back to participating in debates, so that's really valuable, something that I did.

Blanche Touhill: Because not only do you have stand on your feet and speak, you have to think.

Carol Losos: Yes, you do.

Blanche Touhill: And you have to think very quickly.

Carol Losos: Yes.

Blanche Touhill: It's a wonderful club to belong to but it's a very demanding kind of club.

Carol Losos: In all kinds of ways: the skills that it's forseen...

Blanche Touhill: That you speak proper English and you look at the crowd and...

Carol Losos: And you convince the crowd.

Blanche Touhill: And you convince the crowd, yes.

Carol Losos: The person you're looking at, that's right. It's your job to convince them.

Blanche Touhill: You didn't think about law?

Carol Losos: I did think about law and the other thing I did in high school was newspaper. I would say that was the other big thing.

Blanche Touhill: So you can write?

Carol Losos: And I was told I was a good writer so when you asked in terms of what I was told...

Blanche Touhill: Who encouraged you?

Carol Losos: Who encouraged me...? You know, that's a really interesting question, in hindsight. I started getting involved in the newspaper in junior high, I'm realizing...

Blanche Touhill: Ah, so it was very early?

Carol Losos: Yes.

Blanche Touhill: But I think somebody who can write, it's evident in junior high.

Carol Losos: Right, and I can remember some of my English teachers and one particular teacher. I haven't thought about that one in a long time. I don't know who told me I should join the school newspaper or whatever it was, but I got involved at that point and I was told that I could write. I remember my mother saying...my parents telling me I could but I think my English teachers. I more remember my high school English teachers pushing me, and then it became a class in school, a journalism class.

Blanche Touhill: Well, you have to ask questions in journalism.

Carol Losos: You certainly do.

Blanche Touhill: And you have to ask hard questions.

Carol Losos: And it did, it really was a leadership position and this was a case where they let the students pretty much lead the way and organize the other students, I'd say more so than debate, that we really were responsible for the product and needing to coordinate other kids, other students in the process.

Blanche Touhill: And getting it out at a certain time on a certain date?

Carol Losos: Before computers allowed you to do that. And so I remember the journalism teacher whose name escapes me right now but encouraging me through part of the process and rising me through the ranks.

Blanche Touhill: [Inaudible 10:19] schools?

Carol Losos: I did, so I went to Horton Watkins, all the way through, I went to Price School which, by the way, we recently drove by and it's a McMansion and not the school. They've torn the school down and I walked to school. There were some good old-fashioned things in the suburbs. It was close enough, we walked to school and I can remember my brothers and sisters would walk me to school early on.

Blanche Touhill: Because they were older?

Carol Losos: They were older. I have an older brother and sister, Jonathan and Elizabeth and they're four and five years older than I am. And then there was a three-year break and then it was me and my younger sister, Louise, and we were kind of two units. Louise and I were closer as playmates, I would say, than Jonathan and Elizabeth and they were closer. And so when you asked about early on, a little rambling as you said, I would say that Louise was probably the one I played with the most in terms of inside the house and all and then I had a lot of girlfriends, no friends who were guys. We would arrange whatever they were called then, we would get together and usually just play at each other's houses. I don't really remember needing to be organized. You just went over. You didn't have to have other stuff.

Blanche Touhill: So you knew the parents?

Carol Losos: Certainly.

Blanche Touhill: And the siblings?

Carol Losos: And the siblings. Price School was a small community too so that you knew that kind of range and my parents would definitely know those levels as well. It wasn't sent into nowhere. There are two friends I was particularly close to, one I could walk to, the other I couldn't, and I haven't stayed close with them, Juliette and Susan, and I can just remember wiling away time with them. That where in the future something that doesn't seem to happen in the same way any longer. Of course, I also know, there's a certain luxury to that right, too. My mother had full-time help so she could go off and...

Blanche Touhill: Do her volunteer work?

Carol Losos: Right, do her volunteer work and not worry that I had to be all structured which is unlike how I have to plan for my eight-year-old now. So that was nice and I always saw my mother. She was always busy and it was in high school that she went back to work, for pay, I should say.

Blanche Touhill: Yes, that's right, because she worked as a volunteer for years and years and years.

Carol Losos: Years and years and I can remember once in 6th grade, my teacher, Mrs. Leebon, saying, "We have to plan parent/teacher conferences," and saying, "Do any of your parents..." ...I think she said, "Do any of your parents work? Is there a schedule?" and I think I raised my hand or said something that, yes, my mother was very busy and that it was difficult to plan time with her and her saying something like...she meant work outside the home, as we would say now, and I remember noting that, that there was a differentiation and sure enough, it was very difficult to plan a parent/teacher conference with my mother whose schedule was very busy. But it wasn't of notice.

Blanche Touhill: Were there other children in the room whose parents or mothers did not work?

Carol Losos: Certainly, and that would be the exception at that point, or at least that would be my impression, is that most people had the mothers stayed home.

Blanche Touhill: But your mother, she was busy...not that she was outside the home or getting paid because she was outside the home volunteering?

Carol Losos: Right, and I think that was actually...that's been influential in my life, is that she was always engaged, as was my father, who was always home for dinner but who was the bread winner but had his zoo thing, that my parents each had very much their volunteer engagements, that they were very engaged in and rose to leadership levels. That's what you did. And so that is also...nobody would ever say, "This is what you do" or "This is what we're doing" or that we're modeling this behavior for you or anything. It was just an is, how we were brought up, what the house was like. And then my mother went back to work and kind of gradually, one of her volunteer things became a job opportunity, the Leadership St. Louis...is that what it was called then?

Blanche Touhill: Yes, and it became focused?

Carol Losos: Yes.

Blanche Touhill: You think of it today as focused.

Carol Losos: Right. Well, I remember it was the CORO Foundation.

Blanche Touhill: That's right.

Carol Losos: Because I was in high school at the time. So I was old enough to understand some of the conversations and all but she was able to do it on her own terms too, I remember.

Blanche Touhill: Did she ever take you to any of her volunteer activities?

Carol Losos: Well, Girl Scouting was one of them so I was engaged. And I remember once going to a big deal event when she was president of the Girl Scouts that I went along with her to something sat Busch Stadium... It was in 1976, something around the bicentennial and I think it was actually my sister, Louise, who I think you're interviewing who will remember more of being dragged around.

Blanche Touhill: Because she was younger than you.

Carol Losos: Yes, going off to Jeff City for...

Blanche Touhill: Yes, for when your mother had to testify or something?

Carol Losos: Yes. I seem to recall Louise doing more of that than I did but I don't think that's a false memory, although I think a couple times she took us off...she was doing more with that presidential committee on education.

Blanche Touhill: The White House Conference on Education...

Carol Losos: That was it, so I kind of remember some of those conferences and maybe tagging along to one of those or she would take us and we'd have to do something and she'd show us Jefferson City.

Blanche Touhill: Do you volunteer for things where you are now?

Carol Losos: Yes.

Blanche Touhill: So it did take?

Carol Losos: Oh, it definitely took. That's what you're supposed to do. That's just part of what it is.

Blanche Touhill: Go onto college then. Where did you go to college?

Carol Losos: So I went to Harvard.

Blanche Touhill: How did you choose Harvard?

Carol Losos: Well, I kind of fell into it. My father had gone there and my older brother and older sister went to it and I visited and it seemed good and I got in.

Blanche Touhill: And you were smart.

Carol Losos: And I was smart. I did very well at school and I tested well, all those kinds of things so that I got in and was there for four years.

Blanche Touhill: How did you like it?

Carol Losos: Oh, it was great. I have no regrets or questions.

Blanche Touhill: What did you like about it?

Carol Losos: People were smart and there was a lot happening and I made really my best friend. What is the best thing I got out of it are my life-long friendships. I mean, those are the people, I only wish they lived closer. After family, it's my college friends, I would say that are the people who know me and I know them at such a core level and that you can always be you with. There doesn't have to be any kind of preening or posturing.

Blanche Touhill: Were there many women at Harvard?

Carol Losos: Yes. I would say, again, there wasn't a lot...I am, I guess, that next generation although I was interested in...I never wanted to say that "feminism" was a bad word and I was interested in...I studied for my senior thesis, A Female Photographer and took some classes on women in the arts and explored the issue of women artists and feminism and art and that was definitely an interest of mine.

Blanche Touhill: What was the relationship between Radcliffe and Harvard when you were there?

Carol Losos: At that point, everything was integrated. Radcliffe was still...one was accepted to Harvard/Radcliffe if you were a woman and my degree is from Harvard-Radcliffe and signed by both the president of Harvard and the president of Radcliffe but it was...

Blanche Touhill: It was Harvard.

Carol Losos: It was Harvard. Everything was integrated and Radcliffe offered a few things but not really. Nobody was seeking Radcliffe out, I would say, of my female friends, for anything in particular. I remember going over to the Radcliffe library for their archives and what they had for some research project I was doing that they might have the...

Blanche Touhill: Did they use the Radcliffe dorms?

Carol Losos: Well, I happened to live in the Radcliffe dorms but everything was integrated. It just so happens that I was placed in the Radcliffe dorms for my three upper class years of college. You get placed in a house after freshman year and I was placed in a house that was made up of the old Radcliffe dorms. So I lived in the Radcliffe quad. But so did my husband, now husband. So everything was integrated in terms of housing. And I don't know if any of my friends really walk away feeling discriminated against in terms of their careers. Two things happened at Harvard that are really important...and I would say Harvard, not Radcliffe...one is I studied art history but they called it Fine Arts and that was something that came from my parents too, is an interest in art history and I remember my parents essentially expressing that I had an interest in the arts probably before I could have said it and giving me a book some year when I was in high school. It was just a book, like a coffee table book,

from some museum and going to museums with them. So certainly that was influential, that we would go to museums when we traveled and I took a brand new art history class in college my senior year. It was a humanities and I remember that teacher, Terry Cannon. She was also my English teacher, just a really great teacher who really taught how to write better and had that passion for...well, everything. So I studied Fine Arts which was significant in that I felt I could study something that was essentially seemingly leading nowhere, that was a good liberal arts thing to do and I remember my freshman year roommate, Judy Wong, being on the phone with her parents who Judy's a first generation, her parents were from Taiwan, grew up in Greenwich, Connecticut and Short Hills, New Jersey and her saying, "But, Mom and Dad, listen to the courses my roommate is taking." Her parents were very much...she was going to be a doctor.

Blanche Touhill: And did she become a doctor?

Carol Losos: She did become a doctor but they really didn't want her wasting her time on...

Blanche Touhill: Yes, on a frivolous...

Carol Losos: Yes, on a frivolous education and I actually think I remember that happening freshman year and that was a kind of realization to me.

Blanche Touhill: You were there for a liberal arts degree?

Carol Losos: Right, and that someone's parents would be pressuring you in that kind of way, to be a certain thing, person, when you were done.

Blanche Touhill: So when you went to Harvard, you didn't have really any...

Carol Losos: I would have guessed that I would become a lawyer, I would think and that's a little bit of a default and since I didn't become one, apparently it didn't happen but I had the debating skills, I could write well, I wasn't going to become a doctor, there were lawyers in the family and I would have thought that freshman year, if you'd asked me, I probably would have said that's what I would become.

Blanche Touhill: So what did you major in?

Carol Losos: It was a combined of Art History and History and it was, freshman year I took a class that was actually taught by a historian but was a combination of Art History and History and I started in a different major that was a Social Sciences major and then I didn't like that; it was very philosophical and I didn't do well at that. You know, that was definitely coming down, figuring out I didn't write...everybody always said I wrote really well and I got, like, a C in writing the first paper and kind of rebuilding myself. So I started in the Social Sciences and I really didn't like philosophy and that was a big part of it and it was called Social Studies but I liked Art History and History so I switched into that field and took a class with a very dynamic professor.

Blanche Touhill: I know history can be both. It can be a social science where they're measuring everything...

Carol Losos: Right.

Blanche Touhill: ...and they use statistics.

Carol Losos: Well, even more now with computers.

Blanche Touhill: Yes, and then there is the other that is more a humanist...

Carol Losos: Right.

Blanche Touhill: And you were the humanist side.

Carol Losos: I definitely was the humanist side. And fortunately I had a professor who did both and so that was really...Simon Shama. I remember the class very well. So that was very formative, even though it was a big lecture class. I mean, he wouldn't know me from anything at that point, right, and then fortunately they did have small classes. You would go in these tutorials and I had this tutor who wasn't even a full professor but he taught...it was a tutorial in Fine Arts as they called Art History.

Blanche Touhill: Was he a Ph.D. or was he an ABD, do you know?

Carol Losos: He was an ABD and he had a sophomore tutorial. It was really an intro in which they were trying to teach you how to look and how to write about art and that really started to...

Blanche Touhill: ...did it.

Carol Losos: That did it and that was hard. I mean, I can remember writing about this silver teapot in the collections of the Harvard art museums which is, of course, an amazing resource because you actually got to use...I mean, you handled, you used these real and saw the real object and obviously world class. I mean, that's one of the amazing things about Harvard, is to have that access. I remember writing about the silver teapot that had been made by Paul Revere.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, yes.

Carol Losos: But it's very hard to write in one or two pages. So that was a whole new skill but I loved the objects. As a friend once said, I was a material girl and he set me up with an internship at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, how wonderful. Were you a sophomore?

Carol Losos: At this point, I moved into Art History a little late because I switched around so I ended up taking my sophomore tutorial junior year, as an intro, and so he set me up on an internship that I did between my junior and senior years at the Gardner Museum and that was great.

Blanche Touhill: And what did you do for them?

Carol Losos: I did a lot of different things because it was a small museum and I did everything from transcribe letters that were in the archives which takes quite a while because, of course, the handwriting, is almost impossible to read until you learn that writing. Too, I remember there was a catalogue of the collection that they were going through and they were updating. It was an old catalogue so they were eventually preparing a new catalogue but they were trying to update any inaccuracies or new information and I was compiling information from the files. And they would send me...I was their intern and it was a small staff. Oh, I remember, this was funny: the Conservation Department which were two people, they would send me back to Harvard to go into the library to research some objects that they were working on conserving so some days I would go in and get my marching orders and go right back to Harvard to use the libraries. And so that really sold me on museums. That was junior and that was an unpaid internship. Of course, I was lucky to be able to do that as I got bankrolled by my parents to live with four people in a two-bedroom apartment that we sublet from some graduate students. That continued during the year,

I would go in two afternoons a week and they paid me some minimum wage to come in and keep doing research and helping.

Blanche Touhill: But that's what you have to do.

Carol Losos: Yes.

Blanche Touhill: In order to get a start and find out if that's really what you want to do.

Carol Losos: Right, and so that was transformational but the other transformational thing from Harvard is that I started volunteering through their community service organization which was called Phillips Brooks House, which was literally a building but that's where the main community service work was done, through students. And so I started volunteering through there, tutoring some kids, working on an environmental committee because my older sister was there and she worked on that. And so eventually I took on leadership roles in this organization, which had hundreds of students volunteering for everything from a few hours during the whole semester to people that would swallow up their time. So eventually I had a high level leadership position. So I would spend a lot of time there as well and those two really became the definition of where I was headed which...and you can figure out where...

Blanche Touhill: So volunteerism and art history?

Carol Losos: Right.

Blanche Touhill: In a museum.

Carol Losos: Yes.

Blanche Touhill: As a curator?

Carol Losos: As an educator.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, as an educator, okay. So go on with your story.

Carol Losos: Well, so those were the two transformational things, I would say, that really formed what I wanted out of school, or what I was coming out to: a great group of friends, some of them in this Phillips Brooks House, some kind of wanderings of ways. One summer I spent in Washington, D.C.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, in which library or which museum?

Carol Losos: That wasn't in a museum. That was between sophomore and junior year, before I figured out museums, although I'd figured out I loved museums so I spent a lot of time exploring D.C.

Blanche Touhill: In the Smithsonian?

Carol Losos: Yes, but I was doing that congressional internship in Richard Gephardt's office.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, how nice.

Carol Losos: Yes, and then we were living in a house, it was a pigsty with 10 college friends in Georgetown. So I have a bunch of close friends from that summer as well. So that was a lot of fun.

Blanche Touhill: Did any of them run for office?

Carol Losos: I don't think so. I don't think any of those folks are in...

Blanche Touhill: Well, I know that a lot of people, when they're young, go to Washington and work in those congressional offices...

Carol Losos: Right.

Blanche Touhill: And I think, in the long run, they may not run for office but they always are interested in politics.

Carol Losos: Yes, and I would say that everybody had stayed engaged with politics. I'm trying to think, we were sure one of my friends would. We haven't given up on her.

Blanche Touhill: That's right, people run for office later in their life...

Carol Losos: They do.

Blanche Touhill: ...than you would think, yeah.

Carol Losos: Right.

Blanche Touhill: Especially women.

Carol Losos: Yes.

Blanche Touhill: So you're graduating from Harvard.

Carol Losos: I received a Rotary Foundation Scholarship.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, yes, to go overseas?

Carol Losos: To go overseas and I spent a year in England, studying some more art history.

Blanche Touhill: Where did you live in England?

Carol Losos: I lived in Leeds so in Yorkshire at the university and taking art history classes in a graduate-level program but I didn't get a degree, which I didn't really want. I kind of wanted a break but I took these classes and traveled a lot while I was there, perhaps not what the Rotary really wanted me to do.

Blanche Touhill: Well, I think they probably wanted you to go overseas and have an experience with life in another country.

Carol Losos: Right, and so the fun memories from that... I mean, it was a great year and I did do a lot of traveling which was a lot of fun and I made a best friend who, I see her on Facebook every...you know, we're not really in touch but we could at a moment's notice reengage.

Blanche Touhill: Is she a UK person?

Carol Losos: No, she was from Hannibal, Missouri.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, my goodness.

Carol Losos: So that's a little ashamed...and another friend who was from the U.S. as well. That's too bad that that's how that...but Heidi and I...your payback was you had to go and speak at Rotary Club. So we were in rural Yorkshire and we must have spoken a dozen times at the weekly lunches and those were all men.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, were they? They didn't admit women in those days?

Carol Losos: They did not and it was still a little bit of a scandal that the U.S. Rotary Clubs had started to admit women. I think it was still relatively new that the U.S. had done that.

Blanche Touhill: Yes, I think it was, too.

Carol Losos: And they were nowhere near letting women into their clubs, even though both Heidi and I had rather young...you had to have a sponsoring family even though it wasn't a family stay program. But you had a local Rotarian who was kind of responsible for you. You don't really need that much by the time you're at that age but they would shepherd you to meetings and make sure to check in with you and both of us had very interesting sponsors but they were men and they were businessmen, relatively young, one of whom had a wife who worked, mine did. Heidi's, I don't think the wife worked. They had a young kid. But, no, no, you wouldn't allow women into these clubs in England at the time. So that would be kind of funny, to go to them and they would be sweet older men who would be rather patronizing at times. But even then, that was in my mind as a story, as archaic.

Blanche Touhill: Right, you were in a transition.

Carol Losos: Right, but I knew that was archaic.

Blanche Touhill: It was probably a big thing for them to have a woman speaker.

Carol Losos: Oh, I think it was.

Blanche Touhill: But you were a young woman.

Carol Losos: Yes.

Blanche Touhill: Learning, you were a student.

Carol Losos: I was a student and I was that American student who was over here and we gave our same story and we would capitalize on that, too, and talk about America letting women in and by the end of the year, I remember, Heidi and I...sometimes we'd go together and we got sick and tired of each other's story and we just joked, I remember, by the end that we were going to trade: I was going to be Heidi and tell her story, that we could give each other's talks...

Blanche Touhill: Yes, you probably could.

Carol Losos: ...by that point. But that was interesting and that was a fun part.

Blanche Touhill: So you traveled all over Europe?

Carol Losos: I traveled all over Europe and around England too. That was fun too because the train was easy. I had a friend in London from college. Actually, I hadn't been that close to her at college. She was in a circle of friends but we became closer then because she had a flat in London and I'd go down for the weekend and so that was fun and you could do whatever. That was fun, to explore and know that you could do that and I hadn't really traveled on my own but I just did it. I would say that sometimes I'd see myself as shy and I would say to myself, well, I'm going to regret it if I don't put myself in that position, so just do it. And I still say that to myself actually, just do it.

Blanche Touhill: I think those traits are always there.

Carol Losos: And that I'm aware enough of it. Other people...my husband will laugh at me if I say I think of myself as a shy person.

Blanche Touhill: So, then, what did you do at the end of the year?

Carol Losos: I came back home.

Blanche Touhill: To St. Louis?

Carol Losos: To St. Louis.

Blanche Touhill: And you wanted to work for a museum?

Carol Losos: I wanted to work for a museum and I had worked for...I had done a summer internship at the St. Louis Art Museum before I left for England.

Blanche Touhill: And you liked it?

Carol Losos: And I liked it. There, you spent half the summer in the Education Department and half the summer in a curatorial department. That was more organized than my Gardener and it's a bigger place. So I started looking for jobs and my boyfriend then, lived in New York...my college boyfriend who I stuck with who eventually became my husband, lived in New York and I said I was going to go up there. I wasn't going to stay in St. Louis. I was going to go to New York and find an arts-related job. But I started some research and I had a ticket to fly up. I can't even remember how I got there. I think I may have driven. But in the meantime, I saw an ad for a year-long internship at the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, how wonderful!

Carol Losos: Or nine months, and so they'd ad, in that old-fashioned way that you used to advertise, in the museum organization newsletter and I had seen that at the St. Louis Art Museum Library and I wrote it down and I sent them my resume and got a call, had a phone interview and I said, "Well, I'm going to be in New York as of this date" and so then I went down for an interview and got that job. So I ended up in Philadelphia.

Blanche Touhill: Which is not far from New York?

Carol Losos: No, a train ride or a couple, depending which train you take. My older sister was in graduate school at Princeton at the time.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, how nice.

Carol Losos: Right, because I actually remember taking the train down to Princeton and spending the night with her, ironing my outfit and taking the train in from Princeton to Philadelphia. So I moved to Philadelphia for the year.

Blanche Touhill: You liked it?

Carol Losos: I did like it. So I was a museum educator, so that's how I actually learned most.

Blanche Touhill: And you liked that?

Carol Losos: I did and I said, that's what I wanted, was a job where you can...it seemed ideal. It combined my love of art history with...

Blanche Touhill: ...your knowledge of the paintings.

Carol Losos: Yes, and my interest in helping others in the Education Department, you know, that community service portion was the way one could actually combine the two. I still say this and every once in a while I run into my first boss or I'll even jot her a note that says this, that I don't stay in enough contact but I send her Christmas cards, and I ran into her a couple years ago and it was a great first job, very humanitarian department and very devoted to...it was devoted to kids actually. It had a backwards department for museums in that most art museums would have paid staff teach adults and they would have docents teach the kids so the volunteers, people who would be well trained, but not necessarily knowledgeable about child development and education and all those things, and they flipped it and said, "That's backwards." We can train the

docents with the knowledge that adults are looking for but that it takes something, a different type of person to teach kids so I spent a year teaching thousands and thousands of school kids who came on their field trips to the Philadelphia Museum of Art and at the end of the year, they had an opening and so I stayed.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, my goodness, in that department?

Carol Losos: In that department as a full-fledged museum educator.

Blanche Touhill: How wonderful!

Carol Losos: And they said to me, "Usually this job goes to somebody with a Master's" because they could, you know, that there was enough of a demand, and they said, "And you're not going to be here forever. It would behoove you to get an advanced degree while you're doing this and we will give you the time, and we understand that we're telling you to do that," not that they paid for it but...

Blanche Touhill: No, but if you had to study or there was a...

Carol Losos: Right, or there was a class during hours, which there were, so I went to University of Pennsylvania to get my Master's in Art History.

Blanche Touhill: And that's very close to one another, yes.

Carol Losos: Yes. So I would take graduate classes at Penn while I was working at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. So I would have afternoon seminars and that was just...there was never any question that I would...if I had to leave at 2:00 for things like that, and occasionally it would...I still taught schools. Generally you would teach two school classes in the morning and then the afternoon was for whatever else, other job responsibilities. So sometimes if there was a class I really wanted to take or needed to take, I would do less teaching or whatever it was at that point.

Blanche Touhill: Well, they were very generous.

Carol Losos: They were very generous. It was very humane place to work at that time because I haven't always worked in places where people...and I've always worked in non-profits but people haven't always had the right attitude. So that's influenced me a lot. I had great bosses and it was a very collegial department.

Blanche Touhill: So your boyfriend's in New York...

Carol Losos: He's in New York.

Blanche Touhill: ...and you're in Philadelphia and your family is in St. Louis.

Carol Losos: Right and my sister is in Princeton for much of this time.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, that's right, that's right.

Carol Losos: So not everybody is back in St. Louis. So my boyfriend and I, we would visit each other on the weekends and we'd take the cheap trains which was the commuter train to Trenton, New Jersey and then the local train up from Trenton to New York because it was less than half the price of Amtrak and my starting salary was \$10,000 for my nine-month internship at the Philadelphia, and then I think I went up to \$18,000 for the year.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, well, that's pretty good.

Carol Losos: That was a pretty good bump but it was nothing...

Blanche Touhill: It was a beginning.

Carol Losos: It was a beginning, exactly. But it was a great place to work and the building was beautiful. I worked on my Master's while I was there. I did get that. My best professor I ever had was at Penn, Elizabeth Johns, Beth Johns, and she is...was a wonderful person but she had a way of bringing out...she's just the best teacher, I would say, really as an adult, that I've ever had, a way of...in a seminar with her, everybody talked and it was always comfortable for everybody to talk. If you were the wallflower, she drew you into the conversation without you fearing for what you were going to say. I still don't know what her trick was and she worked you really hard. You also produced for her. So she did this but she was no pushover. You never asked for an extension from her unless you really had a good excuse for a paper, and I watched her nail one of her advisees in a seminar, in his Ph.D. seminar and I can still remember, she was not letting this advisee off the hook for what she considered was clearly not good enough. You know, I thought this was fascinating. So one of the pivotal things, I went in to her and I remember, so I really finished my Master's and it was a Ph.D. program and I went in and I was getting married. My husband was going to business school in Chicago at Northwestern and I'd been in my job for five years and my bosses pretty

much said, "This is not an end point. You're not staying here forever" was kind of what I was told and "you're unlikely to move up here because we're not moving and you should be here about five years and then we've trained you to go away or go off." And so I was at about that point. I remember, she said, "Do you want a job where you need a Ph.D.?" and I said, "I don't want to be a curator and I don't want to be a university professor." I didn't want that type of curatorial job, I don't think, and she said...and I was doing this all part-time. She was always really supportive of it. I had professors who weren't supportive of that who made it clear that I was a fake student. In fact, there was a professor...I failed the German exam. I had to pass a reading German exam. I failed it three times.

Blanche Touhill: Did you pass it eventually?

Carol Losos: Eventually, on my fourth try, and you had to pass that and I remember going in to him, distraught that I'd passed...it was a little early on and he pretty much told me to leave.

Blanche Touhill: Because you were part-time?

Carol Losos: Yeah, you know, if I didn't want it, kind of "get out of here." And they weren't supporting me the way they were supporting their full-time students anyway.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, no, part-time students never get...

Carol Losos: So, you know, I was money in their...

Blanche Touhill: Absolutely, you were supporting the others.

Carol Losos: I was supporting the others. I was doing just fine. I wasn't taking a space away from someone else, quite honestly, but I can remember that. That was very upsetting to me.

Blanche Touhill: But you knew he wasn't right.

Carol Losos: Well, I kept going, right. I did know he wasn't right. Why I had to pass the German reading exam was about the stupidest thing. It was an old requisite. They had to do it.

Blanche Touhill: That's right. Actually, I had to pass both French and German.

Carol Losos: Oh, I had to pass two languages.

Blanche Touhill: And I really thought it was not my area but I did it.

Carol Losos: Yeah.

Blanche Touhill: But I think that is interesting about some graduate schools and some graduate faculty. Really, the part-time student is not...but at the University of Missouri-St. Louis, part-time students are fine but it's a different era.

Carol Losos: Yeah.

Blanche Touhill: So, go on. So you went in...

Carol Losos: Well, he told me pretty much, "Why are you here?" I remember him saying but I stayed the course. I knew why I was there. I needed a graduate degree. That's what you needed to move on and I did like the study of it. But I remember going into my advisor's office and I did write a thesis on Florine Stettheimer and that was also about women's issues and I remember saying...a little bit of advice for the future and she said, "If you don't need a Ph.D. and you're..." ...essentially "if your heart's not in it, don't waste your time." And she said, "It can be a lot of nothing and it's not worth it." It's not worth it if you don't need it.

Blanche Touhill: Well, depending on the job, it was your goal. Well, it was your goal.

Carol Losos: Right, and she made that clear and I thought that was really powerful coming from her because I admired and respected her.

Blanche Touhill: So what did you do? Did you quit?

Carol Losos: Well, yes, I did quit.

Blanche Touhill: Did you have a job before you quit?

Carol Losos: No. I had finished up my Master's and you had to pass your written to move onto your Ph.D. and I passed that, with flying colors because I remember, I aced the essay. Somehow when I was preparing for it, I prepared the exact essay that came up in the exam. And so that was fine. I flew below the radar screen for the most part and I never really engaged with...as friends...with my fellow graduate students. I have no idea what happened to any of them after. I can't remember. There were a lot of

women. I'll have to say, I took a path all along and I have that's heavily female. It was education; it was non-profit; it was the arts.

Blanche Touhill: There were a lot of women?

Carol Losos: My bosses have mostly been women through the years.

Blanche Touhill: You went to Chicago?

Carol Losos: I went to Chicago. I got married back here in St. Louis and we moved to Chicago and I had a job by the time we arrived in Chicago.

Blanche Touhill: And what was the job?

Carol Losos: I was manager of school and teacher programs at the Terra Museum of American Art.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, I know the Terra Museum.

Carol Losos: Well, it doesn't exist anymore.

Blanche Touhill: I know.

Carol Losos: Daniel Terra was still alive. I learned a lesson about what are called "founder's museums."

Blanche Touhill: And how long did you stay there?

Carol Losos: I stayed two years and I was in charge of school and teacher programs. That was a great job. There was turmoil while I was there.

Blanche Touhill: And then what did you do?

Carol Losos: So we were at the point, my husband finished up his MBA and I said, "This is not a job I want to stay in for the long run so we shouldn't plan our next step based on my work." There were issues and so he had a job in New York and we moved to New York and I was without a job...this is really interesting to think how often I keep moving without jobs...now, some of that's fairly traditional. He was making out of business school three times what I was making in my current job. So that makes a difference, obviously, not that we thought that was everything. So then we moved to New York. I hunted around for a job, did a lot of networking and I took a position with a consultant who worked with museums and other cultural institutions. I fell out of museum education at that point. If

I had a regret, I wish I'd stuck the course and stayed in the career but that doesn't really...so what? And I worked for that...it was really a one-woman show at that point. We would work with other consultants with, as I said, museums developing programs, strategic plans; it was kind of all over the map...nature organizations, children's...I met a lot of people and I worked with a lot of different types of places. So that was about two years and then eventually...not eventually, I got pregnant, had my oldest son in there and I would have never thought it but I went to become a stay-at-home mom. There were personal reasons: I'd lost a baby before he was born...

Blanche Touhill: So he was treasured.

Carol Losos: He was treasured. I didn't earn enough to keep working for her. The job was really over. I needed to move on. Actually, I didn't hate myself but in the exaggeration, I didn't fully respect myself that I was staying in this job knowing I wanted out. I wanted out but I wasn't actively finding the next job because I said I was going to go...we wanted a baby, enough had happened with the lost child. I'd been very ill with it all and I was going to be home for a little bit. So I was in this job that I didn't love and I knew it was time to move on from but I wasn't actually trying to find the next job. That annoyed me a little at the time but things turned out fine and I had my son. As I said, I didn't earn enough to pay childcare and commute over an hour to work and all those things that happened along the way. So I have three children and all that time that they were...I definitely was channeling my mother.

Blanche Touhill: You became a volunteer?

Carol Losos: I became a volunteer. Actually, I worked part-time for the woman that I was leaving. I would write for her or do some part-time work along the way and then that petered out when my second child came along and then I started to do volunteer work for a local history museum and I would work somewhere...10 to 15 hours a week. I created the job. They didn't have an education program. I created an education program. And I said that that was to keep my hand in it, and, really, I didn't play tennis and I never got into yoga and I just couldn't completely engage in all of that. Then the third one came along and I said, I can't do this anymore. It's not worth my time anymore, to have a...it wasn't moving me anywhere.

Blanche Touhill: So what did you do?

Carol Losos: So, I told the museum and I thought I'd taken this job I created to as many hours as I wanted to give it but they should get somebody who would give it more hours. So I said I'll go on the board and volunteer instead of be paid. You couldn't do both. You couldn't be paid and be on the board and so I tell this story: So I go on the board and two years later I become the president of the board and I tell this great story where I'm sitting in a board meeting and there's a board member who generally says nothing and is a little bit of a downer and talks more in this meeting than I'd ever heard and I know I was in the corner rolling my eyes. It was like, what is he saying and can we get out of here. This is wasting my time. Then I get a call from the board president, could we have lunch and I think, oh, he's going to call me out for bad board behavior. Then he says...he was a great board president and, really, he was calling to ask if I would take over.

Blanche Touhill: And that's what happened?

Carol Losos: No. So I took over that job.

Blanche Touhill: So you ran the place?

Carol Losos: So I ran the place and it was a job and I worked really well with the director but then you know what happened? The bottom fell out of the economy. My husband lost his job, as many did. He was in financial services and there was a point where I said to myself, you know, this isn't right. I was not raised...I didn't do all of this, to be just dependent on him and nagging him to find a job and I had this epiphany.

Blanche Touhill: So you went out and got a job?

Carol Losos: So I said, I'm going to start...it's time for me to go back to work.

Blanche Touhill: And where did you go?

Carol Losos: So it took a little while and I was looking. I thought maybe I'll go into development now. I was networking and I put my resume out there and I did all those things you were supposed to do and the one thing I did is I put my resume...remember that museum organization I told you, I put it on a job board and somebody found me for a job I would have never

applied for and that was four years ago, four-and-a-half years ago. So I went back to work full-time in 2010.

Blanche Touhill: And what's your title?

Carol Losos: So I'm director of Educational Programs for the English-Speaking Union.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, my goodness!

Carol Losos: A national non-profit.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, yes. I know the English-Speaking Union well.

Carol Losos: You do? So I oversee all the educational programs for 70 branches around the country.

Blanche Touhill: Wonderful! Talk to me about, if you had been born 50 years earlier, what would your life be like?

Carol Losos: So, 50 years earlier, in...I was born in 1966...16, so I would live something more like my grandmother's life. I would say I don't think I would have been raised to do anything I wanted to but look at my mother. So I'm not so sure that that would usually be the answer, but she started out as a school teacher so I assume I would have become more of a stay-at-home mom and probably volunteered and I don't know if I would have had the kick in the butt to go back to work again. I'm still in a world of education and non-profit so I haven't broken a barrier along those. I occupy a world that has a strong...

Blanche Touhill: No, you have broken a barrier because you've been places that previously would never have hired a woman and would not have necessarily had an educational program.

Carol Losos: Okay, I will buy that.

Blanche Touhill: But you would have been involved.

Carol Losos: I think I would have been involved, at least given my mother and clearly her mother, but I don't think I would have been working for pay.

Blanche Touhill: And you wouldn't have been the head of the organization.

Carol Losos: No.

Blanche Touhill: What about, have you gotten an award or anything that you treasure, awards that you treasure?

Carol Losos: No, I don't think so. I can't think of any awards.

Blanche Touhill: What is it in your life that you really felt meant that you had succeeded? Was it the English-speaking union job?

Carol Losos: I think so. It was a great job to come back to and then I've taken it far places four years ago that it wouldn't have been before.

Blanche Touhill: So you did a good job?

Carol Losos: I did a good job and the organization is looking strongly inwards to figure out where it should be and it's all about what I do. They know that that is where it has to be.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, how wonderful! That's very satisfying. That's an award.

Carol Losos: So I feel appreciated, I guess I should say, and valued within what I do.

Blanche Touhill: Is there anything else you want to say?

Carol Losos: I will tell you one thing: My largest regret is taking 10 years out of my career. If I had to do it over again, I would have gone back to full-time work earlier and I wish somebody had kicked my butt.

Blanche Touhill: And that would have meant, though, that your entire salary might have had to go for childcare.

Carol Losos: It might have but I don't actually live in regrets and while I wasn't working full-time or at all, just volunteering, my kids always thought of it as a job, what I did for the historical museum. They never really differentiated until they were old enough to understand.

Blanche Touhill: How nice!

Carol Losos: It was nice. That made me feel good at the time.

Blanche Touhill: Well, thank you very much.

Carol Losos: Thank you.

Blanche Touhill: It was a lovely conversation and I am a member of the English-Speaking Union.

Carol Losos: You are? Oh, I'm going to go look you up in our books.

Blanche Touhill: I do understand the important work of that organization.

Carol Losos: Thank you.