

An Interview with

**Jane Miller**

at *The* Historical Society of Missouri St. Louis  
Research Center, St. Louis, Missouri

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interviewed by Dr. Blanche Touhill  
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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.

Jane Miller: I was born in New Orleans and my father was a physician who started out as an OB-GYN but during the Depression when he needed a lot of patients and then during the war, he did general medicine primarily. So we saw very little of him. I do want to say that I was born on Mardi Gras night and I really came into the world in style because the physicians, the attending physicians were partially in their tuxes because they had to leave the ball but my father was always very supportive. My mother was a wonderful woman. Her name was F. Irene Smith and she was just the kindest, sweetest woman and she always encouraged me, as did my father. My father was very proud of what I had done in school, et cetera. I grew up in a neighborhood that had a lot of children so we played together but I also played by myself and I can remember building dollhouses in the roots of trees and climbing up a beautiful Japanese plum tree that was in the back yard and just going on voyages and things like that. I went to the local public high school.

Blanche Touhill: What about grade school?

Jane Miller: Grade school, sorry...which started out very good and then there came Hewy Long who gave a lot of the educational business to his buddies and he picked the textbooks and hired teachers that were unprepared and things like that. So, as soon as possible, my father was able to send us, and my brother who came about two years and nine months after I did, to private school. Actually, I went to the public grammar school for four years, kindergarten through four and I started into first grade early. I started at five and when I got to McGehees which was a partially elementary, partially high school, it started in the fifth grade and I took the fifth and sixth grades together but it was a very small group. I think there were fewer than 15 of us in the two grades. So we got a very good education, except I'm not a good speller and I don't know much about geography but I think that's because I skipped that fifth grade. McGehees was a wonderful school. Its academics were marvelous and the classes were small and the teachers were just really good. I can only think of one teacher, the history teacher, that I didn't think was very good but maybe it was because she just talked about wars and things like that and not the real history of the world. Our school was in a mansion which is on the historic register and it is this beautiful building with marble floors and a

gorgeous circular staircase that went up to a stained glass window at the top. We just felt that it was a place that you could learn. So, I did very well. I was first in the class but there were only 25 of us in our graduating class. We had our 70<sup>th</sup> reunion last spring. Many of us were in there for fifth and sixth grades together. So it was a good place to learn and there was a lot of working together as students as well as working with teachers.

Blanche Touhill: Were there boys and girls?

Jane Miller: No, just girls. For instance, when I got to college, we used the same chemistry text and the same math text.

Blanche Touhill: So they had science?

Jane Miller: Yes, we had a good biology course and a good chemistry course. We did not have physics but I took four years of math. They didn't do calculus. I took four years of...well, I started French in the fourth grade so I took French all the way through high school. What I learned from this was that women could do anything.

Blanche Touhill: Did the teachers say that to you or just, they did it?

Jane Miller: They did it.

Blanche Touhill: They didn't talk about it?

Jane Miller: No, they didn't really talk about it but they did it. They said that even though we were Southern girls, we could go to any college we wanted to, et cetera. When I graduated, I had scholarships to Mills College, to Smith, to a junior college in Nashville whose name I've forgotten. It is defunct...and to Newcomb and then to Agnes Scott and I didn't want to go to Newcomb because I wanted to go away. That was in 1944. At that time, you didn't fly anyplace and my father said that he wanted me to go to a college where I didn't have to go overnight on the train. So that's how I ended up at Agnes Scott outside of Atlanta.

Blanche Touhill: How far was it from New Orleans to Atlanta?

Jane Miller: We got on the train about 9:00 in the morning and I got there at about 3:00 or 4:00 in the afternoon.

Blanche Touhill: And you probably had a nice lunch.

Jane Miller: Yes, had a nice lunch and there were other people from Alabama and from Mississippi who got on the train and also, when we went back after Christmas, all the Sugar Bowl people were coming back too as well as the teams. So it was a nice trip.

Blanche Touhill: When you played as a young girl with the kids in the neighborhood, were they all ages and males and females?

Jane Miller: No, we just mostly played with girls. Girls played with girls and I can remember doing a lot of paper dolls and we would put on plays and things like that and ask the neighbors to come.

Blanche Touhill: Did you charge the neighbors?

Jane Miller: Yes, and then we would have treats. I remember one time we dug holes in the back yard and made kind of pictures in the holes and we invited everybody to come and look at the pictures. So it was a time when the imagination was very important because we didn't have any television.

Blanche Touhill: Well, the radio was your imagination?

Jane Miller: Yes, right, and I can remember how excited I was to get a radio and to listen to The Shadow at night before I went to sleep. We had an excellent education at McGehee's and they certainly urged us to go on and to do things.

Blanche Touhill: Did the girls go to college?

Jane Miller: Yes, I think all of us did. There was one girl in the class who got married.

Blanche Touhill: Right away?

Jane Miller: Yes, right after high school. This was a time when men were going off to war and if your boyfriend...you wanted to get married and this happened when I went to college that a lot of the girls left to get married. We did things, from the church, for instance, we tutored kids on the levy who were still living in tents from the Depression.

Blanche Touhill: From Hooverville?

Jane Miller: Yes.

Blanche Touhill: Did you go down to the levy and do it?

- Jane Miller: Yes.
- Blanche Touhill: As a group?
- Jane Miller: Well, no. It was very safe and we just went down. My house was about three blocks from the levy.
- Blanche Touhill: So you weren't afraid of the poor people?
- Jane Miller: No, not at all, and New Orleans at that time had segregated neighborhoods but they were intermixed so that there was a black neighborhood just a couple of blocks away from us. So we did know these. We had a cook/maid who was with us since my brother was born and until she died, when my mother was in her 70's. So she was there for 40-someodd years, just part of the family. When we were very little, she used to dress us up every afternoon and take us over to the park and we had to look beautiful because she had to have the best looking children in the park.
- Blanche Touhill: Were the schools integrated, the public schools?
- Jane Miller: No, and even the high schools were not integrated by sex; there were girls' high schools and boys' high schools in the part of the public schools.
- Blanche Touhill: And part of the private schools too?
- Jane Miller: In most of the private schools but...
- Blanche Touhill: They were separate?
- Jane Miller: Yes, but there were two private schools, Country Day and Newman's, that were co-ed.
- Blanche Touhill: Did any teacher specifically say to you, "Jane, you should be a scientist" or "You're a good writer" or...
- Jane Miller: No, not really.
- Blanche Touhill: Not specifically?
- Jane Miller: Not specifically.
- Blanche Touhill: It was everybody, was going to have some contribution to make to the society?

- Jane Miller: Yes, that's right, and actually, one of the slogans was "Noblesse oblige."
- Blanche Touhill: Yes, I was going to ask that.
- Jane Miller: Yes, and that was really drummed into our heads. We remembered that, that because we were privileged to have this education, et cetera, we were obliged to do something with it.
- Blanche Touhill: Did you tour Agnes Scott before you went?
- Jane Miller: No.
- Blanche Touhill: You just applied and were accepted and then you got on the train?
- Jane Miller: Yes, that's right, yeah.
- Blanche Touhill: I think that was true of most people in those days.
- Jane Miller: That's right.
- Blanche Touhill: You didn't have to see it. You chose it for one reason or another and you went.
- Jane Miller: Yeah, and geography was the reason that I went.
- Blanche Touhill: Yes, and you wanted an all girls school?
- Jane Miller: I was happy with that, yes, and I think my family was too. So I went to Agnes Scott and I was really surprised that there were other people that were as smart as I was and that there was a lot of competition but I kind of took a leadership role in things. The freshmen always gave what is called a "Black Cat" performance and the sophomores did one too and there was a competition between the two and I kind of helped direct the Black Cat performance.
- Blanche Touhill: So you were like the director or the producer?
- Jane Miller: Well, kind of, there were a couple of us that did that.
- Blanche Touhill: But you decided who was going to be in the show and what they would sing?
- Jane Miller: Uh-huh, that kind of thing.
- Blanche Touhill: What the program would be?

Jane Miller: Yeah. I was a little disappointed at the level of the courses. At that time, if you had had, say, four years of French...however, I did go into advanced French. For instance, in the math, I just went through the tests with no problems at all because it was like third year math instead of the fourth year math that I had and, in fact, the teacher thought I was cheating because I did it so much and got 100 every time.

Blanche Touhill: But you were really just re-taking the course?

Jane Miller: That's right, but the English teacher was very good and she really encouraged me to do creative writing. My goal in going to college was to be a...because I loved English and I loved science...was to be a science journalist. So I took chemistry first and the chemistry course was practically the same one that I had had at McGehee's and so I ended up helping teach the rest of the class, and all the way through, in the chemistry...for instance, they didn't even insist that we take calculus, calculus and physical chemistry with calculus, I had to retake before I went to graduate school. The science wasn't all that great there. The biology was but the way it was taught, I just didn't do it. This was before DNA and before biology was much more than rote memory and it just didn't appeal to me very much. I had a wonderful classics course the first year because it was something new and that I really enjoyed. I wrote for the newspaper. I wrote for the college creative writing magazine and I didn't run for any offices but I did serve as presidents of some clubs and things like that.

Blanche Touhill: Were you president of clubs and things like that in high school?

Jane Miller: We didn't have that.

Blanche Touhill: Oh. Did you have a school newspaper or anything?

Jane Miller: No.

Blanche Touhill: That's interesting. Okay, so go on.

Jane Miller: But I still got that the faculty at Agnes Scott also gave us all, as women, the idea that we could do anything, that we could go ahead and do whatever we wanted in the world and that was a very good thing for me.

Blanche Touhill: Yes, my goodness.

- Jane Miller: And I really think that it was the attitude in both of those schools that made me want to get ahead; also, the attitude of my father because he was very supportive and he, too, was the kind of person who was president of the local medical society and the state medical society and things like that.
- Blanche Touhill: What about the girls that you graduated with, did they go on and have careers?
- Jane Miller: Well, some of them did, yes. One of them was a very good teacher; another one, who happened to be very involved with Zonta, she worked for the government and was married to a retired colonel and she has gone a lot in politics, et cetera; then there was another one who went on and wrote a book for elementary music students that seems to be extremely popular; a couple of them died early of cancer and it was amazing, at that time, women got cancer when they were in their 30's and a lot of them died of breast cancer when they were in their 30's. Then there was a big gap and then people died later on, mostly of breast cancer, et cetera.
- Blanche Touhill: Well, I remember that myself and most of those women did not live. They didn't know how to really treat it.
- Jane Miller: No, not at all. It's made a huge difference.
- Blanche Touhill: Oh, my goodness, yes, because now, if you get it in time, most people recover.
- Jane Miller: Yes, from breast cancer, that's right.
- Blanche Touhill: Then you graduated?
- Jane Miller: Yes.
- Blanche Touhill: Did you go back to New Orleans?
- Jane Miller: Yes. I wanted to go to medical school. Well, there was a big fight between the science departments and the English department at Agnes Scott and the two faculties didn't get along at all. I took almost a major in English but I had one of the English people whose courses I really wanted to take tell me, "As long as you're a science major, you'll never get an A in my course."

Blanche Touhill: Oh, my goodness.

Jane Miller: So I gave up the business of being a journalist and so I wanted to go to medical school but my father said, "Jane, you're going to get married and married women don't practice medicine" and they didn't at that time. In his class, which was, I think, the class of '24, there were three women and two of them got married and never practiced; the other one didn't get married and worked for the government, but she didn't really practice medicine...

Blanche Touhill: (It was more politics?) or something like that?

Jane Miller: Yes, and he said, "I will send you but I don't really want to because I think it will be a waste of money." So then I said, "Well, I'll just go to graduate school in chemistry." So I applied at Tulane.

Blanche Touhill: How did he react to that?

Jane Miller: He said, "That's wonderful; that's great." I had applied to Tulane and their program was just starting and so I was admitted. I had a very good experience there. There were good teachers and, at that time, the women were enrolled in Newcomb College and the men were in Tulane's Arts & Sciences but I did teach in the summer at the Tulane course which was integrated but all of my TA work was done at Newcomb and they had a fantastic, really great faculty. At that time, women could not get jobs in major universities in the chemistry departments. So, like the "Old Boys" network, there was a women's network of women's colleges which made sure that women were able to get jobs teaching at women's colleges so they could go and Mt. Holyoke was essentially the center of that. We had two instructors at Newcomb while I was there who were Mt. Holyoke graduates and had gotten their Master's at Mt. Holyoke, then they taught at Newcomb for a while and then they went on and got their Ph.D., usually at Iowa because Iowa was very good at accepting women and the University of Chicago, both were very good at accepting women. Yale was another place that accepted women but they were mostly in bio-chemistry. So if you wanted to do any others, you usually went to Iowa, Iowa State or Chicago.

Blanche Touhill: Were there women faculty at Chicago and Iowa State that accepted them?

Jane Miller: No, never. It took Chicago until the '60s to hire a woman in the chemistry department but there were just men who felt that they should accept them or, if you were in organic chemistry, you went to Chicago, or physical chemistry because we had one faculty member at Newcomb who was a chemistry graduate from Chicago in physical chemistry.

Blanche Touhill: Well, the interesting thing is, you'd have a chance of a job.

Jane Miller: Yes, and also, the only other place that women had a chance for a job was with the government agencies. I'll tell the tale of this woman, Ruth Rogan Benerito who was a physical chemist. If you were teaching at Newcomb and you still didn't have a Ph.D. and wanted to stay at Tulane for your Ph.D., you worked with the head of the department at Newcomb and she was also a Chicago graduate, Miss DeMilt, and she was a very, very good teacher and she was also very interested in the history of chemistry so she introduced us to that so it was a very good way to start my career. She was dying of cancer and she didn't want anybody to know but she wanted to make sure that...I was her only graduate student. She kept putting off my starting research, and putting off my starting research. So finally I got an offer to go back to Agnes Scott and teach. I also met Jim, the man that I married, at the same time and we decided to get married so I wrote Agnes Scott and said I could not come and Miss DeMilt was delighted because she said, "Oh, you can go to St. Louis and you just go to Washington U and, with your record here, they will accept you and you can just go on and get your Ph.D. from Washington U." Well, when I came up here and I went over to Washington U to see about enrolling, they simply said, "We do not take any women graduate students," and they had plenty of graduate students from the returning veterans and so they just didn't take women. They often hired men who were married to Ph.D. women because they could get twice as many papers out of them because they figured that the wife would work for her husband who had been hired by Washington U, and it was many, many years before Washington U ever had a tenured woman hired in the department.

Blanche Touhill: What did you do then?

Jane Miller: Well, I tried to look in the paper to see if there was someplace that I could do research. My in-laws were upset about this because they didn't think that their daughter-in-law ought to work but I could not stand this

business of just staying at home and going out to lunch and playing Canasta and things like that. I really missed being in the lab. So, I answered an ad in the paper for a technician, because I didn't have my doctorate then, at a pharmaceutical company here and I talked to the head of the lab and he was delighted because actually, what he wanted to do was to carry on with my Master's research and he said, "Oh, this is wonderful." Then I got a call from the personnel department and they said, "We do not hire women chemists," and I said, "Well, that seems kind of strange because I'm the one person that knows something about what this lab director wants to continue with" and he said, "But we don't have any bathrooms for women chemists" and I said, "But you've got secretaries, et cetera"; "Oh, but a chemist can't go to the bathroom with a secretary" and that was it.

Blanche Touhill: That was it?

Jane Miller: That was it. That was the end of that job, but there was an ad for a research assistant at Washington University and I did go there and I worked for a woman, Dr. Graham, who was just fantastic and I really enjoyed that job and were doing some interesting work. She thought that the histamine that's produced when you have an allergy was bound in the body. You have a lethal amount of histamine in your body...was bound by heparin which is one of the components of blood and so we were trying to see whether this was true, but was awfully hard. The only kind of instrumentation we had was very primitive. I was still working on that but I got pregnant and then stopped work and I stopped work to have my first son, Jimmy, who was born in January of '55. When he was about a year old, I went to New Orleans to visit for Christmas and was having trouble with my arm and they found that I had a bone tumor in my left arm. So they were going to do some surgery to correct it but they didn't know that I was pregnant again at the time, and neither did I. So I stayed in New Orleans during my pregnancy and about six weeks afterwards because, with just one arm, it was hard for me to take care of a newborn. What happened was that the metabolism of your bones is affected by the hormones and so the bone graft that they put in the arm dissolved when Bill was about six months old. So I had to have more surgery and it was kind of successful but, through the years, it's kind of fallen apart. So there was a hiatus there. During that time, I worked on my dissertation and what was suggested to me by Tulane was that

instead of doing a lab one, since we weren't sure whether I could ever use that left arm again, I could do one in the history of chemistry. So I did my dissertation in the history of chemistry and got my Ph.D. in chemistry in 1960, in the history of chemistry. But I still thought of myself as a lab chemist. My arm was much better then to use things and I went back to work at Washington U in the Department of Orthopedic Surgery and we were studying what happened to cartilage as it's changing to bone and that was very interesting but I was on soft money and when UMSL started...and I had known Charlie Armbruster who was head of the Science Department and so he said, "What about coming and working at UMSL and you will be on a tenure track and everything will work out fine." So that was why I came to UMSL in 1965 and that made me the first woman to be in the Chemistry Department at UMSL. But the problem was that they ran out of money before they could give me a lab so I didn't have a lab and I couldn't do research. So, everybody else got one but I didn't. So I had a huge teaching load but I found that I really enjoyed teaching those kids. They were so receptive and so interesting and it was just a delight to teach them and I'd developed laboratories and things like that that I thought would be better for them than what was at Washington U because they were the gold standard for UMSL to be in with.

Blanche Touhill: And you could probably order those things, couldn't you?

Jane Miller: Yes. Then, when they started the program of having joint appointments in education, they asked me to do that and that, too, was a great joy because I did not have any student that was not really a joy to teach, a joy to work with, et cetera. So that made me the first there. So I really enjoyed my time at teaching and I did a little bit of research but my teaching load was so huge that I didn't have a chance. And we noticed, there were a lot of women that were hired and I understand that the Arts & Sciences dean hired women because they were cheaper and so we noticed that we were making less money, we had higher teaching loads, and we were not allowed to serve on any committee except the hospitality committee.

Blanche Touhill: That's how we all met.

- Jane Miller: That's right, and so we started this women's group. Stephanie (Christ?) and Blanche Touhill and Irene Cortinovis and Jane Parks Clifford and a few other people who have left, have...
- Blanche Touhill: We stayed.
- Jane Miller: Yes, we stayed, and I think that was a great experience. Then, as soon as I got tenure in 1971, I filed a complaint with the EEOC about this but I had to do it individually. They didn't do class actions then. So the EEOC was just very good and we came with a lot of data because I know Jane Parks Clifford went up because they wouldn't share the data with us and she went up...
- Blanche Touhill: ...to Columbia.
- Jane Miller: ...to Columbia and went through a whole list of file cards until she got all the information.
- Blanche Touhill: Yes, the salaries, yes.
- Jane Miller: Yes. So the university gave in and, personally, I got a semester off to do research; I got a nice raise, which was retroactive for several years, and it affected the whole four campuses which was very important to me, and they had to hire EEO people on each campus.
- Blanche Touhill: And they had to make an analysis of all the salaries for women versus men...
- Jane Miller: Yes.
- Blanche Touhill: ...and they adjusted, I think, every woman's salary...
- Jane Miller: Every woman's salary, yes.
- Blanche Touhill: ...went up.
- Jane Miller: Yes, that's right.
- Blanche Touhill: Tell your story about meeting Ratchford.
- Jane Miller: Oh, yes. They wouldn't mail me the check. I had to go to his office.
- Blanche Touhill: I didn't know that part.

- Jane Miller: Yes...to pick up my check and so I dressed up. I think I even wore a hat and drove up to his office and he kept calling me "little lady," and "Miss Miller."
- Blanche Touhill: And you were probably 35 or 33 or something like that?
- Jane Miller: Oh, yes, more than that because I was born in '28. I was 34.
- Blanche Touhill: Okay, well 34, that's a young woman, not a little lady.
- Jane Miller: Well, it wasn't all that young at that time. That was middle age, really. He kept me waiting a long time, I remember but I did get it done. And the next year, they did re-evaluate all the women's salaries and I think some of the minorities too...
- Blanche Touhill: Yes.
- Jane Miller: ...because I think the minorities were suffering under the same problem.
- Blanche Touhill: Yes, and there were a number of women but there were fewer minorities.
- Jane Miller: That's right, there were very few minorities.
- Blanche Touhill: Everett Nance always used to say they count the minorities two or three times, because when you had faculty status, they counted you; when you were an administrator, they counted you; when you were a researcher, they counted you, which I always thought was a pretty good joke.
- Jane Miller: Yes.
- Blanche Touhill: How did the Chemistry Department react?
- Jane Miller: Well, the Chemistry Department did not react well. They kept saying, "Well, she hasn't done any research."
- Blanche Touhill: Well, you didn't have a lab, a little hard to do research.
- Jane Miller: ...a lab and you didn't have time. For the years until '71, I was primarily the person that did the discussion sessions which meant that I had classes from 8:00 o'clock in the morning until 5:00 o'clock in the afternoon and sometimes taught the evening college quantitative analysis and I had two kids at home and a husband that I needed to take care of.

Blanche Touhill: How did you take care of the children?

Jane Miller: Well, fortunately, they were in school by this time. My first job after they were born was, one year taking somebody's place at Fontbonne College. That was when Bill was in kindergarten. The school that they went to, Flynn Park, was just a block away from my in-laws' house, so after school they would go over there and I would pick them up so that worked out very well and, of course, I would take them to school in the morning or they would walk. I don't know whether they could walk anymore to school because it was several blocks. But it worked out very well.

Blanche Touhill: How did you make friends in St. Louis when you came?

Jane Miller: Oh, I met the man I married because my roommate from Agnes Scott lived here and I came to visit her one Christmastime and I met Jim and so I had a group of friends that were ready-made.

Blanche Touhill: Yes. So you really joined that?

Jane Miller: Yes, that's right, and some of them worked but very few of them.

Blanche Touhill: Now, was he in law school in those days?

Jane Miller: No, no, no, he was working for insurance companies and then he went to be workmen's compensation referee.

Blanche Touhill: Which is a great job.

Jane Miller: Yes, and so eventually we really grew apart and a lot of it had to do with money. We just had different philosophies about how to spend money and kind of over the children too because Jim really didn't pay much attention to the children. I was really a single mother because he would come home tired and not have much to do with them. So we were divorced in '74. We were married 21 years.

Blanche Touhill: That's a long time.

Jane Miller: Yeah.

Blanche Touhill: Were your mother and father proud of you?

Jane Miller: My mother and father were very proud of me. My father, when he was...well, it was in 1948, '47 or '48, he lost his sight and had to stop

practice and he really was just extremely proud of me and of everything that I did, and my mother was just very supportive. She would have been supportive no matter what I did. She was just that kind of person.

Blanche Touhill: When you made this great breakthrough for women in the University of Missouri system, you were active on the senate so you were always getting elected to the senate, weren't you?

Jane Miller: Yes.

Blanche Touhill: So that breakthrough must have...I know on the part of the women, were just delighted.

Jane Miller: Yes.

Blanche Touhill: Because it really did mean every couple of years they were going to make a similar study. It wasn't just a one-shot deal.

Jane Miller: Yeah.

Blanche Touhill: And I do give credit to Ratchford for seeing that and making it for the whole system.

Jane Miller: Yes.

Blanche Touhill: I think he just had you go up because he wanted to make a big deal out of it, don't you think?

Jane Miller: Yes, yes, that's right.

Blanche Touhill: But I admired him for it.

Jane Miller: Yes, and not fighting the whole thing, yes.

Blanche Touhill: Yes, of saying that times have changed.

Jane Miller: But I didn't tell you that right after I had the complaint filed, et cetera, I took the professors to lunch to explain to them about what the situation was and why I did it and they never forgave me. Bob Murray said to me, "Because of your action, you will never be promoted to professor" and I never was.

Blanche Touhill: So you paid a price?

- Jane Miller: Yes, but not really. I might have retired with a little more salary as a professor but I made sure that my salary went up every year.
- Blanche Touhill: Oh, so they were afraid of retaliation?
- Jane Miller: Yes.
- Blanche Touhill: And you published?
- Jane Miller: Yes, I published and I was very active in the History of Chemistry, Division of the ACS. I was...and still am the only member of the Chemistry Department at UMSL who was ever chairman of a division in the ACS and I was chairman of the History Division and I had a lot of friends in the Education Division too.
- Blanche Touhill: Yes, you did.
- Jane Miller: And I was part of that big grant from the ACS and the NSF to be the head of the Missouri team, to write a resource book for beginning high school chemistry teachers. It took us two years to do it and it was an excellent, excellent book and it has been republished recently but very little has been changed. We had different kinds of good hands-on experiments for them to do. You know, the Missouri law is such that if you have been certified in a science, it's usually biology and have had one year of chemistry, I mean, six hours of chemistry, you can teach chemistry to high school students and that's really ridiculous and there are a lot of states that have the same sort of thing. So the resource material was really important.
- Blanche Touhill: I'm going to change the subject a little bit. If you were born 50 years earlier, what would your life be like?
- Jane Miller: Well, I would probably not have gone to high school. Let's see, that would have been 1870's...I would not have gone to high school. There were still a lot of people who said that it ruined women, to go to school and that women's education was very poor. I just read a biography of Mrs. Sibley who founded Lindenwood College and she was one of the first to do women's education but I probably would not have gone to that because she really took in poor girls or Indian girls or things like that to begin with.
- Blanche Touhill: What year did Lindenwood start, do you remember?

Jane Miller: Well, it became a real college when it was taken over by the Presbyterian Church and it was 1864, I think.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, my goodness. I knew it was early but I didn't know how early.

Jane Miller: Yes and it was really like a high school. It's like St. Louis U started. It was called a college but it really a high school, and I would have gotten married and probably married to someone that my family would have wanted and I certainly would not have had...I really give the people around me the credit for pushing me and giving me the idea that I can do anything and I don't think I would have gotten that then.

Blanche Touhill: Would you have been a suffragette?

Jane Miller: I don't know. I think it would depend on what financial group I was with because if you notice the suffragettes, they were all well-funded and they all had husbands who were pushing them to do this. In very few cases, they had...

Blanche Touhill: ...they went against their husband's wish.

Jane Miller: Yes, that's right, but I'm thinking about the Wednesday Club.

Blanche Touhill: Yes, and you're very active in.

Jane Miller: Yes, and it was formed in 1890 and it was formed as a group to study the poetry of Shelly.

Blanche Touhill: No!

Jane Miller: Yes, it was originally the Shelly Club and some husbands found out about Shelly's real life and they said, "We're not going to pay your dues anymore." So they changed the name to the Wednesday Club and started doing a whole bunch of things then.

Blanche Touhill: They were very active...

Jane Miller: Oh, yes, in the suffragettes.

Blanche Touhill: In the suffragettes and active in, as you're saying, food and drug, that legislation...

Jane Miller: Yes, and Susan Blow and the kindergarten.

- Blanche Touhill: That's right; they did learn her methodology and helped her.
- Jane Miller: Yes. I wouldn't have been me, and there were still a lot of things that I did at the time that were different from what other women did.
- Blanche Touhill: Oh, yes.
- Jane Miller: I mean, there's some members of the Wednesday Club who are so happy with Phyllis Schafley because they said that the feminists made them feel terrible by staying at home and things like that. I think it's because they have never been thought a feeling of the importance of themselves. They always think of themselves as being subject to...
- Blanche Touhill: "Mrs."
- Jane Miller: Yes...to children and to husbands.
- Blanche Touhill: Yes. Have you received any award or awards that you're very proud of?
- Jane Miller: Well, I got a Distinguished Alumni Award from McGehee's and I got a Woman of Worth Award for working with women high school students to get them to take more math and science, and then the year before last, I won the Trailblazer Award from UMSL and that's the one I'm most proud of.
- Blanche Touhill: Yes, of course, you did it.
- Jane Miller: Yes.
- Blanche Touhill: You were the trailblazer.
- Jane Miller: Yes.
- Blanche Touhill: You were the first trailblazer.
- Jane Miller: Yes.
- Blanche Touhill: Would you talk about some of the volunteer work that you've done?
- Jane Miller: Yes. Well, I was applied to the University City Public Library board and just got very interested in that and I was president when the new library was built and I was on the board when the new director came and then I went on to be active in the Missouri Library Association. I was head of the Trustees and Citizens Division and then was president of the Missouri

Library Association and that was very, very good because I like librarians and they are wonderful people to work with. Then I have tried to do other things for women. When I mentioned the work that I did about encouraging high school girls to go into science and math, particularly to continue to take math, this was formed in the '70s. It was a group that gave a conference every year, the Expanding Your Horizons Conference and I was one of the founders of that and we brought high school girls...even down to seventh grade...to get them interested in science. We had a good speaker like an astronaut and we had hands-on things for them to do and then had them meet with professional working women as mathematicians to find out what their lives were like and that was very successful. We got grants and the schools were pleased with that. One time we had 900 girls at one of these conferences. The other thing that I did was be on the board of ALIVE, which is a group that works with abused women and their children. It stands for Alternatives to Living in Violent Environments and we were very active when I was on the board in getting a shelter in the county. Up until that time, they had no shelter and this was in the '90s and it was really needed, extremely much so.

Blanche Touhill: Does that still exist?

Jane Miller: Yes, the shelter still exists and ALIVE still exists too. It was founded by some social work people from Washington U and their emphasis is on counseling the women and the children because so often abusers are the children of abusers.

Blanche Touhill: Yes, they are.

Jane Miller: And that was a very, very important part of my life for a while.

Blanche Touhill: You know, I want to thank you for all you've done for women over your life but I think, in my mind because I worked for the University of Missouri – St. Louis for so many years, I think your breakthrough with President Ratchford as the head of the university and his calling you to Columbia to, I think really take credit with that. I think that was your finest hour.

Jane Miller: Yes.

Blanche Touhill: And I think these others were all fine hours but you changed so many policies within the University of Missouri that began to recognize women were here and they had to equitably trained. So thank you very much.

Jane Miller: You're welcome.

Blanche Touhill: It's been a wonderful interview. Thank you.