

An Interview with
Patricia Rice

at *The Historical Society of Missouri* St. Louis
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interviewed by Dr. Blanche Touhill
transcribed by Valerie Leri and edited by
Josephine Sporleder



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.

Blanche Touhill: Would you introduce yourself?

Patricia Rice: I'm Patricia Rice and I have been a journalist for more than 40 years in St. Louis; before that, a bit in Paris.

Blanche Touhill: Would you talk about your youth: did your parents encourage you; your grandparents; your cousins; your brothers and sisters. Just talk about your youth and about elementary and secondary school and about who, among your family, encouraged you and was there a teacher or two that really said to you, "Pat, you really have ability and what are you going to do with your life?"

Patricia Rice: Well, I was really lucky to be surrounded by all kinds of people who were incredibly warm and encouraging and I grew up hearing about my great great grandmother who got herself...she was born in France...she learned English before she came to America. Her father had been coming back and forth and he was interested in real estate development, you'd call it and he also had a bank. But anyway, so she prepared herself. So in her obituary in 1903...she came here when she was 20...it said that she could speak English before she arrived. So I kind of knew that that was a really good thing. That's why she'd had a very good life and married a wonderful man. Both of my grandmothers went to college, one graduated, one didn't. They were women of real accomplishment. They worked. During World War II, my maternal grandmother was sort of drafted by her best friend's husband, who was the head of Maternity Hospital, Dr. Otto Schwartz, to run the chemistry lab at what is now Barnes Jewish...BJC, but then was Maternity Hospital and, based on high school chemistry but she said, really, she could learn everything from some men who were going off to war. So she did that during the war. I was born in 1942 so I don't remember her, in the end of '42 and so I don't remember her working. But it was an important thing to me and my other grandmother was a teacher and she went to Oxford University. My mother went to college. She didn't graduate which was very common but she was a very intelligent woman and in a way I think my grandmothers had more opportunity than my mother who was very much a woman of the '50s where women sort of didn't work as much unless it was absolutely essential after the war. It's something that Betty Friedan wrote about, about after the war, people going back. I was in the 133rd graduating class of the Academy of the Sacred Heart City House which

was founded by, certainly a luminary, a woman who knew how to get things done, St. Philippine du Chain. Of course, she wasn't a saint when I was in school. She had founded the school 133 years before. She was only canonized in 1988 and I had the great joy of covering her canonization. But it's run by the Society of the Sacred Heart, a group of nuns who prided themselves on very high educational achievements and in high school, I had three nuns who had graduate degrees from Oxford University, three. Every single nun that taught me had spent at least a year living in Rome. It was part of this international orders, preparation before they took their final vows. So they had a very global view of things and we learned French from the time we were little but were encouraged to have a very global view. We occasionally had transfer students from other schools, would come in. There was a real sense...my favorite French teacher was a Polish woman who was a refugee countess who had been in the underground in Poland. We had native-speaking French teachers as well. We had a number of other people who taught one thing or another who had a real global view. They came from other countries and this was in the '50s, after World War II where there were a lot of people coming to this country that were very well educated. And so we had quite a lot of a global view but also, almost all our teachers were women and, even in grade school, we had people with Ph.D.'s. Some were getting Ph.D.'s. We were the corner of Maryland and Taylor and Pershing and we were very close to St. Louis U and Washington U and some were actually finishing up dissertations and things. So we were taught by people who had a real love of the intellectual. When I was in 8th grade, a nun who came from New Orleans, Sister Marie Louise Soniat, she encouraged me to write. She said I was pretty good and when I was a freshman in high school, Sister Harriet Corrigan, who was a brilliant woman and very kind and quite low key, encouraged me to write and really gave me, for extra credit, things to do. But Soniat had really encouraged us to read. She got me to read *War and Peace* in 8th grade, but I didn't really finish it until Thanksgiving vacation of my freshman year. Friends of mine at other schools, they were still reading Nancy Drew but we were really encouraged and when I was a senior in high school, we had to write a thesis, about 60 pages with footnotes and I did mine on T.S. Eliot and somebody else did hers on Graham Green. There was nothing ever easy and it was not that it was hard but we were supposed to be challenged at every corner. There were some people in the class that weren't

challenged so much and the funny thing is that quite a lot of us who live in St. Louis get together for lunch three times a year and some of us are in a book club and these were people that I went to grade school with and a number of them who were less challenged, many of them eventually, maybe in their 30's or 40's, went to graduate school. So it was inculcated, this idea of intellectual curiosity even if they were kind of more interested in parties or sports or boys. So, it was an extraordinary school and I was very lucky. And at dinnertime, our father always led us in some sort of, "What did you find interesting today?" as opposed to just reporting on what you..."What did you find interesting?" So the interesting thing could be a billboard that was quizzical, or something you read. It wouldn't have to be what the teacher said, but it could be very funny. I mean, there was a lot of humor around our dinner table. My brother, who's younger than I am, seven years younger, he tells me things that I just really don't remember about the dinner table but he's a terrific party guest. People always say that he keeps the conversation at a high level and he thinks that it has to do with Dad wanting "interesting" things. So I think that I did well and then when I was in college, I went to Newton College of the Sacred Heart and then I got Mono and then came back to St. Louis with the idea of going back but it didn't kind of happen. I went to a small Catholic girls Liberal Arts school called Maryville College, which is on the same campus that Maryville University but it's quite different. There were only 60 in our graduating class but I had superb teachers, again, two nuns who had gone to Oxford and most everybody had a Ph.D. and one was a cousin of mine who had two Ph.D.'s. She was math and music and her math was in computer science and her music, she did computer music and that was from Stanford. Then after I graduated from college, my father said, "I want you to have a job on graduation day," so it wasn't easy but I found one. I knew what I didn't want; I wasn't sure what I wanted. So I had visions of something using writing and I was lucky enough to get a job. I went to the Post-Dispatch and the Globe and they just all but laughed at me.

Blanche Touhill: There were no women really reporters in those days?

Patricia Rice: There were very few and a few of them had done things during World War II.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, yes.

Patricia Rice: See, the doors had been briefly opened. That was true in advertising too. So it was like, those women who were...they were at least 15 years older than me. Most of them were about my mother's age. Then there was nothing in between. And then they asked the most outrageous questions. I can remember I went to Gardner Advertising which was one of the two premier advertising firms in St. Louis then. I wrote all these fake ads. I had stuff down and I had talked to people...

Blanche Touhill: You had a portfolio in a way?

Patricia Rice: I did have a portfolio and I had published some poetry in an English poetry thing. I had things in the college poetry magazine and reporting stuff too. And so this guy at Gardner Advertising said, "Well, are you on the pill?" and this is 1964 and I remember saying, "Well, I sometimes take vitamins." I was clueless. I was this nice Catholic girl. I'd had a date for graduation but I wasn't dating. The whole idea of what he was talking about just blew completely by me and the pill was only really available in the mid '60s, you know.

Blanche Touhill: Yes, it was really new.

Patricia Rice: It was new but imagine, and of course, that would be against the law now.

Blanche Touhill: Today, yes.

Patricia Rice: In fact, it was against the law in '64 but I didn't know the law, for one, and I didn't even know what he was talking about. But that's how intrusive...people said terrible things. I remember one man, I think it was at the Post, said, "Oh, well, you wouldn't want to cover things at Pruitt-Igoe which is, of course, the huge public housing project that's about seven to ten blocks from the Post that was imploded about 1970 and it was already a disaster in '64. I said, "Well, I tutor there once a week." Well, he didn't know what to say. This was his "no girls" talk and I said, "Well, I do tutor there. I tutor a "great books" thing there," and I remember thinking afterwards, I wasn't trying to be smart. It was just the answer. I remember getting in the car and kind of laughing, realizing that it was his trick question. But anyway, a very nice man named Will Rudolph hired me to write shoe ads at Wohl Shoe Company which was on 16th and Washington and after I was there about a year, it moved to Clayton and Will, he was just the kindest man and I was very productive.

There were three women he'd hired the same summer but we sort of replaced some women who had worked through World War II. There was this big gap. It was very interesting. So, the three of us had great times together and shoe ads, it was like a joke. You'd tell your father's friend you write shoe ads like that. But anyway, Will let me have a three-month leave of absence. He doubled my salary within 18 months and it wasn't much. My take-home pay the first week after college was \$32 and the people who were teaching in schools were making...I think that's around \$3,000 a year. They were making \$5,000. I mean, it was really nothing but anyway, so Will let me have a three-month leave of absence and I went with a friend for my first trip to Europe which was very interesting, very illuminating. We spent three months, we drove, we saw everything. We did everything Michelin had said. We didn't miss anything. It was amazing, what we did. But two women dressed in stockings and heels at all times, we had to be sure that everyone knew we were ladies because women just didn't travel, especially in Spain and Italy, by themselves. Then I came back and worked there a little bit and then Famous Barr hired me. I was to be a copy editor. I was there not very long. I was still trying to get in at the Post but when Darcy hired me, Darcy Advertising with Gardner were the two big...and so I was at Darcy a little more than a year. I was the first woman ever to be on the Michelob account and they'd have meetings at the Racquet Club which is still all male but then you had to be a man to get in the front door. So they had lunch meetings and they took these big tape recorders and they taped the meeting for me and sometimes it was my ad and once they filmed me and I gave the presentation. I mean, wouldn't you think they could have had it at a place where a woman could go if she's...now, when I helped get the Southwestern Bell account, they sent a man to actually do the ad and the whole point of the ad was kind of lost because he didn't quite get it. It's too much to go into. It had to do with what the woman had on... So I said, "Well, can't I go at least assist this person?" and they said, "Oh, can you travel?" Can I travel? I lived in Europe. Anyway, but you were never harsh about this. It was sort of, we laughed about it with women but you rarely did much about it, I'm afraid. Then there was an opening at the Post and I knew there was this opening and I went and applied and I got the job. In between, the woman I had gone to Europe with got herself engaged and her parents said she had to wait a year before she married this man. And so I went over and I worked for (UPS?) on a freelance basis and mostly

the night shift and that was terrific and I wrote several things for the Post. So that's how they knew my name. I came back and I went to Darcy and then after Darcy, I went to the Post because they'd been talking to me since I wrote those articles from Paris. So I was hired and it was six months after the first woman went on the city desk. Women had all been in the feature section.

Blanche Touhill: Who was that woman?

Patricia Rice: That was Sally Bixby Defty and she also became the first woman to become a city editor, about 30 years after that. She was terrific.

Blanche Touhill: Didn't her family have connections with the Post?

Patricia Rice: No, not with the Post but her father was a great philanthropist, Bixby Hallett Washington U's name...her grandfather, I'm sorry, and she's written a book about him. It's very interesting. He was a self-made man and after he made enough, he just became this man of culture and acquired paintings and special books and stuff. Anyway, so Sally was the first woman and then Everett Graham, whose father was a doctor at Barrington had established the connection in the '60s between cancer and smoking. Everett Graham really thought they should have more women at the Post and he also thought there should be more younger people. He hired a bunch of younger people. After the Democratic convention of '68, he looked at his newsroom and he realized it was a bunch of old white guys and there were very few people who were born even in the Depression. So he had a real lack of younger people. His idea was hire Liberal Arts people, not so much Journalism people, so he had Yale, Harvard, a lot of Ivy League people, he hired and he hired most of us within about a year and three months. It was great. We all went out to lunch together.

Blanche Touhill: And he went out for women as well?

Patricia Rice: Women and young men, yeah, some women, yeah, and at first the women were all either in the women's section or the feature section or maybe in suburban. Charlene Pro was hired to be suburban. So I started at the Post-Dispatch the week that Richard Nixon was inaugurated president of the United States, the first time, and the Democratic Convention in Chicago had been the summer before and so most of these people started, I would say, between October and the second January.

There was a lot of energy and some of the older people kind of, “hmm” but some of them were happy to become copy editors. They wouldn’t have to go out on the street anymore. But that experience and seeing the generational shift has given me a real sense today that...as somebody who...I’m now 72 years old...that you have a tremendous amount of expertise, knowledge, one would hope some wisdom and you have a breadth of knowledge of things but that there is something about being very young and knowing things that older people don’t see as clearly and I think that’s true today with the electronic age but it was true then with just seeing the Civil Rights Movement. The stuff we were interested in was a little different than our parents, although my parents were very involved with some Civil Rights aspects and stuff. But the guys that had been covering stuff...and they were almost all guys. The newsroom had men in white shirts and they took their jackets off but they came in their dark jackets, mostly suits, not so much sport coats, and we had spittoons. You had to tip-toe around the spittoons. Now, not too many we used still using the spittoons but many people smoked and they did smoke cigars and they bit off that bit of cigar and spit it into the spittoon. So you had to tip-toe around the spittoons. They were pretty gross. They were changed every night, supposedly emptied. But I worked with some wonderful, wonderful writers, men, who were very kind and helpful and Carl Baldwin was the best. He was the mentor and he had something called Carl Baldwin U. You got detached from your regular work and you wrote under his tutelage, two people for, I think it was three months. But I remember doing a piece on Max Starkloff then and nobody had ever heard of him and he had this crazy dream, they thought, and I said, “We’ve got to do it” and Carl got it on page one and, of course, Max now is, he’s dead now but he’s a legend almost in the accessibility right movement nationally and there’s a new book about him. Anyway, there was that sort of...just sort of knowing people who knew Max, knowing about Max. He was in a nursing home. He wanted to build this...that kind of youth thing that you know about, this was a new energy, the Civil Rights. The paper didn’t hire very many blacks at that point but they had one or two. They had an ex-pastor. But there was the energy of what to look for but mostly I wrote girl stuff and that’s what women did. I wrote a lot of first women things and that was great. I did a lot of cultural things. I did a lot of theater, classical music, but one of the things I sort of developed in the early ‘60s was writing about women running for politics.

But I did the first woman Methodist bishop, the first woman doing this, but women running for politics and in 1976, I was part of a group of women who got a grant to do a book called *In The Running: The New Political Woman* and we did the campaign of 1976 and it was with a woman from the Washington Post and the New York Times and it was edited by a woman named Ruth Mandel, the Eagleton Center for Women in Politics, and I wrote about a woman in St. Louis County whose son was a football player at the University of Missouri who went out and gave speeches about football and how politics was like football because her son was this big star. Her name was Harriet Woods and Harriet, of course, became the lieutenant governor and went on to become the president of the women's political caucus but she became a national figure but I wrote about her when she was going door-to-door, trying to win, which she did, a seat in the state legislature. Our book was mainly about women in state legislatures because there were almost no senators but over the years, I did interview almost all the women that first got their feet wet in Congress. Margaret Chase Smith who'd done it before I started doing writing, but Pat Schroeder, Barbara (McClosky?), Senator...I can't think of her name...

Blanche Touhill: The woman that Nixon...

Patricia Rice: No, no, right now she's still big.

Blanche Touhill: Pelosi? No?

Patricia Rice: No, no, no...

Brian Woodman: Feinstein?

Patricia Rice: Yeah, Barbara Feinstein, and Feinstein, Schroeder and Geraldine Ferraro were all people that Mondale, Fritz Mondale considered as vice president, but I was able to break the story two weeks before he announced that he was going to pick Ferraro, who was less well known than Feinstein and Schroeder but actually, there were campaign badges...I have them...Mondale/Schroeder, they were mock-ups done and I actually have those. They were done by women who wanted a vice president...it was done by women in the women's political caucus so I was covering the caucus meeting in Miami and that was really...it was a very high energy meeting. But it was someone there who I'd written about quite a bit. We actually waded out into the Atlantic Ocean and she

quietly told me that it would be Ferraro and she didn't want anybody to know and I remember dashing back up, in my swimming suit, and typing this and sending it into Dick Wile at the Post for the Sunday paper and it ran page one and the New York Times showing how different things are; Before there was a 24-hour news cycle. The New York Times did not...nobody else ran this story for another three days. Well, they had their own sources but my source was a deep water source...well, hip level water source in the Atlantic Ocean. But I did have a second source. I did check and I did have a second source and that source was someone you might say was very close to Fritz Mondale who was just a confirming source. So it was a big deal for women. Then I would look around and I wrote about boards in St. Louis, corporate boards and how there were no women and shortly after I wrote about the fact that May had no women...we didn't have any women on the business page so there wasn't anybody doing this. So anything I kind of thought about, we did these as features generally, but sometimes, like, the Ferraro was on page one. [Inaudible 28:25] even though I wasn't in the city desk and I really loved having the space of being a feature writer and be able to put more color in the long story form that's more common in newspapers now. It wasn't common then. So it was pretty (bold) writing on city desk so I didn't regret that. So I went around looking for other stories to do with women in business and so the May Department Stores had none. Well, I mean, who shopped, right? And a Famous Bar, of course, was its flagship and the May meetings generally were here and the May family lived here and Buster May, his second wife was a real dynamo. His first wife was too actually...and his third, actually, but the second wife was very much on the scene at that moment. So I guess I was gratified that they did put a woman on the board but it seemed a little odd that it was Dinah Shore and Dinah Shore wasn't, like, Desi Lou Production president or something. I mean, she had a show, she had a 15-minute show or something and she did appearances. But anyway, so she knew somebody so they found him. All the women in the United States knew about retailing and she probably was a good shopper. And I also remember doing a story about another aspect of women in business, going around and doing what you might call "potty parenting" and as you know, the Blanche Touhill Theater has terrific, terrific ladies' rooms. Well, I went to one downtown office building that had law firms and things and it was the Merchants LaClede Building. They only had ladies' rooms on every

other floor. The idea was...it was over 100 years old, but I guess that they had so few women secretaries even...they used to have men secretaries...so the ladies' rooms were on alternate floors and then when the Noon Day Club and the...first, the Noon Day Club and then later the MAC took women in. I wrote about that. I even did a story about Ellen Cona who became the woman in charge for putting a ladies' room in the Noon Day Club. There was a little humor in this but it was a symbol of...it was a Litmus test of what was happening in St. Louis, and very often I'd get on the phone and you didn't have the internet but you'd get on the phone and I called reporters in other cities that I knew when I covered national meetings and I'd say, "Well, what's the deal? Have you ever done a story on this? How many office buildings in Chicago or how many boards?" so I tried to put St. Louis in a national context, find some national organization that would help me put St. Louis.... But all this was kind of new and a lot of the men at the paper kind of never paid any attention because it was in the feature section which was interesting. But they did try to get me to go to work on the business section, on the editorial page, and also they wanted me to go to Jefferson City and cover politics. I said no to all those three things. The Jefferson City thing, my mother was very ill and I wasn't going to do that. So I can't say they didn't give me some opportunities. Then, in the great flood of '93, I spent the summer on the news desk helping. I did do flood stuff but I also did stuff that had to be done because so many people were doing flood stuff. So it was shortly after that that the city editor begged me to take on the religion beat. They realized that nationally people were doing much bigger deals with religion and they had special sections, they were doing more about religion and that many of the religion writers were really, really good writers whereas it had been something shuffled off to people often and even part-time people. So I think we really did change things and there was a lot that happened in the next 10 years. It seemed to be a lot of page one things. There was, the Pope came to St. Louis, Billy Graham had a rally here and Bill Graham had been here twice before and they'd give it, like, a few paragraphs. They had never really played up Billy Graham, but the Pope, we had three special sections, even telling people what they should wear because, of course, it was January the 26th and 27th of 1999 and we assumed it was going to be cold. It was 64 degrees. But I did quite a lot. The paper sent me to former Yugoslavia, to a papal trip to Croatia where I wrote these stories: "He's doing this now and

when he comes to St. Louis in January, he's doing that," so that was in October, and the same thing, there'd be a mass choir from many, many parishes; there'd be multi-language offertory procession of people from many different diverse backgrounds. It was sort of a format and we were covering that. Then I spent a week trotting around Krakauer, where he came from and also the little town that he came from and writing about him did a big kind of travel, biography kind of thing. One thing that happened was I was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize. I was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize more than once but I was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize for writing about a big tug-of-war...that's polite...between the president of St. Louis University, then President Larry Biondi and the archbishop who was then Justin Rigali. He's now Cardinal Rigali, Archbishop Justin Rigali, but they both are descended from people from Luca, Italy and there was something of the Italian love of a tug-of-war and so it went on...I wrote over 30 articles and most of the Jesuits were siding with the archbishop and Biondi wanted to sell the hospital which most people thought was okay but he wanted to sell it to a for-profit named Tenant which had had a lot of lawsuits against it for malpractice which all hospitals had that as a problem but more for kind of funny things with charging Medicare and stuff. So there was an offer from the SSM, which is the Franciscan Sisters of St. Mary who run this hospital system but they got a bigger offer from Tenant and so this went on and on and on. The attorney general came in and finally they went to Rome and I went to Rome and it went on forever. It was very interesting. But then, there was also the sex abuse in the Catholic church which was another problem and then there was quite a revolution within the Southern Baptists in their theology schools and that was a huge deal but we found that we didn't have a very strong Baptist readership because they always would complain two weeks later about a story, not when it ran, which was, to me, amazing because somebody would put it...they'd all say, "Well, I saw it on the church bulletin board." So that was very interesting, who read the Post-Dispatch. Baptists and Catholics are the two biggest groups in the state. Baptists are more out of state; Catholics are more in Kansas City and St. Louis, Columbia, Springfield. But anyway, Catholics are everywhere but Baptists are very heavily farther out. So we were covering things that were important to our state. So, when Michael Pulitzer and the widow of the third Joseph Pulitzer sold the paper, I was among the people that took a buy-out and I looked into Lee, the company, and I thought there might be

an opportunity for me to do some other things. So, among the things that I had done, (it?) was in on, before it started, is the St. Louis Beacon which, for six years, was an award-winning, online news gathering operation and I covered music, opera and religion and quite a lot of St. Louis history there, and other things that sort of came across my radar and I loved it; it was great fun. But it was only part-time but I did a book on a Catholic funeral for Lagori. I did a couple of other minor booklets and things and I did some work for Reuter's. I still do a little. Then a year ago, in December of 2013, the University of Missouri, St. Louis Public Radio, KWMU and the Beacon merged and the size of the news staff just grew tremendously and there was more time for news. But there's this website now that's very strong and has done, I think, a really good job, for example, on the uproar in Ferguson, instead of just the radio staff. The radio staff is now backed up with this writing staff and some of the writers who are full-time...I am not...they go on air and they have quirky real voices, which is kind of refreshing. It must be public radio, they have real voices! And I do various kinds of freelance.

Blanche Touhill: And that's what you're doing now?

Patricia Rice: Yeah.

Blanche Touhill: And how is life?

Patricia Rice: Life is very good. Life is good. I did a piece two days ago, on deadline, when Pope Francis, very much behind the scenes, but they sent out this document after this multi-year...six year investigation of Catholic nuns, that I said was like a Christmas card and a benediction. There was all this hue and cry and people were insulted and all these nuns' orders had to take somebody off the regular job for two or three months to gather all the statistics and then there was the visitation. So I remember being asked at the time...on St. Louis Public Radio asked this just as a guest, what did I think of all this, and I said, "Well, the Vatican, nothing will happen soon. The Vatican takes a long time and the staff turns over...the staff and the curate about every seven years..." ...not all of them but they're borrowed from some other important work and from their Diocese, whatever their order, seven years. So I said, "You know, who knows? It will take a long time." Well, it took six years and Francis is now the Pope which nobody could have predicted then and this thing became a Christmas card. Anyway, I knew it was coming because it was at 4:30 in

the morning, I was up watching the press conference streamed from the [inaudible 42:53] in the Vatican but see, now, that's amazing. In 1994 when I started doing religion, the only way to get that would be for a paper to spend several thousand dollars and go and get a hotel room, although I could do it for a thousand dollars because I always knew where to get a cheap hotel, cheap but okay, but expose light over your head, when the air conditioning goes off at 2:00 in the morning and then you complain, you say, "But I'm paying 10 Euros extra for the air conditioning" and they'd say, "Oh, well, we only air condition when you're awake," It's like, yeah, but if there's no air conditioning, you wake up. But anyway, so I went to Rome, like, four times for the paper...or five times and I went to Yugoslavia. I really reported from Africa and China. I reported from every continent but Australia and Antarctica and I did a lot of travel writing and that was really fun, great fun, and for a while, like about six years, I was the ski writer, downhill ski writer. They'd send me to ski resorts where I had to listen to a lot of engineers talk about the safety of their lifts, but I did get to ski and usually with, like, the best ski instructor at the resort which was a pretty good deal. I remember being in Stad, very fancy place and we had almost a whiteout but it was my only one day there and so I was skiing with this great ski instructor and he had a white outfit on, or kind of white, and I could barely see him. So I had a great run. When we were young and things weren't coming that easily for women...I mean, what seems outrageous to me now didn't seem that outrageous then because it's what we were used to. It's what our grandmothers had done. I knew that you get more with sugar than with sour so while there was a woman who sued the Post on behalf of all of us and then she left afterwards. I mean, I loved what I did. The people who were really confrontational...I never was dishonest but if you were really confrontational, you often didn't accomplish the goals of your idealism as well as your personal goals. But it was a very interesting time. I have a niece who is graduating from college this June and she had four offers of jobs and she's going to make almost what I made when I left and the whole idea that women are...if somebody got \$32 a week...no, I don't know, that's probably several hundred in today's...but \$32 a week straight out of college and was so grateful. She's not grateful. She just thinks it's her due, and it is. She was able to choose the one with the biggest vacation. I asked her about pensions and she asked those questions. When I was hired at Darcy and I was there for a year, I found

out that the women were only vested in the pension fund after five years; the men were vested after one. Well, I only found this out after I'd been there for months because I never asked about pension rights. I was 26 or something. Well, the idea was that the women were all clerks and the clerk staff turned over so rapidly because, of course, when women had gotten married they quit or they quit when they had a baby. They certainly didn't work through that. So, that was the assumption and so basically, if they made it five years, they wouldn't have to do all that nasty paperwork, sending out teeny tiny pensions. Well, I didn't even ask and today...and it was the law in 1964, when I was working there. It was the law that I got to have equal things but it would be just nickels and the lawyer would cost more than the lawsuit.

Blanche Touhill: What is the field of your niece?

Patricia Rice: She's in accounting.

Blanche Touhill: Now, would there have been women accountants with degrees when you were coming through?

Patricia Rice: A few but very few. One of my classmates, high school and college classmates was one of three women in her class at Washington University Law School. About five years later, I did a story about all the women...a cover of a Sunday feature section, and we had a photograph of each of the women at Washington U Law School and I remember two were getting Master's Degrees and I think there were seven of them. I could be a little off but we had maybe two or three in one picture...I can see the layout... and Washington U brought this to us because it was so advanced and progressive. And I remember calling my friend, Mary Claire MacDonald whose mother was a Dowd. She's from a big St. Louis political family, and calling Mary Claire who had won the Moot Court Award in her class and had been one of three women. She was thrilled that there were so many women and, of course, now, I believe a majority of women...maybe 1 or 2% in law school...for many years now have been women in U.S. law schools, for at least 20 years. Yeah, so things really did change in the early '70s. They really began to change. But, for example, if you look at a place like University of Missouri, there is a building named for a woman, for you, Blanche, but you know, generally...and now at Washington U there is one named for...I think her name is Grace Valley January but it's because her son gave the money. She didn't give the

money or, in other places, it's because a woman's children or maybe a woman gave the money, but not because they had accomplished something in that institution. It just shows you because it takes many years for your name to get on a building. So, there is that huge gap. I was lucky to cover these huge changes and we knew they were changes but it's only on reflection you realize how huge. But I also wrote about the bad side of all that. For example, I did a story more than 20 years ago about how families were not having dinner together and the loss of that culturally as well as within a family unit...or maybe they had dinner, you know, four times a year or something. So I have done some negative stuff.

Blanche Touhill: Let me ask two questions, which are a little off the topic but they're related: Have you gotten an award or awards that are very important to you? I know you've gotten a lot of awards but are there one or two that really sort of stand out?

Patricia Rice: I try not to pay a lot of attention to awards because I have been on so many committees that gave awards and saw how, in the end, it was a spin of the dice. Yeah, I've gotten an award a long, long time ago, Maryville College gave me an award for professionalism and then I got their top award. I got their top award and I was still in my 30's when I got that.

Blanche Touhill: But you had been a trail blazer for women getting into the news industry?

Patricia Rice: Yeah.

Blanche Touhill: That was incredible in those days.

Patricia Rice: Well, it took a lot of gumption but, I mean, I've gotten all kinds...I've got them in home, I've got them in plaques. They're in a closet in a box. I got the "Tres Bien" Award which is the city [inaudible 52:22] alumni. I got that very early too. I don't know, I can't tell you. I've got something from this and something from that. I got an award from the St. Louis Newspaper Guild. For nine years, I was its treasurer. I got an award from there with a plaque. I really haven't thought about them. I try not to think about things like that, you know? It's not good for your humility.

Blanche Touhill: What about, if you had been born 50 years earlier, how would your life be different?

Patricia Rice: Oh, my heavens. Well, you know, my grandmother had a pretty interesting life. She was exactly 50 years older than I was. Her father was a very powerful man so she had access to things, but if I had been born into...instead of being born...my grandmother was born in 1893 so if I was born...'92 actually...if I was born in 1892, well, I mean, the possibilities for women were to be a full-time housewife; to be a maid; to work in some sort of a family business, for example, if your husband was a shoe repair, you lived over the store and maybe you took care of the clerking and the bills. You could be a nurse or some other kind of person in a nursing type job. If you learned how to type...my grandmother couldn't type. She'd hunt and peck. Her generation, there were still plenty of male secretaries. There weren't even that many...and, of course, you could be a factory worker. Those options for women were very limited. On the other hand, my grandmother ran a ranch. She worked in California. It was called a ranch. You and I would call it an orange orchard but they called them orange ranches. So she ran that ranch. She did a lot of amazing things. She got divorced...her husband basically ran off when she was 28, in California and she spent a year out there. They were running this ranch in California. She kept running the ranch, which was her father's ranch and then she came back to St. Louis, and after several years, started doing chemical things. What she did, she did as a result of not wanting to be the mill worker or whatever and she was divorced, and she was a good Catholic so it wasn't an option to marry again. Yeah, so, I look at my grandmother's life and my life is totally different, I mean, totally but I have great respect for these women. My great great grandmother came to the United States, learned English, lived in a totally...brought a lot of culture and music. She married a composer...orchestra founder conductor founder of the Music School of St. Louis U. His name was William Robyn. So, those two women did things despite their culture.

Blanche Touhill: So you probably would have done something...

Patricia Rice: I don't know. I mean, what I did, I did was more one step at a time. They did sort of more radical things.

Blanche Touhill: But you had a goal too. You wanted to write.

Patricia Rice: I wanted to write, yeah. That was my goal.

Blanche Touhill: You were a writer.

Patricia Rice: I loved writing. I do love writing. I love the actual writing. I love gathering information; I love the curiosity of going out and talking to people who are experts in something I know nothing about and then boning up on them, reading in depth, going to a library. Now you go on the internet.

Blanche Touhill: Are you more of an observer or a writer?

Patricia Rice: I'm both.

Blanche Touhill: Okay. Well, you had a wonderful life because you led the kind of life that you really wanted.

Patricia Rice: I'm lucky that way, yeah.

Blanche Touhill: And you're well known in St. Louis and you're still writing.

Patricia Rice: Yes. I've still got plenty of things to write about, maybe a little non-fiction.

Blanche Touhill: Well, with that, let me thank you for your walk down memory lane and I think we could go on for hours and hours.

Patricia Rice: I think we could. I hope I haven't gone into too much detail.

Blanche Touhill: No, it was wonderful. Thank you very much.

Patricia Rice: You're very, very welcome.