

An Interview with  
**Lois Vanderwaerdt**

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.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: I'm Lois Vanderwaerdt

Blanche Touhill: Lois, would you talk about your childhood: your parents; your siblings; your playmates; your elementary school; your high school. What I'm interested in is who within your family said to you you really have ability in something or the other...or they didn't say.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: No, they didn't.

Blanche Touhill: And then, who in the outside world said you have a talent and you should do that.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: All right. Well, I was born on a farm in South Dakota and it was a farm that my great grandfather had homesteaded in 1869. So my father was the third generation in our family who had farmed that land and since he didn't have boys, he had my sister and me and we were not farming material, the farm was sold after my father finished farming it.

Blanche Touhill: Was that sad for you?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: No, it was just something that had to happen. It had to happen. We still own substantial pieces of land in that area but the farm itself needed to be farmed and lived in by an owner and I think we all recognized that. I went to a one-room country school.

Blanche Touhill: Did you walk?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yeah, it was right at the end of our driveway, yeah, uphill both ways. Then I went to Augustine Academy in Canton, South Dakota for high school. It was a Lutheran boarding school and when we graduated, the major career choice of the boys in my class...there were 60 kids in my class...was the Lutheran ministry and the girls became secretaries and bank tellers and that sort of thing. Very few people went to college except the boys who went to the seminary. I was raised around a lot of cousins and the only ones who got college degrees were my sister and me, which, you know, I've pondered that because I always thought we were all kind of the same when I was growing up and it turned out that our lives have all evolved very differently. My cousins have certainly had opportunities for Higher Education and they just haven't taken them.

Blanche Touhill: Did their children take them?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yes.

Blanche Touhill: So it's a different time.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yes. Some of them had a couple of years of college but then they quit and got married. Well, I had two years of college and then I got married but I didn't quit. I continued to go.

Blanche Touhill: Did your husband want you to continue?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: We didn't ever discuss it. We just always assumed I would do it. But after I graduated from high school, I went to Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota and I went there for the music but I found out how minimal my talent was after I got around people who were really good.

Blanche Touhill: Were you a singer or a performer?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: I was a singer.

Blanche Touhill: I don't mean a performer, I meant a music...

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Well, I also played the piano and the organ. I had lots and lots of lessons. But anyway, in my sophomore year, I decided I was going to be an English major and so I had a meeting in the spring with the chair of the English Department whose name was Walther Prosnitz who was a cellist in the Fargo Moorhead Symphony. I remember very clearly, I'm sitting across the desk from him and I still have my coat on. It's February in Moorhead, Minnesota and I figure we're going to plan my schedule for the next year and instead he says, "All right, you are very bright and we need to start planning right now where you're going to go to graduate school."

Blanche Touhill: Oh!

Lois Vanderwaerdt: That's exactly what I thought. I was stunned because no one had ever told me I was bright before and I didn't know anybody who'd ever been to graduates school and except I had professors but I didn't necessarily think of them as role models in that regard. But he had a huge impact on my life. Many, many years later, I was going through some files and things and I found an autobiography that I had been required to write when I was a junior in high school and the last couple of paragraphs had to have our life ambitions in it and, looking back, I realized I had exceeded all of my life ambitions by the time I was 23, which doesn't

mean I had accomplished a lot; it just meant that I had no very high aspirations. But Prosnitz changed that dramatically.

Blanche Touhill: When he said that to you, what did you say?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: I don't remember. I was so stunned. I will never forget the moment that he said that but I don't remember what I said.

Blanche Touhill: Did you agree mentally? Did you say, yes?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: When I thought about it, yeah, I did, and his Ph.D. was from the University of Chicago and all my thinking was, of course I would go to the University of Chicago which has a very good Ph.D. program in English. But that was how I thought about that. But then after my sophomore year in college, I got married and my now ex-husband was a football player on a football scholarship at the University of South Dakota and so we transferred. We would have continued at Concordia but my parents had this deal: they didn't want me to marry this man and they turned out to be right but for all the wrong reasons and they told me that if I got married, that was the last money they would give me for my education. Now, of course, I look at that and I think, you know, if your daughter is marrying someone you don't approve of, she may need that education and you ought to make sure she gets it, but that was not the way they thought. They thought that that would deter me from getting married but of course, headstrong that I was, it didn't and I got married. But I transferred to the University of South Dakota where I got a Bachelor's in English and eventually, right after, a Master's in English.

Blanche Touhill: How did you pay for your education?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: I got National Defense loans and they were a wonderful thing because when I graduated, for each year that I taught, 10% was forgiven so by the time I had taught for five years, 50% of my loans were forgiven. It was a wonderful system and it really enabled me to get two degrees. The other thing I did, because my husband's tuition was paid for because he was on an athletic scholarship...the other thing I did, I was an Avon lady.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, yes.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yes, and anyone who knows me just finds that a hoot but I was and I didn't ring doorbells but I went to the sorority and fraternity houses and I

would set up my table and they would all come and order and I'd have my samples and they would all come and order and then, three weeks later, I would deliver all their orders and take more orders and I made, like, \$300 a month doing that which, at a time when our apartment cost \$150, was really quite a lot of money. So that's how we got through school.

Blanche Touhill: How did you find the Avon?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: You know, I don't remember that. I suppose my thinking was, this is something I can accommodate to my own schedule and that was what I needed to be able to do. I had been a check-out girl at a drugstore between years in college and I knew I didn't want to do that and other options just weren't available. I don't remember how I discovered that but that's what I did.

Blanche Touhill: That's wonderful.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: So then after I got my Master's Degree, I got a job teaching English Literature at Augustana College in Sioux Falls, South Dakota where I taught for six years.

Blanche Touhill: What did your husband do at that time?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Well, he initially taught in one of the elementary schools in Sioux Falls and then eventually, a year or two later, he got his Master's and ended up first an assistant principal in a small town in Iowa and then eventually the high school principal in another small town in Iowa.

Blanche Touhill: But he could go to his job and you could go to yours?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Well, we moved to this little town in Iowa and I commuted.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, it wasn't that far?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: No, it was 35 miles, yes, and so that worked fine. But it soon became real apparent that the marriage needed to end.

Blanche Touhill: And by that time you had several children?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: I had two children, yes, and in retrospect, I understand what was going on. He was a college football player and he had three concussions and no one understood the medical stuff at that time but I noticed that after his

third concussion his personality changed and he started to engage in more high risk behavior and now, when I listen to these or read about these wives of football players talking about their lives, that was my life but, of course, nobody really understood that at the time. But at any rate, it was real clear to me that I needed to get out of the marriage, and secondly, I was not going to get much help in raising these children from him so I needed to figure out a way to make enough money that I could raise and educate these children.

Blanche Touhill: Were you thinking of the Ph.D. in English?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Well, I didn't think very long about it because I was making \$7,000 a year and a brand new Ph.D. in our department was making \$10,000 a year and I didn't think I could afford to do it.

Blanche Touhill: Did you like teaching?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: I did like teaching. I got very tired of the paper grading so I was not sorry to see that chapter in my life end and I still have friends who were students from those years.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, from those days?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yes, and friends who were on the faculty at the same time that I was and so it was a very good experience. I was treated well in the department and I worked hard and it was good but I thought about what I could do to earn enough money to raise these children and I decided that I could be a lawyer. Now, it wasn't like I...the only lawyer I knew was the one who was handling my divorce. It wasn't like I knew a lot of lawyers and I didn't really know what they did but I knew they made money. So I applied to law schools in the Midwest because I wanted my parents to be able to see their grandchildren and I knew they wouldn't get on an airplane. So I figured I needed to be within a day's drive of Sioux Falls. I was taking the application fees out of my grocery money and so I could only apply to one a month because they were, like \$10 or \$25. It was a lot of money. I was talking to the law advisor at Augustana who was in the Political Science Department and one day he came in and he tossed the Washington U Law Catalogue and Application blank on my desk and he said, "Here, they don't have an application fee" and so I thought, well, all right, so I filled out the application and I sent it in and 10 days later I got an acceptance. So I went in and I said, "Al..."...and he said, "Take it. Just forget about all



the rest. That's a good law school; take it," and I said, "But it's in a city," and he said, "You'll be fine." I had never been in a city before so this was really a brave new world. Now, my husband knew none of this because I had all the mail going to my college mailbox and eventually I got a divorce. I guess I took the LSAT in the fall of '70 and I entered law school in the fall of '71 and that was really the first time that actions by our federal government benefitted me. One of the things that happens when there's war is that women on the home front benefit. Washington U had just finished their first big law school and they were doubling the size of their law class except that their applicant pool was over in Vietnam and so what were they going to do? How were they going to fill the class? It was purely an economic decision on the part of the university. So when I got there for registration, I discovered that 28% of my class was women. The year before it was 7% and the year before that it was 3%.

Blanche Touhill: Yes. Well, that's the coming of the government protecting women too.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yes, but I wasn't impacted by the Civil Rights Act yet. I was later on.

Blanche Touhill: Yes.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: I mean, I was impacted on by the Vietnam War. It's not like...they had women but it's not like they knew what to do with us. There was a professor who always called on me as the "nice blonde at the end of Row 4" and of course now I look at that and I think, oh, my God. At the time, I needed a grade in that class and so I didn't say anything. But that was sort of the way it was. They did not have a placement bureau so there wasn't any assistance for us to get legal jobs and the law firms would not interview women. They would look at the women who were in the top 10% who were Order of the [inaudible 13:30] and any women who were there got interviews but none of the rest of us did. Now, our male counterparts all got interviews but we never did. So virtually all of the women in my class have had non-traditional legal careers.

Blanche Touhill: Now, that's really very interesting. How did you pay for all of this?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Well, the first thing I did, I was living in Rock Rapids, Iowa, where my husband was the principal and I went to the bank and I said, "I'm going to go to law school and I'd like to apply for a student loan" and they granted it and when I went to sign the papers, they said, "Well, we figure we'll get this money back real fast because you're not going to make it" and I said,

“Thanks.” So the first year was all loan and then the second year, they gave me half scholarship and I got another loan through the university and then the third year was all scholarship. So that’s how I paid for it.

Blanche Touhill: You were a brave woman.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: You know, I didn’t think of it as being brave. It was just something that I had to do and I had to get through law school and I had to support these children. When I was studying for the bar exam, my youngest one was seven-and-a-half and one day he said, “Mom, is this the last exam?” and I said, “Yes, it is,” and he said, “Whew, I didn’t think we’d make it” and I thought...but I made them very much a part... This was a family project and they had jobs that they had to do and on Saturday morning, they had to do their jobs before they could go on with the rest of their day. They didn’t have a deprived childhood. They were very involved in sports; they were both on teams; they were rabid Cardinal fans. One summer went to 43 home-based ballgames. We were inhabitants of the left field bleachers because, at that time, it cost a dollar to park the car, a dollar for each of our tickets, and we had another dollar left to buy three Cokes and a program. So for five dollars, we could go to a baseball game.

Blanche Touhill: And have an entertainment.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yes.

Blanche Touhill: And they loved the sport.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Oh, they loved it; it was great, yeah, it was great.

Blanche Touhill: Well, you always knew about baseball?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Not much.

Blanche Touhill: Were you athletic?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: I was but there weren’t any opportunities. I always won blue ribbons at Lincoln County Field Day in the 100-yard dash...

Blanche Touhill: Because you could run.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yeah, I could run and I could do things like that but there really weren’t any opportunities.

- Blanche Touhill: When you were in law school, did you work at a law firm?
- Lois Vanderwaerdt: No, I didn't.
- Blanche Touhill: So you took the summer off?
- Lois Vanderwaerdt: I went to summer school and I actually finished in two-and-a-half years, yeah. And then I took the bar and then I started work right after I took the bar.
- Blanche Touhill: Where was your first legal job?
- Lois Vanderwaerdt: Well, I worked for two different federal agencies and the first one was the Office of Federal Contract Compliance and my job there was to review Affirmative Action plans which served me well in the future.
- Blanche Touhill: Isn't that interesting?
- Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yeah, so that's how I got to know about Affirmative Action plans. And actually, I'm officially retired now but I still write plans for a couple of clients because it's hard to get someone to do that and I do it much more economically for them than some of the big companies do. So they're real happy.
- Blanche Touhill: And you know what you're doing?
- Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yeah, it's real easy.
- Blanche Touhill: It's not starting down a path that you have to learn it all?
- Lois Vanderwaerdt: No, I've got it all on my computer and I just plug in their information and do the analysis and it's real easy. Then, after a year there, I went to work for Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service and the reason that I did that was because I had been a GS-9 and this was a GS-12 job and after three years I would automatically be a GS-14 and GS-14s make pretty decent money and I thought, I can do this. So I go to Washington for six months of training.
- Blanche Touhill: What did you do with your children when you went to Washington?
- Lois Vanderwaerdt: I had an au pair.
- Blanche Touhill: A nanny?

- Lois Vanderwaerdt: I had a nanny who stayed here, yeah. It was not easy.
- Blanche Touhill: And you could come back and forth.
- Lois Vanderwaerdt: I was home...like, a couple of times a month I was home. So it worked out. It was not ideal.
- Blanche Touhill: Well, they were probably old enough to understand too.
- Lois Vanderwaerdt: Well, the youngest one would have been 10 and the older one...yeah.
- Blanche Touhill: Well, when you're 10, you have a pretty good idea of...
- Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yeah, they knew what they were supposed to do and it did.
- Blanche Touhill: And what you were doing and you were the support.
- Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yeah, they understood that. So anyway, I'm assigned back to St. Louis which was part of the deal when I had applied for the job. The regional director was the retired president of the International Rubber Workers Union. His name was Paul Bowers. Now, think about this: he was about 5'4" and weight 300 pounds. He looked like a rubber worker. He looked like he bounced. Anyway, Paul was not a feminist, to say the least and he had another woman who had come two years earlier and she was the one actually who had recruited me and he was very distressed. He had made her life miserable and tried to get rid of her and the national office had refused to let him get rid of her. So now he was faced with a second woman and he hadn't been able to get rid of her. So he writes this letter in which he says "There are a lot of good men out there who need jobs and I should not have to take a second woman," and the national office said, "Sorry, Paul, you've got two women." So he made sure my life was pretty miserable and the other mediators were told that they were not to really help me very much. But another thing that happened...and again, it's a governmental agency that helped me out...the Iowa Public Employee Bargaining Law was passed and Iowa was in our region and they were desperate for help because there were all these contracts being negotiated. So I was sent to Des Moines and the guys there hadn't gotten the message that I was black-balled and so they gave me work and I worked really hard and I was up there for a couple of months and I came home and found out later that they had written a very detailed and lovely letter about what a good job I had done. So on the day that my

probationary period was up, 363 days, Paul Bowers calls me into his office and he tells me that he has decided I will never make a mediator and I am discharged because, of course, had I made it one more day, I would have had an automatic promotion and I would have been in the agency and he would have been stuck with me for good. So I discovered...I called a friend and she told me what to do and I filed a charge of sex discrimination and went through the whole process and there was an administrative law judge who heard the case and we had a 1½% chance of winning statistically but I had some help. I had the letter from the Iowa Mediators and I had Paul Bowers' wonderful letter that basically showed that he didn't want women in his office. So we won and I guess it was January of that year, and I think it was 1977 maybe, I had started teaching Legal Environment of Business at UMSL that fall and then in January of the next year, that was when my case was decided and when I found out I had won and it was very shortly after that that I got a call from the chancellor's assistant and he told me that the Affirmative Action officer had resigned and given them two weeks' notice and that the office was a mess and there were federal investigators coming and they didn't know what to do and would I take the job as acting director. So I did and eventually became the permanent person and I worked in that capacity for 10 years. There were many things I liked about it. I had the office pretty well...

Blanche Touhill: Well, I remember you organized it and I remember you did the Affirmative Action plan and I remember you were the ombudsman. If somebody wanted to raise an issue, you would try to...

Lois Vanderwaerdt: ...to resolve it, mm-hmm.

Blanche Touhill: And I know you were active in the Title Nine...

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yes.

Blanche Touhill: ...of making place for the girls teams in intramural sports. What else did you do?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Well, we had to make this campus accessible for people with disabilities.

Blanche Touhill: That's right, I remember you worked with Paul Elsey.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yes.

- Blanche Touhill: And you had, like, a five-year plan...
- Lois Vanderwaerdt: Well, we developed a five-year plan and we went through...and there was this big chart and we went through and we had every building on campus and all the things that needed to be made accessible and every year we would meet with Paul Eley and we would talk about what we could do that year and sure enough, in five years, the whole campus was accessible and I think it was because we didn't ask for extra money and we didn't ask that it all be done at once.
- Blanche Touhill: Yes, I always thought that was the key, that the federal government was saying you have to move to the ADA standards if you proved progress...
- Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yes.
- Blanche Touhill: ...within a certain reasonable time.
- Lois Vanderwaerdt: And, if we had a student who needed to get from Point A to B, they would cut the curbs for that student. They would look at their schedule.
- Blanche Touhill: Oh, really?
- Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yes. So there was no student who had a complaint that they couldn't get into a building or that they couldn't get to their classes. So Paul was very helpful with that.
- Blanche Touhill: Well, it was a wonderful thing. That ADA...
- Lois Vanderwaerdt: The ADA was excellent, yes.
- Blanche Touhill: And I thought the intercollegiate sports, the entering of women in intercollegiate sports...
- Lois Vanderwaerdt: Oh, it was.
- Blanche Touhill: ...was just a monumental...
- Lois Vanderwaerdt: Well, look at how our teams have done in the Olympics ever since Title Nine, and it's because of all the high school and collegiate women who are playing sports.
- Blanche Touhill: Yes. Did you have many complaints that you were able to mediate?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Well, when I took the job, I think we had over 100 active grievances and charges. I don't remember the exact number but there were a lot of them and so my objective was to figure out a way to resolve these problems before they became formal and I don't remember all the things that I did.

Blanche Touhill: No, but I knew that people did come to you.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Oh, yes, they did.

Blanche Touhill: And the goal really was to cut down on the number of formal grievances.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yes, and I think the first year I was there, we had 11 and then after that, we never had more than 1 or 2 and frequently we didn't have any because there are ways to deal with these things and we did.

Blanche Touhill: How did you like working in...well, you had been a teacher so you sort of understood the academic world?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: I did, yes and I liked it and I continued to teach one class in the MBA program.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, did you?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yes, so it was like 80% Affirmative Action and 20% teaching and that was a good combination too because it gave me credibility with the faculty.

Blanche Touhill: Yes, it did. If you had faculty status, that has meaning.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yes, it does.

Blanche Touhill: Was it Arnold that hired you?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yes, it was Arnold who hired me and about a year-and-a-half after I was hired, I had things pretty well organized and so I went to Arnold and I said, "I'd like more responsibilities" and we talked some more and he didn't have anything in mind but I worked for him for eight-and-a-half more years and he never, ever found anything else for me to do which I thought was kind of odd because I had done a competent job and I would have thought he would have looked around.

Blanche Touhill: My judgment of Arnold was he wanted you to do the pre-thinking but he also would rely on you in a crisis...

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yes, he did.

Blanche Touhill: ...and I think he wanted you free. That was my personal observation; he wanted to rely on you in case there were really problems.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Well, Arnold was very funny because he really did think that he could solve these things himself.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, did he?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: And in my experience, with CEOs of other companies, they all think they can solve them themselves too and they usually can't.

Blanche Touhill: No, of course not because it's a specialty.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: We had a student complaint...and I don't remember the nature of the complaint but Arnold decided he was going to mediate this and I was not invited. So I was just in my office and I get a call and my presence is being requested so I came in late and I sat at the other end of the table because that was where the empty chairs were and so Arnold said to me, he said, "Do you have some suggestions for us?" and I said, "Well, the first thing you have to decide is whether or not you're going to allow the complainants to record this proceeding" because from where I could sit, I could see that that's what they were doing. The others couldn't see that. It wasn't that we were doing anything wrong but you don't want one side...

Blanche Touhill: ...to have a recording and the other side not to have it.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: No, exactly, you might want a neutral recording but you don't necessarily want one party to...I wouldn't have wanted the university recording it for their...

Blanche Touhill: You know, I always thought that that position, really, to have a law degree was very helpful.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: I thought it was, yeah.

Blanche Touhill: I know in later years the campus decision was it really wasn't the most important aspect of Affirmative Action, but in those early years when we were all feeling our way as to how to handle these two new groups, the African Americans and the women, it took somebody with experience and with knowledge of the law.



Lois Vanderwaerdt: Mm-hmm, I think it did.

Blanche Touhill: And how to draw the line. Were you the Affirmative Action officer when Jane Miller sued?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: No, that was prior, yeah. In fact, there were a number of people in the external community who believed that the Affirmative Action office really ought to be a Minority Affairs office.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, I'm sure.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: And that only a minority could head that office.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, yes.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: And so there was an African American member of the Board of Curators, Marion Oldham.

Blanche Touhill: Was that her position?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yes, oh, yes, it definitely was her position and in 1983-84, I was awarded a fellowship by the American Council on Education and that meant that I spent a lot of time over at SIU-Edwardsville but, of course, I still had to keep the Affirmative Action office humming and I didn't have a large staff. I had an assistant and I had a secretary and sometimes we'd have student help and so if my assistant was off meeting someone on campus and my secretary needed to go to the restroom, there was nobody to answer the phone. So we got a recorder. Well, Arnold gets this call from Marion Oldham and she's just furious because we are not being responsive to the community because we've got a recorder and people who might want to call for confidential reasons are not going to want to leave a message on a recorder and she just went on and on and so Arnold said, "Look, she has three more months" and he said, "Just put it in the file drawer until she's off the board" so that's what we did. She felt very strongly about these issues and I've always thought that maybe there should have been a Minority Affairs office but it needed to be a different office, not the Affirmative Action office.

Blanche Touhill: In some ways, we had a variety of Minority Affairs offices.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yes.

Blanche Touhill: In some ways, we did, and we really, in time, consolidated all of those.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Mm-hmm.

Blanche Touhill: And I assume the campus still has the consolidation but I don't know that.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yeah...

Blanche Touhill: We had several directors in several different units when we eventually coordinated all of those. You know, you have one director and you have one associate and you have one secretary and then you have specialists who can handle different aspects of minority affairs. Well, did you have fun in the job?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: There were many things I really liked about it. When Arnold didn't give me anything else to do, I started writing scholarly articles and I wrote several that were published in referee journals which I had just discovered. I mean, we weren't really taught about those things in law school. It wasn't like a Ph.D. program but I discovered referee journals and so I wrote some things and they were published and I also wrote a book on Affirmative Action in Higher Education which was really a manual about how to do this job. I was working with a consulting firm out of Denver and doing seminars for Affirmative Action officers.

Blanche Touhill: In the academic realm?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yes, in Higher Education and I was always stunned by these people who had this job that had no experience, no knowledge, no background for doing the job and that was really why I wrote the book.

Blanche Touhill: Well, I think that was true.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Oh, yes.

Blanche Touhill: I think people became the heads. Somebody would say, "Well, you have to prepare the Affirmative Action plan" and they just were sort of...

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Oh, they were completely bamboozled as they should have been because it's a very technical thing. There would be an African American on campus and the chancellor or president would anoint that person Affirmative Action officer.

Blanche Touhill: Yes. Well, that was the first interim academic Affirmative Action officer was a gentleman who's a very fine man. He was in the College of Business

though and we knew him, but he really did not exactly know but he would admit that. He would be the first to say.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: I don't think most institutions realized that that job was, first and foremost, a matter of complying with their own state laws. Now, there are other things...I mean, I did a lot of training on discrimination and on harassment prevention and there are other things that I did also but the most important thing was to keep us out of trouble in the courts and with the federal agencies.

Blanche Touhill: Yes, because you don't want to lose your grant opportunity from the federal government.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yeah, exactly.

Blanche Touhill: So you then left the university and you went into private practice is my memory?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yes, I did.

Blanche Touhill: Tell me about your private practice.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Well, I did the same thing I had been doing here.

Blanche Touhill: I knew there were a lot of faculty who went and used your services.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yes, there were. That wasn't my primary thing. About 40% of my business was in Higher Ed and I was going all over the country doing seminars and training programs and developing complaint procedures and working on mediating and not really arbitrating but figuring out how to solve complaints on various campuses.

Blanche Touhill: Did the federal government encourage you to do these things or were they just removed from it all?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Oh, no, there wasn't any federal involvement at all.

Blanche Touhill: You were training the Higher Education Affirmative Action officers?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: I was training the Affirmative Action officers and then they would frequently call me to their campus to do X, Y and Z and I was also doing day-long seminars at the annual meeting of the American Association of Higher Education and I would always get three or four Higher Ed jobs out

of each of those workshops. So I had a lot of Higher Ed clients and then I focused on prevention in my outreach for corporate clients as well and basically did the same thing with them that I'd been doing in Higher Ed.

Blanche Touhill: Were they friendlier to Affirmative Action than Higher Ed or was it the athletics that really upset people in Higher Ed, the coming of Title Nine and the athletic...or did...

Lois Vanderwaerdt: There were plenty of things that upset businesses also.

Blanche Touhill: What upset businesses?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Well, it depended on the size of the business. If it was a small business that was still being run by the founder, they really thought they should be able to do whatever they wanted to do and so I would have to explain that the reason we needed this procedure that I was setting up was to protect them because if they jumped in and investigated, then they're involved in it and there's nowhere to go. But if you have somebody else to investigate it, whether it was me...and I did that for a lot of clients...or whether it was a staff person that I would assist and then there would be a supervisory layer and there might be a vice president layer and we'd get all of that put together and then "You, Mr. President, you make the decision on how this is going to be handled but only after we've got all the facts. You're not the fact finder," and that worked. They were able to understand that. So that was a good thing.

Blanche Touhill: Is the glass ceiling still there?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Oh, yeah.

Blanche Touhill: Are women losing ground?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: No, I don't think women are losing ground. I have three nieces who are all in their twenties and I look at the opportunities these young women have, it's mind-boggling, it's absolutely mind-boggling.

Blanche Touhill: Do they understand the changes that have helped them?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Oh, I don't think they do. It's always been that way. They've always been able to do whatever they wanted to do. The doors have not been closed. Now, they could eventually be closed as they get older but so far, they've done whatever they wanted in high school. One of the girls had a tennis

scholarship, a free ride to the University of New Mexico and nobody batted an eye about that.

Blanche Touhill: Yes, that's right.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Nobody batted an eye.

Blanche Touhill: That's right where 50 years ago it was unheard of.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Not even that long ago.

Blanche Touhill: Yeah, not even that long ago.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: It wasn't until 1971 that...

Blanche Touhill: That's right, 40 years ago, yeah.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yeah, that Title Nine was passed.

Blanche Touhill: Yes.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: You know, I look at them and I look at other young women that I know and...

Blanche Touhill: Yeah, and that same legislation opened schools and colleges that were previously closed to women...

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yes.

Blanche Touhill: ...such as business. You were probably one of the first women to teach in the College of Business?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: There were other women. I was not on tenure track.

Blanche Touhill: No, I know but I'm just saying...

Lois Vanderwaerdt: I'm trying to think. There was...I can't remember her name but there was a woman on tenure track...

Blanche Touhill: But there were very few.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: You're right, there were very few.

Blanche Touhill: And there were very few women majors in business.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yes, but that's not true any longer.

- Blanche Touhill: No, it isn't true any longer.
- Lois Vanderwaerdt: I mean, I had a lot of women in my MBA class by the time I was at the end of my time there.
- Blanche Touhill: I know that when I was chancellor, the Dental School at UM-KC, the dean said that the women didn't get as many places in dental school because those little women couldn't pull the teeth of those big men.
- Lois Vanderwaerdt: Oh, my!
- Blanche Touhill: And then that was the end of...
- Lois Vanderwaerdt: ...him.
- Blanche Touhill: From then on, a lot of women got admitted to the KC Dental School but I always thought that was so funny.
- Lois Vanderwaerdt: It is funny. Well, it's like women not being able to do surgery.
- Blanche Touhill: Yes.
- Lois Vanderwaerdt: It's the same thing.
- Blanche Touhill: In my early years in administration, we gave an honorary degree to a woman who would operate...she was one of the few surgeons in St. Louis and she would operate on babies because she could do the small...
- Lois Vanderwaerdt: Oh, my. They use instruments.
- Blanche Touhill: Yes, it's just a wonderful thing and now I understand women surgeons are all over the place.
- Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yes, they are and hurray! It's one of the reasons the Arab world is so backward. They're not taking advantage of the talents of half of the population.
- Blanche Touhill: No, and that's what the women's movement was all about, that the talent could be unleashed...
- Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yes.
- Blanche Touhill: ...and people could be themselves.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: We're certainly not 200% equality there. I think women make 77 cents for every dollar but I remember...remember when it was 59 cents?

Blanche Touhill: Yes.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: So there's been progress.

Blanche Touhill: So you went into private practice and you were not only a consultant, Affirmative Action, but you also practiced law.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yes, I did, and I also represent...most of my clients, like 90% were institutions but I also had a small 10% practice of federal employees suing federal agencies because I had been through that and won and I didn't represent myself but I had been through the procedure and I understood it. So I did that. I mean, it worked out fine. I enjoyed it. I was happy to retire. The things I'm doing now are much more pleasing to me than practicing law really was but the law degree and practicing law did what I needed it to do. It supported me; it got my children through their education and it was a good thing.

Blanche Touhill: Did your children go to college?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yes. My older son started college when he was 15.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, he's very smart.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yes, and he eventually got a doctorate in classical philosophy from Princeton.

Blanche Touhill: And does he teach...

Lois Vanderwaerdt: He did, he was in academe. He was in the Philosophy Department at Duke University for a while but he just kind of got burned out on Higher Ed and I can certainly understand that and he writes grants for a not-for-profit agency in California now. So that's what he does.

Blanche Touhill: And your other boy?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Well, he went through UCLA on a water polo scholarship and that was a good thing because it saved me a lot of money.

Blanche Touhill: And it's a wonderful school.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: It was a wonderful school and he eventually worked for Anheuser Busch for 23 years and got laid off with the first big lay-off in December of '08 and presently he lives in Denver with my three grandchildren and is the national sales manager for a company that sells equipment to restaurants and hotels and schools and hospitals and such.

Blanche Touhill: So they both landed on their feet.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yeah, they're both doing fine, yeah.

Blanche Touhill: And what are you doing? Do you still have clients?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Well, I write a few Affirmative Action plans but I don't really do anything else and I'm just delighted not to. I'm the local chair for the Garden Conservancy's Open Day Program so I run a garden tour every year. I play tennis every day. My significant other of almost 40 years and I travel.

Blanche Touhill: How many years?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Forty, just about forty, yeah.

Blanche Touhill: You travel.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: We travel. We've been to lots of wonderful countries.

Blanche Touhill: Talk about some of your travels.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: We've been to Africa five times. We've been to China, we've been to Hong King, we've been to Cambodia. We went to Borneo and we hiked up Mount Kinabalu which the travel books all said, "This is an easy hike; no problem; this is not mountain climbing." Well, it was 13,455 feet and it was the toughest thing I've ever done physically. I did make it but it was crazy. We just decided, we're not going to climb any more mountains or hike up any more mountains no matter what the guide books say. But it was fun and it was certainly memorable.

Blanche Touhill: When you travel like that, do you look at the plight of women as you travel?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Huh! You know, I've never really thought of that. In Africa, the little stands are as likely to be run by women as they are by men. That's also true in Russia. You know, we just got back from a trip to Norway which is a country of enormous equality.



Blanche Touhill: Economic as well.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yes, and, you know, it's hard to tell because you don't know what goes on in the office buildings but the women just moved very freely. They were well dressed and had good haircuts and of course Norway's a socialist country and the residents are educated and their health is taken care of.

Blanche Touhill: And they probably have some housing stipend.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: I don't know if they have housing stipends but I know that if they have a child, each parent gets a year off with pay and I am reminded of how family unfriendly our country is when I see what the Norwegians do.

Blanche Touhill: We used to be even more unfriendly.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Oh, yeah, we're better than we used to be but we're the only first world country in the world that doesn't have paid parental leave. We have the Family Medical Leave Act but it's not paid and a lot of people can't afford to take that amount of time off without pay so that makes a huge difference.

Blanche Touhill: If you look back on your life, would you have done anything differently?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Huh!

Blanche Touhill: Would you have become a Ph.D. in English if you had had the opportunity?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Well, if I could have made enough money doing it and I think people now can but the woman who took my job at Augustana, because this was in, like, the 1970's, fall of '71, she was a Woodrow Wilson scholar with a Ph.D. I mean, it was very hard to get jobs in the humanities in the '70s and I just thought it was not a smart thing, to go and get an English degree...

Blanche Touhill: ...and then be looking for a job.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: ...and then be looking for a job and I had these kids to support. I mean, I think I made the right financial decision. I'm thankful regularly that I ended up in a city.

Blanche Touhill: You had options then, didn't you?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Well, I could have gone a lot of different places to law school and I was unfamiliar with cities. I didn't know what they had to offer and I take classes at Oasis now. I'm in a theater group, a film group, I'm in two book clubs, I go to the art museum book club, I visit art galleries, and you can't do that if you're not in a city.

Blanche Touhill: No. Are you glad you came to St. Louis?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Well, yes, I am. St. Louis is fine. I have wonderful friends here. I have a wonderful life. I think that, career-wise, I would have had better opportunities if I had, when I got out of law school, if I'd gone to one of the coasts or if I had gone to Chicago or even to Minneapolis and this is a Southern city and the opportunities for women were greater in Northern cities and on the coasts than they were here at the time that I graduated. But I really don't like cold weather so Chicago didn't have a big draw.

Blanche Touhill: Or Minneapolis.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: I know, there wasn't a big draw there.

Blanche Touhill: But sunny California or parts of New England.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: But again, here are my parents who refuse to get on an airplane so I felt that I needed to stay in the Midwest.

Blanche Touhill: And what happened to your sister?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Oh, my sister lives in San Francisco. She eventually got a Ph.D. and she...well, first she taught elementary education and then she got a Ph.D. and she was working, unhappily, as an assistant dean at a college in California and this man walked into her office and recruited her to work for Lutheran Brotherhood Financial Services and she worked for them for a number of years and then she became a vice president with American Express and eventually she retired and then she has worked as a fundraiser for a couple of places on the West Coast.

Blanche Touhill: And what happened to your school mates?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Bank tellers, secretaries, LPNs...

Blanche Touhill: They still worked as secretaries?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yeah. One of them got a job...she just had a high school education but she managed to get a job with IBM and she worked there and she went to training programs and she improved herself but she never went to college and eventually got laid off...

Blanche Touhill: And then is trapped?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yeah, she really wasn't qualified to do anything.

Blanche Touhill: Yes, because time had changed.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Time had changed and IBM knew her and knew she was a hard worker and such but it's hard to package that and take it to another employer.

Blanche Touhill: If the federal government hadn't reached out a hand to women...let's just say women...would the changes have come?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Well, first we had to get the vote.

Blanche Touhill: Yes.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: First we had to get the vote and then the congresswoman from Michigan whose name escapes me at the moment had to be in Congress so she could introduce the bills and introduce the amendment.

Blanche Touhill: I see what you're saying, okay. So it took quite a while for that to work up and it really took the war, the Second World War, to show that the women contributions were needed.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: And it took a few women in strategic places to put that amendment...no, I guess it was Howard Smith of Virginia who put the amendment into Title Seven that would include sex because he figured that would defeat it.

Blanche Touhill: Yes. Now, tell me that story. Do you know that story?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Well, that's about all I know, that he was...

Blanche Touhill: I heard that same thing, that they were trying to block the African American protection...

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yes.

Blanche Touhill: And so they put in the women in the Civil Rights Act in order to bring the anti-feminine moved in but it didn't work and they both were protected.

- Lois Vanderwaerdt: And the rest, as we say, is history.
- Blanche Touhill: That the rest is history.
- Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yeah.
- Blanche Touhill: I think the one that really did irritate a lot of people was the Title Nine, on the athletic side.
- Lois Vanderwaerdt: Oh, that's been huge. I mean, that's had a huge impact on...especially the minor men's sports at the Division One schools. A lot of them have cut their tennis teams or cut their wrestling teams, especially wrestling, has been very much impacted because they've had to devote...they think they've had to devote their resources to women's sports which they have. It apparently hasn't occurred to them that maybe they don't need to have 100 players on their football roster. They don't cut their major sports. They only cut the minor ones and that's unfortunate.
- Blanche Touhill: That is something that I never really focused on but that is true.
- Lois Vanderwaerdt: And swimming, swimming is another one.
- Blanche Touhill: And then the swimming teams became both male and female.
- Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yes...gymnastics. So we don't do as well in those sports in the Olympics as we have done in the past because there is an effect from all of that.
- Blanche Touhill: You know, you should write a book about your life in relationship to the federal government's contributions, in other words, your job with the federal government...
- Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yeah.
- Blanche Touhill: ...your law case and then implementing these various rules, especially the contract, the ability of the federal government to say, if you're going to have a contract with us, you have to...
- Lois Vanderwaerdt: ...you have to take affirmative action, mm-hmm.
- Blanche Touhill: Yes, you have to take affirmative action.
- Lois Vanderwaerdt: And you know, when Reagan was elected, there was a lot of talk about doing away with Affirmative Action and one of the things that happened is that the National Association of Manufacturers...I might have the order

wrong, the order of the name wrong...National Manufacturers Association, I think, they lobbied Congress and they said, "No, we can handle Affirmative Action. This is the devil that we know and so we don't want that changed," which I thought was very interesting, and the other thing that happened is that there was a study done of companies and what they did was pair companies that were similar, similar geographically, similar industry, similar in size and looked at their demographic profile and how had they done with women and minorities if they had had contracts and if they had not had federal contracts and one of the things that that study shows is that the companies that had had to have Affirmative Action plans had done substantially better than the companies that had not.

Blanche Touhill: Isn't that interesting?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yeah, I thought that was too because I tend to be kind of cynical about these things and think that government really doesn't necessarily work very well but in that case, it was working just as it was supposed to be working.

Blanche Touhill: Are there as many class action suits anymore?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: No, because the Supreme Court has seen to that.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, they don't allow that?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Well, they have narrowed the parameters so that it's almost impossible to put together a class and they did that. There was a huge Wal-Mart case.

Blanche Touhill: Talk to me about the Wal-Mart case.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: I don't recall. I wasn't involved in it and I don't really know but I know that it was that case where they narrowed the parameters and said that it was too broad a case. I think that the plaintiffs were female managers and females who had applied for managerial jobs with Wal-Mart and had been refused and it would seem to me that would be a natural class but the Supreme Court didn't think so and so they basically took the guts out of the class action possibilities, not just for that case but for all of them.

Blanche Touhill: What do you view the rest of your life like?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Well, I hope for a while to continue doing all the things that I'm doing and enjoying. I keep telling Craig that, given our age, we need to go and do because we don't know how long we'll have our health. I'm 72 and I'm doing fine, I'm still playing singles on the tennis court but you just don't know. Stuff can happen. There can be accidents. You can have health issues and so my objective in my life is to just proceed to do the things that I'm doing and to enjoy them.

Blanche Touhill: What do your granddaughters want to do?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Well, I have one granddaughter, and actually, this is kind of a funny story. Her name is Sydney and she is now 17 and she's a junior in high school and last Christmas we had this conversation and I said, "Sydney, what are you thinking about when you get out of high school?" and she said, "I want to become an aesthetician" and I thought, oh, my God. I was just appalled. I was just appalled but I didn't say anything and I just...she was very involved in her hair and her nails and stuff that teenage girls are involved in and then I was there in September. I actually went that particular weekend because my youngest grandson, who's 12, is a good little athlete and he had a basketball game on Sunday and a football game on Saturday and so I went to see him play. So I'm talking to Sydney and I said, "Well, Sydney, have you thought any more about what you want to do when you get out of high school?" and she said, "Well, yes, I'm going to apply to UC-Boulder." I was thrilled and I said, "Really?" I said, "What are you taking in high school?" and she said, "Well, I'm taking Algebra II and geometry and chemistry and I have B pluses and I have A's in everything else." I was just floored and just delighted, me being the person with low aspirations. I was so delighted that she had raised her level of aspiration and she's just...that's what she wants to do. She doesn't have a boyfriend. She's not doing anything bad. She's just focused on her school and her goal.

Blanche Touhill: Now, how did that change happen?

Lois Vanderwaerdt: I have no idea and I didn't dare say to her, "I thought you wanted to be an aesthetician." I didn't want to bring that subject up anymore. I mean, I don't have anything against aestheticians but it's not a very reliable way to make a living and I think every woman has got to be able to support herself.

- Blanche Touhill: Do you think women understand that?
- Lois Vanderwaerdt: Some women do. I mean, I was in my 20's when I figured it out.
- Blanche Touhill: Talk about your grandchildren. You talked about Sydney. Maybe you want to mention Sydney again. Well, obviously her aspirations changed and we don't exactly know why but it doesn't matter. They're going to change again. I mean, we know that as she matures and develops, we focus on different things.
- Lois Vanderwaerdt: Well, I'm just delighted with her and Craig and I had talked what we want to do as a high school graduation present is to take each of the children on an international trip because their mother has not been willing for them to go previously. We would have liked to have taken them sooner. So we were talking about it and Craig said, "Now, she might not want to go and so you've got to respect that" and I said, "Well, I understand." So when I was there in September, I said, "Now, Sydney, Craig and I have talked about this and if you don't want to do this, you just say because we'll think of something else but in spring break of your senior year, we'd like to take you to the country of your choice in Europe and bring your dad along." She said, "Oh, I'd love it. I would love to go" and she just went on and on and on. And so I'm real pleased with that because I think travel is very broadening and very good for children.
- Blanche Touhill: And she's adventurous.
- Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yes.
- Blanche Touhill: Because a lot of children that age would say, "No, I think I'll go to Washington, D.C." or something.
- Lois Vanderwaerdt: I know. She's real interested in it. She's taking Spanish.
- Blanche Touhill: And is she good at it?
- Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yeah, she has an A. She's good at it. She's taken a number of years. They have it in their school system. And then her brother is 14...he's 15 and he has wanted to go to Egypt. Now, this is not a good time to go to Egypt but he may have to choose something else for his graduation present but he was very funny. He was very frustrated with his history teacher because he said, "You know, we're studying the Civil War and I don't think that he's really telling us all the whole truth" and I said, "You know what? This

is the problem, Mitchell. The problem is, he's only got 50 minutes a day and he can't tell you the whole truth and he's got to go by this book that the school system approved and you just have to ride with that and not bug him about it" but I said, "What you do is, you read other books on the side" and I said, "For example, there's a great book about *Jesse James, The Last Confederate Soldier* and Jesse James came from a secessionist family in Western Missouri and he and his gang spent 10 years trying to disrupt the economy of the North after the Civil War was over by robbing banks and by robbing trains" and his mouth just dropped and I said, "Now, I wasn't taught that when I was in high school and you won't be taught that either because that's sort of a specialized thing but it's real interesting and it's something you can learn on your own" and I gave him two or three other examples, one of which was the way in which Grant and Lee handled the surrender and how the way they handled that made a huge difference in how...

Blanche Touhill: Peace.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yes, in the peace.

Blanche Touhill: They won the peace as well as the war.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yes, because there were other generals, Jefferson Davis included, who wanted to continue to fight guerrilla warfare against the Union but because of the way they handled that, that didn't happen and the other generals laid down their arms too.

Blanche Touhill: What's interesting about this dialogue is he trusts you...

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yes, he does.

Blanche Touhill: ...to make that intellectual judgment.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yeah, he did, that's true.

Blanche Touhill: It isn't just that you're his grandmother and that he loves you and you love him. It's that you're an individual who says to him, "Research to find the truth. Get what you can from the teacher but you're a knowledgeable young person. You're going to have to learn things on your own," and he took that to heart.



Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yeah, he did, and I'm real happy. He had a couple of shaky years but he seems to be focused and seems to be doing fine. My youngest grandson is 12½ and I went to his football game. The kid's a little star. There's a kick-off and he's way in the back and he doesn't catch the ball. It goes over his head but he manages to catch it on the first bounce and I don't know how anybody does that because the football just goes catty-wampus when it hits the ground. He grabbed that he fakes so he gets everybody going the other way and then he does like this and runs down the sideline for a touchdown. So he scored 11 touchdowns in five games and he loves...I wish it were a different sport but he loves football. So we're in the car going home and I say, "Well, Griffin, what do you like most about football?" and he says, "I don't know," and I say, "Well, you looked like you were having a lot of fun running that football down for that touchdown" and he says, "Yeah, I guess" and he's 12. That's the way the other two talked when they were 12 too. So I'm patient. He'll be fine.

Blanche Touhill: Yes. So you were a mother, a homemaker and really a high-powered lawyer. Well, I hope you write more and it was an interesting time that we lived through.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: It's a very interesting time, continues to be.

Blanche Touhill: Continues to be but you were really a pioneer in that Affirmative Action and it took more than a knowledge of the law; it took your personality to convince the academics that the times had changed.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Well, I also had a lot of support from the women on this campus, a lot of support.

Blanche Touhill: Yes, we did unite.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yes. Well, one of the first things I did when I was acting was release a longitudinal study of the demographics of every department, not knowing that the women had been trying to get that information for years and we put it in the library and announced it was there and so I think that kind of cemented my relationship with the women, yes.

Blanche Touhill: That's right, yes. You were the bridge.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Yes, yes, I think I was.

Blanche Touhill: Well, thank you very much.

Lois Vanderwaerdt: Thank you.

Blanche Touhill: It was a wonderful conversation.