

CASSIE INTERVIEW 1

TAPE 1

SIDE 1

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K: Better get which thing started?

C: This conversation (laugh).

K: Oh, this conversation. OK, well I'll see if I can't take care of it. OK, well one of the things that I wanted to talk about, you said that as a native of Colorado Springs you know about, a lot about the history of our people there in the forties and fifties.

C: Yeah.

K: And so I thought we might focus on that, you know, that in the 1940's and the 1950's, that period. And I'd love to hear, you know, stories or anecdotes or any kind of thing, but if you run out of things to talk about I can ask you specific questions too.

C: OK.

K: So, you can just tell me what it was like back then.

C: Well, it was, Colorado Springs was a very closed community. And it still is, compared to Denver, but I was born and raised there, I lived there all my life and when I was growing up and dating and everything, it was very difficult because we had to be very careful. And my first lover and I met, we both worked at the same place in Colorado Springs. And we met and we played on the same ball team, and we bowled together, and there were 16 of us gals that ran around together, and we were ballplayers and bowlers and what have you. So we just kind of kept you know our own people, because there wasn't anything to do. There was no support groups that I knew of. Ahm, and there was only one dance hall and that dance hall's still there.

K: Is that right?

C: The Hide and Seek? Over on West Colorado Avenue, I believe is where it is. It was then on West Colorado Avenue. And it was a hookey old place. I understand that they've done it over, but at that time it wasn't much. And we were scared to death to go there anyway because we was always afraid the place would be raided or something, you know, and of course we were not out, and in those days you weren't out. You just kept your mouth shut. But we never had much trouble because I think the reason we didn't have was because we didn't socialize a lot in the gay and lesbian community. We more or less hung to our own crowd. Like I said, we had about

16 gals that ran around together, and we was always at each other's house and they were always at our house. Ruth's and mine. Because we had you know, we had a little bitty house up on the hill and when people couldn't get to work because the snow was too deep or something, they'd come to our house. (laugh) They could get to our house; they couldn't get to work. (laugh)

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K: Especially with the top of the hill.

C: Yeah. With their grocery bags and they'd come over and we'd be snowed in over there. And we literally had wall-to-wall people cause we had a little tiny house. It was just a 3-room house. But it was a lot of fun. And I don't, if there was such a thing as a support group or something like that, I did not know it. We just, you just kind of tried to help each other and we never had any trouble with being in trouble over it because we were a crowd of our own and because we were always careful. You know, I always hug everybody. And I always say honey or sweetie to everybody. And that's a built-in protection with me. We done that when we were very young people, because that way you didn't have to monitor what you did or said, and it's just become a habit. But I like it.

K: Did you choose to do that on purpose?

C: Yeah, I think so, because, you know, it was a cover-up. In fact my first lover and I, we dated, we double-dated with guys and she laughed at me so hard one time because we went fishing with these guys and of course my little boyfriend had to help me cross the river you know, and he held onto my hands and helped me cross that, cross those rocks. And Ruth was sitting down, she laughed her head off because she said, and the next weekend we were up there and Norma was hopping from rock to rock to rock. I didn't need any help. But I let him think I did (laugh). So it was, you know, you just learned to live so that you didn't expose your identity and we had many friends that were gay and lesbians and we played cards with straight people. We had a lot of straight friends. And if they ever knew the difference, nothing was ever said. The only thing that ever happened to us, and it was really funny, we had some gals that were in the military. And we had like I said this little house up on the hill. And we had wall-to-wall people there all the time. And we didn't know it until many years later that our house was off-limits to the military. We did not know that. But it didn't work, because they came anyway, but the old big wig, she said that we were off-limits.

K: How did you find that out?

C: One of the gals was in the Air Force and she was a kind of a, well she was a sergeant I think, and she knew this captain personally and she told us. She didn't tell us at the time, she told us many years later, cause, you know, she said she didn't see

any use in saying anything and getting us upset about it or anything, so, but I thought it was really funny though. We didn't know it (laugh).

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C: And I think the thing that most people had more trouble with than anything else back in those days was work. You know, they obviously thought or knew or had ideas that we were different than they was. And for instance, I had one gal that I worked with and she went to the boss and she told him she didn't want to work with me anymore because I wore my hair short and I wore levi's and she said that she was sure I was queer. And so he called me on the carpet about it. And I told him, hey, I'm the same woman that they hired and I know where that door is and I can go out of it just like I came in it and I said, I don't want to hear anymore out of this. I do not wish to hear it. And I said, I'm more of a woman than she'll ever be. She was a woman that was, wouldn't live with her husband, hadn't lived with him for I don't know how many years, but he'd come back every year and she'd be pregnant then with another kid, so that the Social Services, Welfare, could take care of them you know, so it kind of made me mad and I just kind of blew my cork and told her I didn't want to hear anymore about it. And I didn't. But they were always harassing, you know, they would get you for anything that they possibly could. Because they wanted you out but then they couldn't, you know, they could at that time just say we don't want you to work for us. But, of course, they didn't. That wasn't a good policy. They'd rather find something else to turn you loose for, you know.

K: . . . always, yeah, they'd come up with some excuse.

C: Yeah.

K: And so you talked back to your boss that way?

C: I did. But I was always in trouble everyplace I worked because I wouldn't take their BS that they wanted to hand me. I figured you know, hey, I'm a person the same as anybody else and I don't bother anybody and I'm not going to be harassed by my bosses about this or people at work. I just said no.

K: Well what kind of BS did they give you?

C: Well, just like I said, you know, they would try to any way that they could possibly get you know, anything they could get on you they would use on you to try to get rid of you, but they never succeeded. But I was always in trouble. I was (laugh), my mouth always got me in trouble. I 'd either lose raises or something because I wouldn't take their bunch of BS you know that they was dishing out. And you know, it was so obvious because there was a handful of us gals that worked there that were lesbian women and we were always picked on about everything. Anything that came up it was used against us and they'd try to find anything and

everything that they could to harass us and get rid of us. And of course back then we didn't have equal rights. You were classed right along with the black people and the peons and that sort of thing.

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K: Would she be happier sitting up here?

C: Yeah, she wants to get up there with you.

K: OK, why don't you sit up here. Come on. Come on.

. . . [discussion about the pet]

C: So things have changed a great deal, and there was a time and now, let's see, my second lover left in 1986 and I spent a year in Pueblo, and Pueblo is absolutely terrible. I didn't know anybody and I met one lesbian woman through New Dawn Correspondence Club that lived in Pueblo, and we paled around, but other than that I didn't know anybody. But at that time I did go to a support group in Colorado Springs, and that was something for Colorado Springs to have that. My doctor, I think the only reason I found out about it was because my doctor told me about it and wanted me to join this.

K: Was this a lesbian doctor?

C: Yes, he'd done a lot of work with the gay and lesbian community.

K: That's great.

C: Yeah. So I just never had any trouble with people individually bothering me except at work we all had problems. But as far as the people that I associated with, I think the only time I only had one person ask me, and these were our landlord and landlady that my lover and I had when we lived in the little house on the hill. And we paled around with them and they were a straight couple and they were older than we were, but we used to go to their house and they'd have us over and we'd just have fun, you know, we'd talk and everything. And she was a poetess and also beautiful artist, and I don't know why, but we was there and out of the clear blue sky she said, "Are you gay?" And I about swallowed my tongue and my lover did too, because she said, you know, but it was the first time we ever had anybody ever even ask us such a thing, and it startled us. We both stood there, like, ah, ah, and neither one of us lied about it though, we said yes. And she said, well, it doesn't bother me, I don't care, I've loved you all these years and I don't intend to quit. So it didn't bother her. But that sticks in my mind because it was really something to have somebody say something to you, you know.

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K: How about among the other women? Did you ever talk about being gay or was it just something you all knew about each other and

C: Oh you mean our group that we ran around with?

K: Yeah, among the group.

C: Oh yeah. We talked about it, and we were very open about ourselves when we were all together, and it was funny though because most of us had partners, you know, we were paired up and we just had our own parties. We talked about it, but it wasn't anything that was, anything that we talked about constantly or anything, cause we all just knew. But I have a point to tell you that I think is very interesting. My niece and my nephew lived in Colorado Springs, my brother's children. And we, their mother was something to be, she had a lot to learn about being a child carer. And we took care of those kids, my lover and I, most of the time, because they were both little and they'd call crying come and get me, Mama's yelling again. And we'd go and get them and take them home with us. And it wasn't until this niece was grown and had children of her own that she told my lover--it was my ex-lover at that time--that they talked about us being gay. But I had never said anything to her. And so something was said and my ex-lover says, well, because we're still best friends, she said talk to her sometime about it. She knows. Talk to her. So she called me on the phone and I don't know what was going on, I can't remember now, but something, and so I just wrote her a letter and told her about me being gay, and when I got home from work that night she was there waiting for me. And she hugged me and hollered and danced and we whooped and hollered, and said how wonderful it was to have this in the open finally. And so that was how some of my family found out, and I've been open with some of them and some of them I'm not. But I think that, I'm sure that people know, but it just isn't discussed, you know. And my niece said that all the years that she lived with me, practically, and she was around all of those people when we used to, 16 of us, gather and have our parties and everything. And she said, I never knew for sure until I was grown, that you were indeed gay, because, she said, you always treat everybody the same. See, we always done this and I think that's why we never had any problems. Because I wouldn't treat anybody any different than I did, you know my straight friends, I treated them the same as I did my gay friends. So there was no questions.

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K: Treated them the same, you mean in terms of always giving them a hug and a kiss and

C: Yes, and calling them honey or sweetie or whatever, you know, so I think that that was one reason why we got along as well as we did was because of the way that we handled the situation. But you

had to because if you didn't, why you'd be tarred and feathered and run out of town.

K: What years did you live in this little house on the hill?

C: Well, it was in the late 1950's and early '60's because I went to work at Hewlett Packard in 1962, and we was still living there on that property at that time, and then my lover and I bought a new home in Colorado Springs. And we lived in that little house for 6 years.

K: For 6 years.

C: Mmm-hmm. We had a lot of fun up there.

K: It sounds like it.

C: Yeah, we did. We used to have some really good parties (laugh).

K: Dance parties, that kind of thing?

C: Everything, you know. I mean, and in those days boy we used to drink too. Whooh! Boy, you know how kids are. Kids, you know they do it all, and it's funny because of all of the people that I know that we used to have those parties with and we all used to be wild and drink, none of us drink anymore, you know (laugh).

K: . . . after a while.

C: It's kind of nice though, because most of us still keep in touch with one another even though we're scattered around. We still get together once in a while and still keep in touch. There's one of the gals that we don't know where she is. The last I heard she was very ill with cancer and she went off somewhere, so she didn't know anybody and I don't know where she is or what, and there's one that's dead and she died with cancer several years. But the rest of us are still flying around here somewhere. We get in touch. That's like say, 30 years ago, for some of them. And my one very good friend, that I've been friends with for so many years, just lives right close to me here. And we're still buddies and it's almost 30 years.

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K: That's real special to know someone for that long.

C: Mmm-hmm, it really is. And like I said, I'm friends with both of my ex-lovers, both long-term relationships. One of 21 years and the other one 11 1/2. And I still correspond with the one that doesn't live here in Colorado and the other one is my best friend yet. The 21-year relationship, we're best friends now and have been. Soon be 40 years that we've known each other, so I think that's great.

K: Does she still live in Colorado?

C: Mmm-hmm. Yeah.

K: So you can see each other.

C: Oh, yeah, she's my rock. Anytime something goes wrong she's always there for me. (laugh) But I think we help each other, you know. She grew up with my family. She moved in with me when I was still at home, and she was just out of high school, she was 19. And she moved in with my family and we lived with my family for 5 years. And she never knew her dad. She was very young when he died, so she adopted my father, and they truly loved one another. He treated her just like a daughter and she thought he was her dad, always did. But you know, in that many years she's all of my family have grown up with her. She's as much an aunt and a sister to my brother--I only have one brother--but he always calls her his half-sister and half something else. He hasn't decided what yet. But they really have a good relationship together, all of them, and they love each other very much. She's closer with my family than she is her own. Being, you know, living here around my family.

K: How did it come about that she moved in with your family?

C: Well she came here as she graduated from high school she moved here. Her class, her graduating class, came here on their senior trip. And she fell in love with Colorado Springs and she said that's where she wanted to live. And she's lived there all these years, she's never lived anywhere else and said she never will. She still loves it.

K: Where was she from originally?

C: New Mexico.

K: Oh I see. So then made just this trip up north.

C: So she just thinks that's wonderful.

K: That's great, yeah.

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C: Colorado Springs was a nice little town. It's big now and kind of, I don't know, it doesn't have the support. It'll always be home to me, but I don't think I'd ever go back there and live unless I met somebody that lived there and had a lover from there or something, you know. I love Colorado Springs. But there's nothing there for me. I enjoy the community here in Denver. We have such a wonderful support and loving community. I think it's fabulous.

K: So how about this place where you all worked, where was that?

C: I worked at Hewlett Packard Company is the one that I was speaking of.

K: That was the one where all, a whole group of you worked together and go to know each other.

C: Several of us, yeah. Then there was another place. It's not even there even more. It was called Universal Electric, and it moved out and went to Arkansas. But we all worked there. I think that's where a lot of the old-time people that we were together with worked there. And then we met some at a place called Wycon. Wycon was a hearing aid place. They manufactured them. And some of us worked there. It was kind of funny because we bowled together and we played ball together, softball, and yet we worked together a lot of us, so but we were all very close. And one thing you know, that, we, my love and I were together for 21 years, over 21. And we were a bit older than the other kids. I guess we were the oldest ones then. They kind of looked up to us and we kind of played a role model for them and when we split and broke up, it really did tell on those people, it really hurt them. They really had a hard time handling it, because you know, their loyalty was you know, who are you loyal to? So that was one reason why my ex and I said hey, you know, we can't be made at one another. We were for a while and then we got to talking about it and we said, you know, this is not right because we're hurting an awful lot of people, you know. If you can't be friends what do you do with all of these people that you've known all these years? Because their loyalty is split right down the middle. And that's very difficult. And they really had a hard time adjusting to the fact that we split, because none of them ever thought about that I guess, or anything.

K: You were kind of their rock.

C: Yeah. Yeah. But it's, the few of us that are still around here and still get together, we're still such good friends that you know, we're still each others' rocks . . . very deep relationships with each other still.

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K: Now, how did you all find each other and kind of realize that you were all alike in this way? How did that happen?

C:C: Well, I don't know, you know ahm, I think Katie, it's a feeling that you have. Don't you? Don't you more or less?

K: You just kind of know?

C: And of course, back in those days it was different than it is now. Now it's very difficult to know who is a lesbian woman and who isn't. Because many of them are professional women, they don't

wear their hair short, they dress in dresses, and they have makeup and all this. Well back when I was growing up that was not the case. Most everybody that was gay at that time more or less wore their hair short and wore levi's and that sort of thing, and I think that's where the term butch and fem and that sort of thing and dike and all that came in. And I don't understand those terms because I never played that role. We were just . . . we were just a people. And we had our own friends and everything that we ran around with but if you want to make me mad just call me a butch or a dike or something, because I don't like that. I don't like to be tagged anything. I'm just a person. I'm a woman. And I'm proud of it. And that's what I am. Just because I happen to have a different choice of sexual preference doesn't mean anything as far as I'm concerned. But back then there was a lot more of that, butch and fem and dike and this sort of thing. You don't hear that so much now. And you can't really tell that much about people. You know, it's like down there at the Harmony, a lot of those women, you would never know that they are because they don't fit the description of what it used to be. But I think that's because there's so many of them that's so, professional women, you know. And too, life is so different now. I don't think with me I didn't wear my hair short or wear levi's or that sort of thing because I was gay. It was what I chose to do. I was comfortable with that. My lover had long hair. Her hair came clear down to the middle of her back. She could sit on it. And she cut it because somebody was always messing around with it and pulling it or something when we'd go to the movie theater or something, and she just got tired of it, and cut it off. But I think just the difference in people's ideas, and you young people now, you know you're so much more open. And I think being open maybe has something to do with this. I think it's tremendous. I think it's wonderful. Harmony. I'd go down there and out of all these people there's 138 members. And we're having pictures taken now for this concert that's coming up, and they always say, if there's anyone who cannot have their picture taken, because it goes public, please go over to the side of the room, and out of that hundred and thirty some odd people, there was only two or three that did not have their picture taken. And I think that's wonderful. People are just coming around to where they're so much more open. I think if you'd have had something like that when I was a young woman you wouldn't have had anybody in the picture, because they'd have been scared to death. I think it's wonderful that everything's much more open. Yeah, it really is. I think, but I think my generation has done a lot towards helping the young women of this generation now. Because we kinda broke the ground, you know? I don't know, I think there's probably been gay women all through history. We read about one or two once in a while, but I'm sure they were there, but they just were undercover, they had to be. Can you imagine a poor gay man back in those days? That would have been horrendous. With all of the macho guys (laugh).

K: So, I was surprised when you said that you wore jeans to work. Wasn't, was this in the fifties?

C: Yeah.

K: Was that unusual in those days for a woman to wear pants and . . .

C: No, I don't think it was. I think that earlier than that, like maybe in the thirties and forties that people, that women didn't wear slacks and that sort of thing, but when I was growing up, well, in the thirties and forties my mom and dad was very particular about what I wore. And I can remember that as a child I never was allowed to go anywhere with shorts on. You just didn't do that. And if we dressed up to go somewhere like maybe over to somebody's house for dinner or something you never would wear slacks or jeans or something like that, and I know that I got a lot of ridicule from different ones. My sister-in-law and my aunts and what have you, because I always wanted to play on the hill and in the dirt and everything and I wanted to wear levi's and my hair was flying and you know, I was a tomboy. I never was a little girly girly thing. I didn't know why then. But I do know now. But I didn't at that time. but I don't think that I ever wore shorts when I was a kid ever, to go downtown or anything. My mom wouldn't have heard of it. And I know that I never, I was raised that way, so I never wore shorts to town or anything until, well, I don't think till I came to Denver. I don't think I, no I'm sure, and I still have a little twinge of guilt whenever I (laugh), whenever I go downtown in bare shorts or something. Which I think is silly, but you know.

K: Those lessons you learned from way on.

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C: Yeah. Your mind is tuned to that. In fact, oh yes, when I was growing up in the 1940's and '50's why we wore levi's and at that time we didn't wear men's levi's. We had women levi's. And we rolled them up. We bought them long and we rolled them up in those big wide cuffs, to your knees, and then you wore bobby socks and saddle shoes with them. That was what was popular.

K: That was the outfit.

C: Yeah (laugh) and a long white shirt that belonged to your daddy or your brother (laugh). That was teenager, that was typical, you know, like what kids do nowadays, they wear all those old raggedy, taggedy clothes, you know, and well, that was their way of expressing themselves and we done too.

K: And that was something that straight women wore too.

C: Mmm-hmm. Yeah. I think we were, when I was a kid in school we used to wear those to school, and of course, our mothers thought

it was terrible, you know, they didn't like it at all. But we did it anyway (laugh).

K: So, how about getting your hair cut short? Now that was kind of unusual wasn't it for a woman?

C: Yes. Cause when I was a child I wore my hair long. I had long curls. And I had just one brother and my brother used to set me between his knees every morning of his life, and comb my hair and brush it. And I wouldn't let anybody else touch it. Only Buddy could do my hair. Well, when he got big enough and he went to the service, see he's almost 11 years older than I am, and when he left home I thought I would die, because Buddy wasn't there to comb my hair. And my mom couldn't do anything with me. She said I squalled and hollered and bawled and so she took me and had my hair cut. But then even so it was not real short, you know. And, oh I can remember my dad and my brother and all of them just having a fit because we wanted to get our hair cut. And I think I cut my hair, I was working in a greenhouse and I got tired of messing with it. I worked in the rose room where there was a mist, a fine water mist, all the time, and my hair was constantly wet and in those days my hair was really bad, but it was real fine and it just got little snarls in it and everything. It was really hard to take care of. And cutting my hair I'm sure has made my hair what it is today. And I am, I don't have any problems with hair now.

K: It looks very nice, yeah.

C: Yeah, that's easy. I've got hair like my dad's, wavy and got enough curl in it that it's easy to manage. But oh, I can remember how just had fits and just ridiculed me and if you wanted to make me mad or hurt my feelings all you had to do was say something about my hair. In fact, I can remember one of my lovers that came to live with me said something one day about, well, if you don't like your hair why don't you do something about it or something to that effect, and I started crying. And she said, what did I do? And I thought she was ridiculing me because I lived with that. And she wasn't at all, you know, but I really had a hang-up about it. And I don't know, I've always been one that kinda done my own thing.

K: Sounds like it.

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C: If somebody didn't like, well, that was too bad. And I can think, I fought all my life, in fact, when I had my heart attack I had a real thing that I had to get rid of. They had to back in my history to find out why I had this heart attack, what was bothering me, and one thing that they found was my sister-in-law always ridiculed me, about my hair and about me wearing levi's and this sort of thing. And being rebellious I was going to be doing it regardless. Be damned I did, but I can remember her giving me

such a bad time about it, and that sticks in my mind, and that was one thing that I received counseling on when I had my heart attack. Was because it left a, a mark on me. See, they wanted me to be a little girl and I wasn't a little girl. I never wanted to be a little girl. I was always wanting, I always wanted to play with cars and trucks and out on the hillside digging in and playing in the dirt. I never wanted to play with dolls and stuff like that, so I guess, I guess I didn't know it, but I'm sure that was because I was different. And when we used to play house when we were kids, my cousins and I, I was always the daddy. Always the daddy. So, it goes back, you know to your childhood. I think it's just the way you are. I truly believe that. I tried being married because everybody else was getting married, all my friends, and I thought, well I had to get married, so I married and I was married about two years and it lasted just about that long. It wouldn't have lasted that long only he was in Korea part of the time, and he was wounded severely twice, and so it was kind of a bad scene. But while he was gone I met and fell in love with a woman and I tried very hard when he came home to make it work. But he was a womanizer and we just couldn't hack it, so, and I never, of course never wanted to try it again. That was not for me. Little wifey type was not what I wanted. Of course I had trouble with, I had an uncle in my family that was one of those old things, you know, holier than thou, and he was very quick to tell me that I was a sinner because I was divorced and I didn't stay with my husband and you know, blah, blah, blah. And all these things leave marks on you. You grow up and you have these things inside of you and they eat at you and you don't know that. And I didn't know it. I can remember I never liked my sister-in-law. I never liked her. And I thought she was mean to me from the day one. And always ridiculing me and picking on me about something, and when I had my heart attack and I had counseling on this, they went back to that and got that out of me. You know? It's kind of interesting what they do to find these things out, because I thought I was bad. You know? I wasn't like other people, I was bad. I was a sinner, I was bad.

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K: Well, tell me this. On the one hand you felt like you were bad, but on the other hand, like at work when your boss, when someone said she didn't want to work with you, it seemed like you were also very proud though and defiant, you were confident in a way, you said

C: Well I was, and the woman counselor who happened to be gay too, she said to me it's wonderful to meet someone who will stand behind their own convictions, because most people won't do that. And especially women. But I guess I have a bit of my father in me and he was a bit of a rebel and one that he wasn't going to live the way everybody wanted him to, and I think that I was sort of like him. I never did, I never could understand why if I was made that way why it was wrong, but I had a lot of trouble with church. See, I was raised a Methodist, and I went to the Methodist church

when I was a child, regularly. My family seen to it. But as I got older I found that every religion that, every church affiliation that I had gone to was contradictory. And their contradiction was the way they treated my people, the gay people. And my uncle was such a devout Methodist, and he was such an old hypocrite, and just tormented me to death with that, and I think it just drove me away. But I had a hard time finding a church because to me they were all contradictory. And I always used to say, if I'm God's child and if God loves everybody, then why am I put here to be criticized and hurt because of the way I am. And it was very difficult to find answers back in those days, but I did find answers with the Church of Religious Science. My aunt went to that church in California and she told us about it and it made a vast difference in my life. Because I found that we create our own problems, or they're created for us, and not because God done this, you know, and I found something in that church. But I never had a church till I came to Denver that I really was satisfied with, because I never could take my lover there. We could never take communion as a couple. I could never hold her hand. And to me it just wasn't right. And when I came to Denver and went to the MCC church I found that indeed God did love me. And I always felt that way but yet I couldn't find in the church what I needed to find, the love and the support. They were always distant. And when you go to the MCC church you feel such a love. That's not the only church though. The Science of Mind Church is very good and they're very good with our community. But and of course nowadays the Holy Unions and the Marriages and stuff, I think it's wonderful. And being a Christian woman I always felt that you know, these vows that I took with my lover were just as sincere and just as important as anybody else's, and truly meant to God. And I tried to live my life that way, but yet I couldn't find any support in it. I always felt that when you took a lover and you lived with that lover and claimed them as your love, then the Ten Commandments or Christian life applies to you the same as it does to the heterosexual, and because of that I had kind of a hard time because I could never be married in the church, you know, never could hold my lover's hand and take communion, all these things. So when I came to Denver in 1986 my whole life changed, because I found in Denver what I was looking for all my life. And that's why I don't think I'd ever move back to Colorado Springs, because it's still

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END OF SIDE ONE TAPE ONE**SIDE TWO**

000

C: . . . and I think it's the best thing that I ever done in my life, because, and I've had other people tell me, [C] for instance and some other people that have gone there, they said that it

absolutely is fantastic. You love the feeling of love and support that you get from those people. And I never really never knew too many gay men. I never was around them a lot. I always liked them, but I didn't you know, know very many of them and never was around them, but I think they're just wonderful people. They're so sweet natured and they're loving and very kind and I'm really enjoying Harmony. I think it's a wonderful thing. And I'm proud to be a part of it. I like that mixed chorus where there's men in it, and the stress that they put upon to be loving and sharing and caring with your opposite sex and I think that's great because, you know, there's still a lot of separation between people. And I don't there should be. I think we need to love one another and support one another all we can.

018

K: So, to go back to your earlier years. Do you remember when you first began to realize that you were gay?

C: Yes. I think the first time that I ever knew anything about that was with the neighbor girl. We used to experiment a little bit and find an interest in each other, and I don't think we ever done any seriously, but just kind of experimenting, you know. As kids will. And then there was another friend that was, a friend's, well she was a daughter of friends of my family, and her and I kinda experimented and kind of enjoyed each other's company and stuff. But my first lover was my cousin. And she lived in Oklahoma. And I used to go every summer and spend my summer vacations out there. And we were lovers, really, truly. And I still love her very much today. She's married and got a bunch of kids, but I still love her. We're very close. And then, but I think my earliest recollection of that was when oh, I was just a child. I must have been, well I couldn't have been in junior high. I was still in grade school. Cause it's when we loved over there and I think that, and like I said, I always liked men's sports and loved sports. That's what I lived for. And I always had a special rapport with men. I don't want to be with them lovingly, but as a group of people to be with and to understand I always felt that I kind of got along better with the men than I did the women. Now I'm speaking of heterosexual people. Because I like men's type sports. I'm a very, very devout fisher woman. I was raised in that and I always kind of followed my dad and my brother and fished and rock hunted and hiking and camping and all the stuff that they used to do, and that was my thing, that's what I loved. And of course, playing softball and bowling, so I don't meant to say that bowling is a more or less a men's sport, it isn't, but back in those days fishing was definitely a man's sport. And I lived it. And I don't know, I just remember, you know the things that I liked were men type things, you know. And I discovered this when I was fairly young. I was still in grade school. But I can remember all of my life everything pointed to, as I look back on it now, that I was gay. Because of the way that I wanted to love, you know. My mom used to have to practically whip me to make me put on a dress. I hated it. And I still hate it today (laugh). I

don't own a dress (laugh). If I had to wear a dress, oh Lord. I feel just as dressed up in a pair of nice slacks. I don't know, well, I just loved my brother and I still do. Him and I have always been very close. And whatever he done that's what I wanted to do. But I don't think that that has anything to do with it. I truly believe that they are going to find out, and I think they've already found out, that we have an extra chromosome or we're without one or something that makes us who we are. You know, they're experimenting with it. And I think one day that it'll be just, I hope and pray, that someday there'll be no separation, no difference. You're who you are and you're born that way and you were made that way by God, you're God's child, and just accept it that way. I think it will be. I don't think I'll see it. But you might. And you might not. Coming generations I'm sure will. You know.

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K: Do you remember the first time you heard the words Gay or Queer or anything of that sort?

C: No, I don't think so. I know that it's always upset me. I hate it. I had people comment, if you want to get under Cassie's skin just say something about Queer or Dike or something like that. To me that's just, it's just not right, to call somebody that. I'm a woman. I was born a woman and I'll die a woman. And I'm so proud of it. I would never want to be anything else. And why do we have to be tagged as Gay or Lesbian or a Queer or a Dike, why? We don't tag people who are heterosexual and call them some crazy name. I just don't like it. I never did like it. And I've had friends, you know, when I run around with all of them, there were some of them that you know, used that very freely. And they still laugh at me. They say, don't say that to Norma, if you don't want any trouble (laugh). I didn't like it then and I don't like it now (laugh).

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K: So when you were experimenting with, I think you said, a neighbor girl? How old were you then?

C: Well I wasn't in high, I wasn't in junior high school, I was still in grade school, so I probably was, I'm going to say probably 8 or 9 years old, somewhere around there.

K: How did you feel about it at the time? Do you remember what you thought about what was going on? Did you think this was normal or unusual or bad or?

C: Well, I think all kids experiment with this. I mean that's just something that they do. And I know the boys . . . experimented to the boys and the girls and the girls and the girls and the boys and the boys. And I don't know, I think, the only thing that I can remember is that I really thought so much of her and more of

her than I did of the other kids in the neighborhood. We were very close. She was a bit older than I was. I think she probably was 2 or 3 years older than I was. And she married and had a family, but this was just early childhood experimentation. But I think my first really, really true love that I remember was when I was about 15 and that was with my cousin. And I really loved her. And I still do. And she loves me. We're very close. And you just don't lose that special

K: Connection.

C: Connection there, even though she's been married and divorced and married again and got a passel of kids and now she's got grandkids, we still love one another.

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K: How did that make you feel that, you know, that you had been lovers and then she got married? Were you assuming that she was going to be gay also?

C: No. I don't think I did, because even when we were lovers, she used to go, we both used to go with guys. I was engaged to somebody and so was she. But I think at that age people don't really know what they want. You know. We didn't anyway, we were, we had no idea what we wanted out of life. We just were happy go lucky and experimenting and, but ah, I know that I just loved her and adored her and I still do. And it's funny because anytime that anything happens bad like a death in her family or anything, she always calls on me, cause she says, you'll always be there in my heart. So, it's sweet. But I just hated to see her get in the mess that she's been in. She was married to one old guy that they didn't get along at all, and so she married again. She married an alcoholic and one that's abusive to her and beats the tar out of her, and sometimes I had a hard time handling that. I don't like it, you know, it bothers me. But there's a lot of years gone by between the two of us since that, you know. I don't know how things would be. I've often told her, leave him and come be with me. And I think she's thought about it a few times, but of course she's so married and kids and grandkids and everything, you know, that don't think that it would ever amount to anything. I don't know whether she has any feeling for anything like that anymore or not. You know. Whether she, I don't know, I don't know what she done with her feelings for that. I think she's probably like a lot of other married women. Just suppresses it. She wants to be with a woman but what do you do? You know.

K: Have you ever spoken with her about, about the time when you were lovers? Recently, you know, in later years?

C: Oh yeah. She knows my life style. We talk about it. We write about it. She's met some of my lovers, and she never says anything. Just never anything said about it, but she just, you know, I just feel a special love connection there with her when

we're together. Yeah. Don't think, I'm sure it doesn't make any difference to her, you know, uhm, I have a feeling that people make their own problems to a certain degree and I think that our community is very guilty of this. I think because we've been put upon and we've been denounced and pushed back and told that's it's wrong and everything for us to love the way we do and what have you, I think we rebelled but it seems as though the pendulum always has to swing too far before it comes back and hits a happy medium. And I think that we're guilty, I don't mean you and I, I mean the gay and lesbian community. I think they are guilty of expressing too much and saying too much about it. I think if they would just leave it alone and not get out here and have all these things that they do and I think we create a lot of our own problems is what I'm saying. But yet I don't know how you keep from doing that because if we didn't do that we wouldn't have any rights.

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K: Yeah, it's a dilemma.

C: But I think that people as a rule accept you the way you are if you don't push them with it. I mean, like me, I've worked with so many different people and all my life worked and I have had very little trouble with people that I work with. Because well, mercy, when you work with that many people, and actually I never really had much problem with it. But I never created any problem. I know a lady right now that's having problems with her job and she just got out of one job where they harassed her, and were nasty and oh, said all kinds of terrible things to her and what have you and she got so sick of it that she finally quit. And she went to work at this other place and by gosh, now already they've got her on the carpet. She put her hand on somebody, she touched their arm or put her hand on their shoulder or something, and she was called on the carpet. And, but with her I'm not sure that she doesn't ask for her problems. You know. Maybe she's too quick to say, look who I am. See I don't live my life that way. I live my life like [Cassie], that's who I am. And I don't live it any other way. I won't. If you love me and like me and want to be my friend you take me for who I am. And I don't bother anybody with my sexual preference. If I'm not in a crowd of people you don't find that I'm any different than I am when I'm with you or anybody else. I'm also very quick to be the other way too. I believe that people create a lot of their own problems by having too much to say and exploiting their sexual preferences. In other words, I don't see any reason for me to go out and say, well look at me, look at me, look at me, I'm gay, you know. This is my lover and I'm gay. I don't do that. I find no necessity for it. I don't ask other people who they are or what they're doing in their bedroom and I don't see why I should be treated any differently. And I truly believe that we create a lot of our own problems by the way we act. I've always thought so, but like I said if we didn't do this I don't think we'd have any rights. So it's kind of a Catch 22. I'd much prefer that people would just leave me alone and let me live my life and love me for me, accept me for me like I do them.

And let it go. I really believe that we create a lot of our problems in our own mind and in our how we do, how we act, and growing up in the thirties, forties and fifties, believe me, you didn't say and do, but I'm glad that we have the freedom to do things that we do now. And I think that if we hadn't have fought this battle and if a lot of people hadn't have gotten into trouble and declared and marched and yelled and fought, we never would be as far as we are. But yet, we do create a problem with it. See what I'm saying? I wish it wasn't necessary but it is, I guess. I mean, to me I'd like to just be, well hi, Katie, how are you today, Sweetie? You know, you know I love you. I know you love me, and I know that you respect me and I respect you. And that's all that matters. Because that's the way I am. I love, I've heard people say, I've heard people say even that they didn't like somebody because they wasn't gay. Now I don't understand that, but on the other hand I don't understand people who do not like me or you because we are gay. See I don't think that makes any difference. It shouldn't.

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K: Shouldn't have anything to do with it. No.

C: I wish I wasn't so old. Because I'd like to see what happens in the future generations with it. Maybe I'll come back (laugh), you know I think it'd be fun to find out

K: To find out what life is in the future. Yeah, that's for sure. It will be interesting.

C: Yeah sure will.

K: To see. So, let's see, how about, you mentioned that there was a bar, the Hide and Seek, in Colorado Springs. Do you know what year that bar was first started or how far back that went? Was that in the sixties or back in the fifties?

C: Well, I would say that it probably was in operation probably in the mid-fifties or late fifties, because in the early sixties it was there and had been for quite a while as far as I know.

K: How did you know about it?

C: Through other people. Through the gals I was running around with. And I don't know how they knew. Somebody that they knew probably. Through the grapevine.

K: Had you ever been there or did you?

C: Just went, I think we went once or twice, and it was really kind of a dive. And we were scared to death to go there anyway. Well, we thought we'd go to the old Three Sisters. (laugh) Way back in the fifties, we went to the Sisters. As far as I can think, the fifties, maybe sixties, I don't know.

K: Well, they just celebrated their 19th anniversary. So, that means they, oh that's wrong, I did my math wrong.

C: Sixty something.

K: Yeah, 1962 is when they opened.

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C: It seems like we went there before there, but I guess not. And that was the only one in Denver that I knew of. Somebody asked me if there wasn't another one, a something Cherry Creek or.

K: The Cherry Creek.

C: But I don't remember that.

K: Have you ever heard of the Melody Club?

C: No.

K: No? Yeah.

C: No, the Sisters was the only one I knew of. It was the same gals that owned it then that own it now.

K: Right, right.

C: Yeah.

K: So how about now, you and your group kind of stuck together. You didn't go to the bars and stuff. But did you know of other groups that did do those kinds of things? Did you know other lesbians or you know, gay people that were involved, that you didn't socialize with as much?

C: Not really, not back in that time. Like I said, we weren't, we didn't go out with people like that. I think that outside of our own group of people, that I knew more people from Denver, because some of the kids that we ran around with knew people that lived up here and we'd get together with them and stuff. In fact, a couple of the gals that we ran around with were from Denver and we got acquainted with a lot of other people in Denver through them. One of them is a little lady that's dead.

K: She just died a year or so back?

C: No, she's probably someone else.

K: OK.

C: Had cancer. But I don't know, it seems as though that I, of course my memory's kind of short on a lot of things, too, I don't

remember a lot of things, because of that heart attack. But some things I do remember and as far as I'm concerned we just hung in our own group. Unless somebody brought somebody in, you know, and something, I guess we were just busy bowling and playing ball and being together, you know, and that's all I

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K: Now, one thing I'm wondering about is you kind of, you knew each other from work, and from bowling and stuff, but how is it that you kind of ended up being a group that really just stuck together? That knew this about each other? Were there straight women that were involved in your group?

C: No.

K: Or not? Do you know how that happened, that you kind of formed your own little circle there?

C: Well, I can go back to the first person that, that my lover and I knew, ah, we've known that lady almost as long as we've known each other. Which is close to 40 years. And we always tease her about being our oldest friend. And we worked with her. And played ball. I think playing ball and bowling was the answer. Because people who, who were gay, were more interested in playing ball and bowling and that sort of thing than what other people were at that time. Now I think that it's changed a lot, I think you know that there's as many heterosexuals that bowl and play ball as there, as there is gay women.

K: Right.

C: But back then it wasn't so. And ahm, we I think that's just how we got together, was through our sports.

K: And why do you think that was so? That there was this interest at that time?

C: Well, I don't think that, I think it was just a different life than what it is now. I think it was just a different era that we lived in. Women didn't get out and play sports like they did, like they do now. We used to go bowling, my family and I, but that was in the sixties, I'm sure, and seventies that we used to go bowling, but as a child and as a young woman I just think that as far as I can remember that a whole lot of the people that were involved, I don't mean everybody now, but a lot of the women involved with sports--bowling and softball--were gay. And we bowled. We bowled and played softball in the city league and we got acquainted with a lot of people from Denver and other parts of Colorado through playing ball against them.

K: Oh, I see.

C: Yeah. And I think that's how we, you know, somebody knows somebody and somebody knows somebody else, and it's just the way it starts.

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K: When did you start playing ball?

C: Probably 1953, my lover and I met each other at work in 1953. Is that right? I was 21 and she was 19. '53, and I was born in 1931.

K: Yeah, so about 1952 or 3. Who taught you to play ball?

C: I don't know. I guess I always knew how to play, I don't know (laugh).

K: You were a natural.

C: (laugh) I don't know.

K: Did you play with your brother?

C: I'm sure I did.

K: You probably learned it from him.

C: And I lived in a neighborhood where there was a lot of kids, Lord there was bookoo kids in that neighborhood, and about half of them were boys and or, more than half, and I think all of us gals just used to play ball.

K: Just played, I see.

C: I just think that that's what we did. I can't ever remember doing any different. Like I said, I never played with dolls and stuff like that. I was always too busy with sports and stuff like that to do anything.

K: Who organized your team?

C: I think most of our sponsors and stuff were people we worked for.

K: I see, but do you remember who decided like to even get together and get sponsors and stuff like that?

C: No.

K: You know, organize it all?

C: I don't. Ahm, no, I don't. I know that we had a ball team, that there was a softball team where we worked at old Universal

Electric when I met my first lover there. And that's where we all started playing ball together.

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K: I see.

C: Several of us and then it just kind of snowballed you know, through the years.

K: That must have been a lot of fun.

C: Yeah, it was. And we used to (laugh), we used to bowl. We'd bowl in them tournaments you know, and boy, we'd come to Denver, I mean, we really raised hell (laugh). We got kicked out.

K: What did you get kicked out for?

C: For making too much noise (laugh). We went to this one place one time and got a motel. And two or three people came and knocked on the door and told us to shut up, and of course, we probably were all pie-eyed (laugh). And we got kicked out. But it was fun times. Yeah. I can remember that (chuckle).

K: Were you usually on the winning team?

C: No, not always. Done pretty good with the bowling, better in bowling than softball. Ahm, I never was a real good bowler. I never was a real strong bowler because of my back. I had a lot of back problems then and it affected my bowling. But we had some gals on our teams that were excellent bowlers. They just bowled all over everywhere, and they were very good. But, ahm, I don't know, I can't, I just, I can't remember Katie, really. It was just something we always done.

K: You all fell into doing.

C: Yeah.

K: Just that way, let's see.

C: I have something that I wanted to tell you here too, because I think it's so different. And I've had people comment on this all of my life. And it's only been since I've been in Denver that I have found the answer. All my life I've had people tell me, oh I don't say all of my life, but my more or less adult life, that, that I was an unusual person because I'm a person that, that just loves people. And I really do. And I find them so interesting. And I really love, I very rarely ever meet anybody that I don't like.

K: I'm the same way.

C: And I, I ah, I like to show my love and affection for people, and I'm very loving natured even with, with anybody. And I've had people say, you know, that the group of people that I ran around with were such nice, loving people. And I think we were. We didn't get into a lot of trouble and things, you know, and ahm, but I just always shied away from people who tried to create problems because I never liked that sort of thing. I always, I said I'm a lover not a fighter. Make love, not war. Well, I kind of forgot what I wanted to say to you about that now, but we'll go ahead and talk and maybe I can think of it a little bit later.

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K: Yeah. You started out by saying that people always said you were an unusual person.

C: Yeah. Ahm, I don't know, I've lost my train of thought.

K: Maybe it'll be better to come back to it.

C: Yeah.

K: OK. You know, I'd love to hear about the different women that were in your group. The 16. And you can talk about it without using their names if you want.

C: Yeah, well, we're going to have to be careful about that anyway, because my ex-lover is still in business in Colorado Springs and she is a teacher of driving, and if parents got a hold of that, you know what that would do. So we have to be very careful about using my name or anybody else's. You can just use the name Cassie, because nobody knows me by that.

K: Right. Well last, we talked about that last time. And even your tapes I've just labeled Cassie. So, and when I go through and listen to them, if there are any times that you said your full name I'll erase that, and anytime that you mention, I don't think you've ever mentioned your lover's name, but if you did, I can erase that.

C: Well, we'll just say don't use names because I wouldn't want to have anybody get into a problem because of it. But what our oldest friend that we had was a lady that lives in Colorado Springs, she still lives there, and her name is [X] also, so she was called [X] and I was [Y]. But people in Colorado Springs always called me [Y]. They never called me Cassie. They don't know me by that name. That's only been since I left Colorado Springs.

K: Oh, that's interesting.

C: And that was put on me by one of my ex-lovers. She didn't like the name [Y] cause she knew some man that was named that. She never would call me that. So she called me Cassie, and Cassie's just stuck since then. But well, let's say, ahm, that first lady

and we have been friends all these years. And seen her through a lot of problems, lovers gone, lovers here and lovers gone, you know, and she's a retiree. I think she may be retired now, from Hewlett Packard Company. And it was kind of interesting because she held one of the first jobs at Hewlett Packard. It was a man's job, per se, and she was one of the first women to ever do that job. And so I think that's one reason why she stayed there as long as she did, was simply because of her job, and she knew the job. She still lives in Colorado Springs, and ah, let's see, one of the ones that we knew and we still are good friends with lovers of these people and their ex-lovers, you know, they aren't lovers anymore, but they're still around. And one of the gals that I run around with now I'm very close to, I've known over 30 years, just lives over here not too far from me and we're together quite a lot. And she's not in good health. She has a very bad problem with her hip and leg and she's had a lot of surgeries and stuff so we kind of pal around together and help each other. And her ex's are here and there. She's, I was a long-term relationships, and most people aren't, you know, they've had many lovers to my two. But a lot of those people live Fort Collins and Loveland, and up that way, and I think that a lot of the way that we got acquainted was just people brought people, you know, and we got acquainted with them like that.

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K: Right.

C: And they're still around and like I said, most all of us are still living. Some of us are with lovers and some of us aren't. You know.

K: It's wonderful that you all keep in touch.

C: Yeah. We do.

K: That kind of thing. Do you think any of them might be willing to be interviewed? Given of course, that the interviews can be completely confidential.

C: I think so. I spoke to Lou about it. She, I don't think that she would care at all. And she'd certainly be a person that you would be interested in talking to. She's had a lot of experience with a lot of things that I haven't had, because I was involved in relationships and you know, I wasn't out and around like she was. And she's lived all around. She's from Canon City and she's lived in Colorado Springs, she's lived in Denver, she's lived in Fort Collins, and she's lived in Loveland and so she'd be a good one for you talk to.

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K: Great, great. And is she the friend that goes way, way back, the very first one?

C: No. No, that one still lives in Colorado Springs.

K: Do you think she might be willing to be interviewed?

C: I don't know. I have no idea.

K: Why don't you tell her about my project the next time you talk to her?

C: OK.

K: And ask her.

C: I don't see her or talk to her very often.

K: Oh, you don't.

C: No. I was trying to think of somebody else that you could get, around here. Let me think on it and I'll get back to you with that.

K: Yeah. You think on it and either, you know, if you think they'd be comfortable, I could call and just say that you gave me their name. But if you think it would be better.

C: Well, I think [Z], I think she'd have an interview with you.

K: [Z] would be fine. OK, good, good.

C: And I'm sure that she would. There wouldn't be any reason why she wouldn't.

K: Do you know her phone number?

C: Mmm-hmm.

K: Great.

C: [redacted].

K: Great, good. OK, let's see. How about in terms of the group of women that you hung out with, in terms of race relations in general, in Colorado Springs when you were growing up, were all the women that you were friends with white? Were there any black women or let's say Mexican-American women or anything like that?

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C: No, I think most of, I think we were all just white. I had some very good school friends that were black people. We lived in a black neighborhood. That's where I learned to love the Negro Spiritual music, cause we lived just a half a block from the Negro

church, and on Sunday morning, they really got that church rolling (laugh). I'd go out and stand out there and listen to them because they really, their music is beautiful. By the way, that's something that we're going to be doing with Harmony too, is we've got a, and I can't think of the name of that church. It's a

K: Schroeder AME church?

C: Yeah. They came and they sang at a service that we had, the CAP? We done a memorial service, and they sang at that same service. And we had so much fun, and so their director and our director's getting things together so that we can do a program together.

K: That's wonderful!

C: Yeah.

K: That's just great.

C: Yeah it'll be fun. I can only think of one person probably that is got some Mexican or Spanish blood and I guess (laugh), I guess the reason I'm thinking of that is because I made a boo-boo. The Mexican people that I grew up with in Colorado Springs were tough people. And I really never associated with them much, because they were trouble makers, they were problems. Now, never had any problem with Negroes. In fact one of the best friends I ever had, a man friend, was a Negro man, and I loved him with all my heart. I've lost all track of him now. But we went all through school together and he was a wonderful person. But the people that I knew that were Mexican people, I just, they were bad news. And I'm not trying to be prejudiced or say, because there's all kinds of people in every race, but unfortunately those that I knew in Colorado Springs were not the type of people that you wanted to be involved with. But anyway, I said something to someone about, I didn't care for those people, and my lover said, well, you know, that our friend [A] is part Mexican. And I said, oh, no. Shut my mouth, you know. And I wasn't trying to be nasty about it. I just was making a statement, but I didn't know, you know that she was, but anyway, it was funny. I'm generally very careful about that, but I don't know, I don't think so.

695

K: And this friend [A], is she someone that might be willing to be interviewed? Is she an older lesbian?

C: She is, but she's so scared or so closed because of her job, that I don't know whether she'd do it or not. She's probably too scared. Because I was telling her that I was doing it and she was cautioning me to be careful because of her, but I think start with Lou.

K: OK, I'll start with [Z].

C: And I will ask some other people. I have a little friend, a little lady friend, and she's 10 years older than I am, that lives in Lafayette. She might do that for you, and it would be interesting to hear her because she was married and she was in a family that she said, oh if her mother knew, she said, she would have disowned her. She was an adopted child. And she might do it, I don't know that she would, but it wouldn't hurt to ask.

K: Well whenever you tell people about it, you know.

726

END OF SIDE TWO, CASSIE 6/9/92 INTERVIEW

SIDE THREE, CASSIE 6/9/92 INTERVIEW

000

K: Even just these tapes that I use, I don't even put your name on it. I just put Cassie on it.

C: Well, it wouldn't make any difference to me. Cause I'm not hiding from anything and I really don't care. But then I have to

K: No. But you explained to me that you were concerned for your friends and so, you know

C: I have to be.

K: Right. So even just in, you know, when I, in the notes I take, I don't even put your full name on it for that reason. Because you know, if that's what you feel is the right thing for you.

005

C: I have a feeling that we could probably get some people too about this interview, after they see maybe what it is and talk with you about it and stuff, from Harmony.

K: That would be great.

C: Because there's a lot of people there that might truly be interested you know. I don't, you know, I don't know that they are but I imagine they would.

K: Well, is there a way that I might be able to let them know about the project?

C: I think you might be able to print up a flyer or something like that and put, I'll put them out there.

K: OK, I'll send you some of my flyers.

C: Yeah.

K: Great.

C: I'll certainly be glad to take them down there for you. And I'll tell some of the people that you know, I've done this and it will be confidential and

K: Right. That's always a real dilemma for me because, you know, I know myself that it would be hard if someone just walked up to me out of the blue and I didn't know them and I didn't know who their friends were and I didn't know what kind of person they were. I wouldn't be ready to just to go and talk about my life.

C: Well, why I said Harmony and why I mentioned some of the other people, because these people are very supportive of the community.

K: Right.

C: And they might just be interested in doing something like that. The gals that I knew back when are so scattered that I don't, we very rarely see each other. We do, occasionally, and enjoy being together, you know, but I just kind of am not even into their life anymore because we've all, they don't live here, you know, live all around and we just kind of have lost contact, but yet we still get together once in a while. It's fun.

K: Well, I'll give you some of my flyers so you can just pass them along and I'm willing to travel, I'm going to be going up to Yuma sometime in the next couple of weeks.

030

C: Are you?

K: Yeah. And I've been down to Colorado Springs for an interview. Stuff like that.

C: Well, I'll ask people here, I know a lot of people in Denver and I'll pass out some of your flyers and stuff and they just might be able to do it. I'd like, I have some that I'd like for you to interview, simply because I think they'd be very interesting.

K: Yeah, and it's important that these stories are preserved you know? It's important that people know what life was like and you know.

C: Yeah, I've got this one little couple and I knew the one for so long, you know, and she was, she's been one of my best friends ever since I've lived in Denver and I lived at her house, not as her lover, but we just shared a home, and I was very ill at that time. It was right after I had my heart attack. And oh, I used to

worry about her because she used to be out and going, going, going, and drinking and she ran around a lot with the gay guys which is nothing against that. But I just worried about her and she never settled. She'd have a lot of girlfriends and stuff but she never settled with any of them. And she met this lovely lady and they got together and they are so happy and it's made such a difference in her life. And I didn't know [B] before, but she said it's made a difference in her life too. And she was married for ten years. She has a 14-year-old son. And her husband and her son live here in Denver. And she won my heart, because she made a statement that you don't offer hear anybody make, but if they do they fall down on it. That my lover comes first. I love my child and I support my child, but if I have to make a choice it will be my lover. And she proved that, because she said I don't want to lose my child. That's not what I want to do. I love him but he will be old enough to be out on his own very soon. He lives with his father. And she says, I am going to do what I have to do. And she proved it. But you just don't find many people that do that. But I'd like for you to interview them. They're just such sweeties.

K: That'd be great. Well I'll send you some flyers. What is your zip code?

C: Mine here? [redacted].

K: OK, cause I know I have your address, but

C: And then I know a woman that would be so interesting for you to talk to. She has 4 children and one of them is a gay man and he has AIDS and he's not doing well at all.

065

K: I think I may know who you're talking about. Bernie?

C: No.

K: No.

C: No. And she just might do that. She's got a very interesting story.

K: I'd be very interested to hear it.

C: I'll just have to ask these people, you give me some of your flyers and of course, when they see, you know, what we've done, why they might be more you know responsive.

K: More responsive.

C: Yeah.

K: Would you be willing to have your story published in Lesbians in Colorado newspaper?

C: Yeah, but you know, like I said, just don't use names.

K: No, no names.

C: I think it'd be great to have it in there, but one thing that I, there's one thing I wanted to talk to you about. About the lesbian and gay paper. This Lesbian and Gay Paper goes to so many people, many people are reading it, and I'm so concerned that people realize that we are good people and that we are just people, and that we're loving and we are created the same as they are. I think this is so important and I don't like it when I see printed, "that queer," "dike," "butch," "faggot," all of these things. I really think it is bad for our image. I don't think it should be, that's one thing I don't like about that paper, is because they are so

K: They use those words.

C: Yeah. And I don't like it. And I've heard other people comment about it. I wanted to bring it up to you. Maybe people don't care, but I do know that some people do.

K: Yes. And I think in some ways it may be a difference of generations, because I think that women your age have experienced those words in a very painful way. That those words meant terrible things.

C: Yes it did.

093

K: And I think what's happening now with some of the younger generation is feeling like those words are weapons, and if we can take them back and use them ourselves and give them a new and positive meaning, then they can't be used as weapons against us. I think that's why they use them.

C: That might be.

K: And I'm not sure if it's right. I'm not sure if it's a good thing to do. And I know it's very upsetting particularly to people who you know, to older people who experienced those words in a terrible way, that they'd never want

C: Well, I think that we're going through a real crucial period right now. And one of them is, this terrible thing with McCartney and all of this blah, blah, blah stuff, you know, that's so, and we're going to have to vote to get our rights on that new Amendment 2. And it's so important. And I just think that we don't want to do anything to spoil our image. And I think that if we use words about ourselves that would be offensive coming from someone else, then I'm not sure because I'm not real rehearsed on this. But if it makes you angry to hear somebody else say it about you, then

you should not use it. You shouldn't give that fuel to the fire. And I just don't like it, it's really turned me off, and I've heard other people say that they didn't like it. And they're very proud that we have a paper and there's a lot of good stuff in there. But it may be something that you want to look into, because, you know, it doesn't take much to, one apple can spoil the whole barrel you know.

K: Right. I think that's especially true for me, because in my project I think a real dilemma has been for me to use words that women will feel comfortable with, the women I want to interview. And I think I have made some mistakes sometimes, because I haven't always been sure what words other women are going to be comfortable with, you know. Some women are much more comfortable with the word Gay even than the word Lesbian, they don't like the word Lesbian. And it's a very tricky thing, you know, words are real important.

C: Yeah. Well, I don't, I find it completely unnecessary to have to be labeled anything. I mean, we don't go around and say are you a heterosexual? We don't even ask. Well, then they sit and ask about us.

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K: Exactly.

C: They should accept us that we are a human being. And that's it. This is what I'm saying, that I think we do a lot of harm to ourselves by some of the things that we write, particularly where other people pick it up and read it. I think that that Out Front Newspaper is absolutely awful. And I think that they've done this, I don't think that women are as bad as men about their, what do you want to say? What word am I trying to find? Well, you call a woman, back in the days when I grew up, you'd say, well they were a loose woman or a floozy or a street woman or something like that, with some of the comments and some of these things are written in that Out Front paper by men is absolutely terrible! I think it's a disgrace to our community. And I know a lot of people that won't even read it, because it's just nothing but pornographic, next to it.

K: Yeah. Yeah. Well, I appreciate what you know, what you're saying and I, and I think it's very good advice. I'll take it as good advice.

C: Well, I just think that we have to be very careful. We're trying to make an impression on people that we are human beings. And that we need to be treated equally right. We need equal rights. We need to be treated as people, not some old thing that's crawling around on the ground, some old awful thing. And if we want to have a good image then we have to be able to live up to that and put it out. And I just, maybe if the men want it that way, that's fine. Let them have it. But there's a few articles

that I've read in there that were very interesting articles, from women, but I know there's a lot of it that doesn't get read because people won't read that paper. My friends won't. Because they don't want to even, it's too crazy.

K: Don't want to have to see all that, yeah. Quest is a lot better.

C: Yeah, it really is. Yes.

K: Quest is very different in that way.

C: But I think it's a shame that, you know, because we don't have that much literature. I think you know that we, it's a shame that we have to have something out on the streets like that that lowers our image and I really truly believe, now I could be wrong, but I think it lowers our image, I really do. And we don't need that. We have to be very careful right now. We need all the good image that we could possibly get. And I guess this is one reason why I kind of shied away from gay men, because I don't know that many and I, all the experience I've had is what I've read in the paper, and you see all of this garbage that comes out, these ads, and the things that's going on at Charlie's and some of these things you know, and the pictures in there are very graphic. And I just, mercy! Are they like that? But you know, they're not. I expect some of them are, but those guys down at Harmony, they're such nice young men. They're nice people. They're loving and caring and I never hear nasty things out of them. They're just nice people. But if you read that Out Front paper it certainly doesn't give you that impression. I mean you think, oh my God, what kind of a community is this? And I think it's a false image. And I'm just telling you what I think because it's important to me. I don't want to be classed as one of those. Like I said, I'm a gay, a Lesbian woman, I'm proud of it, I want to be able to be proud of it, I don't want to have to have people say, Oh, oh, that's gross, that's terrible, to be affiliated with that. I find that people's images of you through your actions and through your thoughts that you present to them and what's inside of you is very important. It's more important than any of us want to realize. And you're a young lady that's out and about and into this and you might really want to tell a few people to clean up their act. I think that's why we get ourselves in trouble. I really do. I think that we have presented this and whatever you present you're going to live with until you change it.

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K: And it's hard to change. Once we've got an image in their minds, it's real

C: I read an article in the Out Front about something that went on, I believe, in Washington or somewhere, and the language in that was so awful. It was a good article, but I know for a fact that a lot of people would just put it down, they wouldn't even

have read it. Cause, the first line turned you off completely. So I think we might have to think about that. And I really like the new lesbian paper, I think it's great, but I think you know, there's an awful lot of good people in our community, they're good people. And I think that they would like to see the community be a good community that we can be proud of. And basically, I think we are. But I think that we have to be careful. Well, anybody, you know the standard joke has always been about the whores on Colfax. I mean, that's just a standard thing. It's been there all the years that I have been around, and the reason that it's got that reputation whether it is or isn't, now, (laugh), it's got the reputation and it'll always be, unless somebody changes it.

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K: That's right.

C: You know.

K: Well, I'm glad you like the new paper.

C: I do.

K: Yeah, I know the one too.

C: And your articles that you had in there that I have read, the one about Bernie?

K: Mmm-hmm.

C: See that rang a bell when you said that. I thought it was great.

K: Yeah, isn't it wonderful? There's going to be another one about her in the issue that comes out this month.

C: Is that right?

K: Yes. It's going to come out, oh, just in 5 days. So you can read a, it's quite a story, she's a very, she's a wonderful woman.

C: Yeah. There's a lot of great people in our community that we could learn a lot from. I guess the lady that died here a while back,

K: Rosie?

C: Rosie.

K: Rosie. Yeah. I didn't get a chance to meet her, but

C: I met her at SOL, but I don't even remember her. But everybody said that she was such a great person, just a great person. And that would be nice to be remembered that way, you know? I hope

when it becomes my time to go that people will remember me for my good things.

K: I'll bet they will.

C: I hope so. But I think one thing that they've been doing and we get this little paper, you know, the Harmony Paper. And I think it's well-done. I think the people who do it, McKenzie and oh, what's her name, I can't say, Gigi. They put that out, and it's so well done, it's so nice. But they take one person every so often in the chorus and they tell about them, you know, something nice about them. And about their families and their lovers and where they, you know, just different things, and I think it's real nice. Because what we want to be in Harmony is a family. That's what we strive to do. And I tell you what, if you want to go to something nice, go to a memorial service that we sing at. One of our members died with AIDS, David Dauer, and we went, we sang at that, and that was the nicest service I've ever been to. You know how most generally funerals are sad and you know, this was a celebration of life. And it was wonderful. It was just great. The Freedom Band was there and we were there and they, and what they done that I thought was so fantastic for one thing is anybody that knew him, knew him personally, that wanted to, got up and talked about the relationship with him. And it was really nice, and his folks was there. They came from Missouri, especially for the thing and then afterwards they had a nice reception and a potluck dinner. It was really nice, you know? Something to think about you know? And we all had balloons and we went outside and then the daddy of that young man said something about, ahm, something about clinging, something to the effect that he's not in pain anymore and that he's happy and out of pain and everything. Said something and I can't remember what the words were now. But anyway when he said that we all turned those balloons and they were just gorgeous, and we watched them, you know, when they floated away. Really gave me a good feeling. If you ever have a chance to go to one of those services, go. They're very inspirational.

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K: Right, yeah.

C: Well, just watch for one from the CAP. Cause we do those every so often.

K: Every so often, right. And I'd be real interested in going to the concert that you have with the Schroeder AME Church.

C: Yes, I'll let you know. Sometime if you'd like and you have an evening that you can spare, come and go as my guest to Harmony. We have guests that come down all the time and you get to set in on the rehearsal.

K: On the rehearsals. Oh that would be fun.

C: And you get to see how the thing is run and it's just nice, you know. And you get to meet a lot of nice people.

K: What nights do you meet?

C: Tuesday.

K: Tuesday, oh. Do you meet any other nights, only Tuesday?

C: Just Tuesday.

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K: What time?

C: From 7 to 9:30.

K: Oh,

C: Why, what's on Tuesday?

K: Tuesday is when I have my Lavender University meetings. But there's some, you know, every once in a while we don't have one when we don't have any work to do when we've finished a session, or something, so what I'll have to do is one of those Tuesdays, give you a call.

C: Yeah, let me know.

K: That'd be nice. I'd enjoy that.

C: But I think that you would do well to attend these concerts and the services and stuff that they have for the community, because it gives you such a sense of belonging, and it's to me it's a different type thing. I don't know, I've been in Denver and I go dancing a lot and everything, you know, and I meet a lot of people, and I don't say that they're not nice people. That's not what I'm saying. But when you go to Harmony it's a different atmosphere. They want you to feel like family and it's such a loving feeling in those meetings. [C] says I've never felt love and the support that I feel when I come out of one of those rehearsals.

K: That's great, that's wonderful.

C: So you know, it might be something that you really want to attend sometime just to see what it's like. It'd help you in your work.

K: Yeah, I'd like to, that'd be real nice. Next time I have a free Tuesday, a Tuesday when we don't have a meeting, and I will probably shortly after Pride Fest. Let's see, after Pride Fest is

our Lavender University registration, but about 2 weeks later, maybe in mid-July, that'd be nice, I'd enjoy it.

C: Yeah, it'd be a good time.

K: Good. OK, do you still feel up to answering questions or do you think you want to wind down for the evening?

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C: No, I'm fine.

K: You're fine? OK. How about, I'm interested in the fact that you and your first lover had a house together. Was that very unusual in those days for two women to share?

C: Yes, it was.

K: So how did that happen?

C: We got an FHA loan and we were one of the first women that had ever had an FHA loan in both of our names. Because they didn't do that. But because we both had good jobs and we'd been on our job for a long time, and everything, why we did qualify for an FHA. And I think that there's a lot of pro and con on that. I think there's a, I want to say to you that we need to live our lives just like anybody else does. And when you take a mate, it doesn't make any difference whether you're a man and a woman or a man and man or a woman and a woman, you take these obligations on and they're yours. And it don't make any difference what lifestyle you live. I want to say that because that's the way I feel about it, but yet it seems as though, and I don't, now I'm speaking only for our society, because that's what I know. It may be the very same and I think it is a lot the same with heterosexual. But you get involved in these things like buying a house together and buying automobiles and stuff. And so many of the times that people separate and one gets left holding the sack. And it's a very hard, hurtful thing. I think that can happen with anybody, but I don't know that, I'm just talking from my experience. I think that we have to be careful but I don't know how you can be careful, because I don't think you ever know anybody until you live with them. And the obligations and stuff that you get sometimes can be horrendous to get out of. But I think you, you know, because there's so much hurt feelings and so much anger and everything, and well, you know, you hear it all the time. Boy did I get cleaned. I've been on the receiving end of that, I know. But I think that we still have to be able to trust the one that we get involved with and just know them as well as you can and trust that it'll all be OK. Because I think we have a right to these things. Why would we not? Why is it different for us to separate and lose a home than it would be for anybody else? It isn't. But while I'm speaking of that, the two ladies that fought for the right to insurance and stuff when one of them was ill?

K: Right.

C: Have you heard anything about that recently?

K: Yeah it was recently, the decision was reversed.

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C: That's what they were doing last night down there. We all signed a petition, everybody that was in that room signed it.

K: Wow, that's great.

C: We were a long time getting out of there because they had two petitions to sign and they pleaded with us, they said please everybody take time to sign this, cause it's so important. Now how did they do that?

K: I don't know the ins and outs of, you know, it seemed like it was all settled, and then all of a sudden it was changed.

C: Well, I thought it was too and this is what scares me to death. Boy this thing with McCartney and all of them and that, whatever it is, that Family Rights, Family something? We've got to put that down, we just have to, or we're all going to be in sad shape.

K: Were you and your partner nervous about trying to get a loan together as two women? Were you concerned about what people might think?

C: No, I don't think we were concerned with that, but we just didn't think that we had a chance because it was something that just wasn't done.

K: But you didn't think people would wonder about you?

C: I think we probably did but we didn't really care that much. People always think what they want to think. And I think what we always tried to do was to just to live our life so that nobody could really honestly criticize us.

K: It seems like it was very brave of you to do that.

C: Don't give them anything, any power. And I think this is what we always tried to do. I've had people tell me that. [C] for one, she always says it's so nice to meet somebody that believes what they believe and stands behind it. And I always try to do that because to me it's important. I don't want to point a finger at myself and say, look at me. I don't want to put the finger on anybody else. All I want is to be treated equal and but I think that I have to keep myself in that realm of equality in order to be treated that way. And this is what I think is so important that people miss. You can't go around, my dad had a saying, if

you live with a dentist's ghost long enough you're going to smell like one. And I think that it's so important for each and every one of us to remember that. And be proud of who we are. Be proud that we're gay or a lesbian. We were created that way. God made us that way. And there's nothing wrong with that, even though people want to tell you that it is wrong, it isn't. You're God's child the same as anybody else. And hold your head up high and say, I'm who I am. And no matter who wants to beat you down, or who wants to hurt you, stand proud, stand tall, and never let them ever beat you down. See I won't do that. I absolutely will not. I have pride in who I am and I live that and I think this is what people see in me that's different. But I just stand behind what I believe in and they can either take me or leave me. You know. And I don't make an issue out of it. Recently, I said to my nephew, I have something to ask you but I have to tell you something first. I want to ask you to come to one of our concerts. But I said, I have to tell you that I'm a lesbian woman, before I can ask you to come to that. He said, so what's new? He said, I've known that since I was 14. He said, I still love you. I don't care, it doesn't make any difference to me. I've loved you and lived around you all my life, why would I care now? See. So I think that if anybody asked me I would tell the truth about it. I would never lie. I'd never say oh, no, oh no, no, you've got it all wrong. I'm not a lesbian. I wouldn't do that. And I think this is what you were asking before about my jobs. I have fought some battles and I've won them, because I wouldn't give in. I just told em, I said at one time when they called me on the carpet and they were going to take my job away from me the woman that I told you she lived with her husband only once or twice a year, long enough to get a baby, and then she criticized me and didn't want to work with me because she was a churchified woman and she didn't want to work with one of those. And I told em, I said I'm the same woman that you hired and I said apparently my work is fine. Oh yes, yes, nothing wrong with your work. I said, then get off of my case. I don't bother anybody and I don't want anybody bothering me. And if you don't leave me alone we'll see what Mr. Packard has to say. I knew Mr. Packard personally.

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K: Is that right?

C: A very nice man. And I said I don't think you want me to do that. If you're going to make threats, be sure you can carry them out. And I don't want to hear any more about it, and most of the time I didn't. And I think it was just purely because they knew that I wasn't joking. I would have carried out what I said. I told them before, I said, I don't think that you, I don't think you want to do that. I don't think you want to show me the door because if you do I'm going to go right to Mr. Packard and Mr. Hewlett and I'm going to have a long talk.

K: How did you know them?

C: They used to have inter-divisional sports between Loveland and Colorado Springs division. And Mr. Packard and Mr. Hewlett would come out for them. In fact Mr. Packard and I ran a sack race together (laugh). He's a nice man. A very nice man. We ran a sack race and we got our feet tangled up and I fell down and he fell flat on me, and he's a great big guy. He jumped up and he picked me up, he said, oh honey, are you alright? (laugh) I said, I'm fine, you didn't hurt me. He said, are you sure? He's a very nice man. And I knew that he wouldn't appreciate having to be talked to about something like that in his plant, because he's not that kind of a man. Mr. Packard was Deputy Secretary of Defense at one time, in our United States Senate. And at that time he quit 'em for two reasons. One, they wanted him to sell his stock in the company, and he said he wouldn't do that because he'd ruin his people. And two, he said I don't want to be in this because it's so crooked, he said, it makes me sick. He got out of it. So he's an honest fella. He's from Pueblo. And Mr. Hewlett built their first electronic machine, in Pueblo in a garage.

K: Wow, that's amazing. What did you do at the factory? Did you work at the factory or in an office?

C: Yeah, I worked in the manufacturing. Colorado Springs division was cathode ray tube division and I was quality assurance, QA inspector, and most of the time I'd done final inspection. I was the last one that seen it before it went out the door. I could be one of those little toughies. So, I think that was another place where I learned to stand behind my own convictions, because as an inspector you're never very well liked by a lot of people, because nobody likes to be told that they're doing something wrong. and you have to learn to stand behind what you say regardless. And I was tough cause I had to be. Some of our instruments were used into the space program. I had the honor of working on one of the first instruments, on a instrument that went in the first space missile. And I wouldn't sign my name to anything until I knew it was right. If the thing had failed and it had my name on it, I would have felt terrible. And I think, you know, that's one thing that makes a person a good quality assurance, is to be just say, hey, this is the way it is. I'm not putting my name on there if it isn't right. I think this is where I learned a lot of that. I liked Hewlett Packard Company. They were good for me. They taught me a lot of things. I went to work there in 1962 when they first opened their plant there. They opened it in January and I went to work there in March. My number was number 17, and when I left there there was over 2,000 employees. So, it was fun.

K: What did your dad do for a living?

C: My dad was a carpet and linoleum and tile man. And my brother and my brother's son were in the Cassler Carpeting Business and they were in it for a long time. My brother's retired now and my

nephew works for somebody else, but had a family business for a long time.

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K: So your dad did the installation of carpets?

C: Mmm-hmm. And tile. Cabinet tops and all, my dad and my brother and my nephew.

K: I don't imagine that your mom would have worked outside the home, did she?

C: She did at one time, once upon a time she worked at Universal Electric where we all worked, for a short period of time, because my dad was ill, and she worked there for a while. But most of the time she didn't.

K: And what did you do at Universal Electric?

C: Whooh. Well, I done about everything. I think I was kind of like what they call a floater. I worked a lot of different places. I worked where they needed somebody, along towards the last part of my working years there. Cause I'd been there a long time and I knew the work. I worked all over the place. They manufactured electric motors and they made the rotors and everything that went with them.

K: You must have been quite an asset to be able to do just most any job.

C: Yeah, I was a floater at Hewlett Packard too for a while.

K: Wow.

C: You know, wherever they needed extra help if they had somebody off sick or something, or on vacation.

K: You could step in and do it.

C: Uh-huh. But most, my job mainly at Hewlett Packard was testing the things that were made there. I sat and looked at that little [tss-tss-tss sound] all day long. You know the little screen?

K: Right.

C: Cause they have a certain amount of specification that they had to abide by you know, so, it was interesting. I done a job that required a college education and believe it or not, I done it because I could remember. When I was told something, somebody taught me how to do this I never forgot it. Cause I had no way to figure it out cause I don't know that. And I guess that's one reason why it's difficult for me now because I don't remember and

don't have the capacity to remember a lot of things since I had that heart attack and it just irks me to death. Because I, you know, I'm not used to that, it's so foreign to me because I always remembered everything. But that's my excuse anyway.

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K: How about when you were in Colorado Springs in the forties there, there must have been a lot of women going through the military there? You said that some of them were coming to your parties and stuff?

C: Mmm-hmm.

K: Did you know many of them?

C: No. We, I knew a couple of gals that had been in the military and they both had been kicked out because of their homosexuality. And I knew two that were in the Air Force that were active in the Air Force when we were running around together, and they were the ones that wasn't supposed to be there. And of course, we knew a lot of their friends and stuff but they didn't run around with us. But Let's see, two? Yeah, I guess two, that were dishonorably discharged because of that, and the other ones that were put on off-limits at our house, I think they went ahead and done what they wanted to do anyway. I don't know how they got by with it, but some way. They had their way. I think the one did because she was an NCO, a non-commissioned officer. And I think that you know, she done more or less what she wanted to do. It's the little gals that couldn't do, you know. I don't think it ever amounted to too much though, because we didn't even know anything about it.

K: If it had mattered a lot she might have mentioned it.

C: I imagine if it amounted to a whole lot that old captain would have got 'em, kept them out of there.

K: That's true, yeah.

C: And we learned, we knew them because played ball against them. And they also bowled.

K: You played ball and the ones on the base had a softball team and your team played their team?

C: Mmm-hmm.

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K: Oh, that's interesting. And then did you each have bowling teams too then that played each other?

C: Ah, no.

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K: Well, that's interesting, so that's how you, so through the softball and through the bowling you got to know some of the women who were in the military too.

C: Mmm-hmm. And met some of them through friends.

K: Right.

C: You know, that's the way it kind of snowballed, you know, friends have friends, and friends have friends and

K: And so on and so on, right.

C: Yeah.

K: Did you ever think of joining up yourself?

C: No, cause I never would have gotten along with the old sergeants. I'd have been in the stockade from (laugh) day one.

K: I suppose that was a wise decision.

C: In fact the one that we had that was a sergeant and she was one of our very best friends, but see you know how they kind of get carried away every once in a while you know, and they're going to bark and order at you? And she barked and ordered at me one day and I pointed my finger at her and I said, hey! I'm not one of your little flunkies and don't be bothering to tell me what to do. She said, oh, excuse me (laugh). I said, I'd have been in the stockade right there (laugh). I never would have got out. I thought about it, but it wouldn't have worked for me. I don't like someone bossing me around. (laugh)

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K: Interesting.

C: Yeah, it'd be interesting if you could talk to Lou because you'd get a lot of the same story from her that you got from me. Cause we were in the same bunch.

K: I'll have to give her a call.

C: I think I mentioned it to her and if she's not receptive to you, just try to leave it open that maybe you can get in touch with her on another time. Lou is not doing very well right now.

She's been having some problems with her home. She lost her roommates and she's having a hard time making her payments and you know, life gets tedious.

K: All that stuff, yeah.

C: And she's not well anyway, so if she's not receptive well just kind of say, well maybe I can get with you at a later date or something, you know.

K: That's a great idea. I'm glad you told me that, cause it's always helpful to know.

C: Yeah.

K:K: Sometimes people say

C: I think I talked to her once before, I said would you be interested, and she said, I might.

K: Good, well then I'll give her a call.

C: She didn't say no.

K: OK. It's worth a try. Well, looks like we've covered just about all my questions.

C: OK.

K: Anything else you wanted to say? You wanted to add? Make sure it's part of the record?

C: Well, I think I've talked my head off. I don't know. We might talk about me and what, how I feel about the situation of not having a lover and being alone right now.

K: Right.

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C: Because I lived for 30 years with just two different people and then in 1986 I found myself alone. And I'd never lived alone in my life. When I met my first lover I was still at home, and then we lived together over 21 years. And then I was alone for about a year, but I wasn't really alone because my back was bothering me a lot and my mom was with me most of the time, before I met my lover from Canada. And then we were together 11 1/2 years and then she left and went back to her home and it was the first time I ever was alone. And being in Pueblo it was awful. I didn't know anybody, and like I said, Pueblo is so closed. The gay community. There's nothing. I think they do have something down there now, but they didn't have when I was there. Some kind of a support group and some kind of a community center, or

K: I've heard of a bookstore or something like that. I think so.

C: I can't remember.

K: Yeah.

C: But it was very frightening and I've always lived with somebody. I've always had a partner, a lover say, and it's very hard for me. I hate being alone, I just hate it. But I keep myself active and do a lot of things to keep busy. I keep busy with my crafts and a lot of things, you know. Keeps me busy, but I hope, and what I want for my future is I want to have another lady in my life. And I hope it will be the last one before we can, maybe we can live together until one of us is gone, you know, and just live our golden years out and enjoy being together. I find no joy in being alone. I never have. I think we have to be very careful when we live alone that we don't get so one-sided that nobody wants us. You know, when you live alone everything's done your way? So I hope that I can find someone, but I'm a type of person that when I make a commitment it's very difficult for me to get out of it because I don't take that commitment lightly. You know. Whether you're married in the church or whether you're married in the sight of God is all that matters. And when you take those vows I don't take them lightly. And it's difficult, it's difficult to meet people. There's a lot of people out there but when you get older, you know, the field gets thinner and thinner. There's not as much to choose from. And by that time you're about half scared to death. If you've had bad experiences (laugh) you know, you think, oh mercy, do I want to try that again, you know? But yet I don't want to be lonely. I really want to share my life with someone. I think that's what it's all about. I don't know what else to tell you.

K: Well if you think of any other things you want to talk about, I can always come back.

C: Can't think of anything. I think we've pretty well covered everything.

K: We sure did cover a lot.

C: Yes, we did.

K: OK

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