

Edited transcription of **second oral history** interview with
Zelda K. Nordlinger conducted by Betsy Brinson, July 20, 2007.

This transcript includes some transcription by VCU graduate students in Dr. John Kneebone's graduate level history class on Oral History, Fall 2007. Ray Bonis, an archivist in VCU Libraries' Special Collections and Archives department and a member of that class, compiled the various transcripts into one document in May of 2008.

Betsy Brinson, Ph.D., the interviewer, is a public historian with a specialty in oral history. At Virginia Commonwealth University she has been a student, a teacher and a faculty administrator.

Her oral history awards include the Award of Merit from the American Association of State and Local History in 2002 and the Elizabeth B. Mason Project Award in 2004 from the Oral History Association.

Zelda Kingoff Nordlinger (1932-2008), the narrator, was active in the women's rights movement in Virginia from about 1969 through the 1990s. She was a founding member of the Richmond chapter of the National Organization for Woman (NOW).

Nordlinger was born in Greenville, South Carolina on January 29, 1932 to Joseph and Alice Heiner Kingoff. Her family moved to Richmond, Virginia in 1947. After graduating from Thomas Jefferson High School, Nordlinger attended Margjorie Webster Jr. College in Washington, D.C., graduated from the Sally Thompkins School of Practical Nursing and earned a Bachelor's of Arts degree from Virginia Commonwealth University in 1984.

Nordlinger is well-known for her activism on behalf of women. She and a small group of women, including Mary Holt Woolfolk Carlton, co-founded the Richmond Chapter of the National Organization for Women (N.O.W.) in 1969, which was granted a charter in 1973. She was a member of several organizations including the Women's Lobby of Virginia, American Civil Liberties Union, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Virginia League for Planned Parenthood, National Museum for Women in the Arts, Emily's List and the Virginia Foundation for Women. In addition to her work with these organizations, she served on the State Board for N.O.W. (1972-1979), as the Assistant State Coordinator for N.O.W. (1982-83) as well as N.O.W.'s Task Forces on Sex-Role Stereotyping and Rape.

As part of the national "Women's Strike for Equality" day, August 26, 1970, Ms. Nordlinger along with Ms. Carlton and two other women participated in the integration of Thalheimer's Men's Soup Bar in Richmond and Miller and Rhoades. She also lobbied the Virginia General Assembly in behalf of the women's movement for N.O.W. She helped rewrite the state statutes on judiciary evidence for rape trials, which lead Delegate Ralph L. "Bill" Axselles to introduce the first rape reform law. Nordlinger made speeches throughout Richmond and Virginia and was awarded a Founding Foremother certificate by the Richmond N.O.W. chapter in 1983.

Zelda Nordlinger died eight months after the interview was conducted on March 18, 2008 after a long illness.

Her obit from the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*:

OBIT - NORDLINGER, Zelda Kingoff, died on March 18, 2008 after a long illness. Born to Alice Heiner Kingoff and Joseph Kingoff in Greenville, South Carolina, she moved to Richmond in 1947, where she graduated from Thomas Jefferson High School in 1950. She was preceded in death by her husband, Martin Stanford Nordlinger. Survivors include her four children, Debra Margaret Markel and her husband, Tom Jones, of Powhatan, Samuel Andrew Markel II and his wife, Susan Markel, of Richmond, Joanne Nordlinger and her husband, Daryl Hallock, of Newfield, N.Y., and Sharon Nordlinger and her husband, Adam Burns, of New York, N.Y. She is also survived by seven grandchildren. Ms. Nordlinger co-founded the local chapter of the National Organization of Women in 1971 and served as state coordinator in the early to mid-'70s. She was also active in the National Women's Political Caucus where she worked toward electing women to political offices. Ms. Nordlinger will be remembered for her early and ardent advocacy of women's rights, making innumerable speeches and participating in debates and marches. She graduated from Virginia Commonwealth University in 1995.

Betsy Brinson: Well, good morning, Zelda. This is the...

Zelda Nordlinger: Hello.

BB: This is the second part of the interview that we began a couple weeks ago today is July 20, the year 2007 and we are back at Zelda's residence in Richmond, Virginia. And the interviewer this morning is Betsy Brinson. Zelda, we were just talking about a woman named Mary Holt Carton?

ZN: Carlton

BB: Carlton. Tell, tell me about her.

ZN: Mary Holt Carlton is a very retiring woman but she is a very active woman in the women's movement here in Richmond. She and I met each other back in 1969, I think, when she attended a debate before the student body of the Medical College of Virginia. The debate was about the abortion movement. She wanted to go because she had heard about me and she heard that I was going to be on the panel. So she went and while we were waiting for the program to begin, people were still walking in, so she stood up and she looked around and she called out, "Is Zelda Nordlinger here?" It happened that I was sitting right next to her [laugh]. So that's how we met. Mary Holt Carlton is a woman that comes from a long old line Virginia family. She is a soft spoken retiring kind of lady but she was interested in early on women's movement so urn we met and we became very close friends and we still are to this day. She had a very

profound influence on then the minister of her church, which was St. Paul's Church, the minister at that time was Bishop Spawn.

BB: St. Paul's Episcopal Church.

ZN: Saint yeah, St. Paul's Episcopal Church and Bishop Spawn, now he is a bishop but at that time he was a junior minister, she found that he was receptive to the women's movement but she helped him along and certainly raised his conscience a great deal during those years, so I think she had a lot of influence even nationally...

BB: Well, its helpful to talk about some of these other women but before we turned the equipment on here we were talking about Sylvia Clute and how last night she was giving a lecture here at the Westover Hills Library that I saw, I didn't go to it. I saw Love as a Political Philosophy and that reminded me that, of course, we knew Sylvia Clute back when, you were talking about her organizing the women's bank can you share that story again please?

ZN: Yes, the women's bank in New York had already been founded and I had bought stock in that so there was, an occasion where, I don't remember where it was, when I met Sylvia Clute and she had also had either bought stock in and heard of the women's bank in New York and we began talking about starting a women's bank here in Richmond. At which point she said well, she would begin to investigate the possibility legally and look at the idea of getting it going here in Richmond, and I encouraged her to do so, but along the way she more or less she let me drop and she gained a great deal of support from other

more established people here in Richmond and the women's bank did get off to a start, but without me and I understand she was quite successful for a while.

BB: Well, I remember the bank it was down at Tenth and Main. I believe (yes) um, on Main Street I'm not sure tenth was the intersection...

ZN: yes

BB: ...but it was a nice building...

ZN: It was in the old iron fronts.

BB: Yes, that's right. The old iron fronts and then it urn, it merged with one of the more traditional banks and basically was phased out of existence and...

ZN: But it was successful, so I suppose it did make a point in the community and that's good.

BB: And it had a branch bank for a while out off of Parham Road and I think well, well Okay. Thank you for that, I want to pick up urn on some things that sort of left last time. We were talking about your growing up, Zelda and your education and what not I didn't get to ask you about whether family was any particular religious faith that your family subscribed to.

ZN: My family more or less was Jewish, and I say more or less because they did not subscribe to a strict religious kind of life, and I was brought up as a Jew but not an observant Jew.

BB: So you didn't attend synagogue?

ZN: No, not regularly...

BB: Did you celebrate any of the Jewish holidays?

ZN: I think the High Holy Day was the one of the days I remember going to Temple but I don't remember much about it...

BB: How about for you as an adult has that been a piece of your life at all?

ZN: Well, as an adult I found myself a nominal Jew here in the city of Richmond but again not observant. There was an incident that occurred when I met my second husband. I had two children at that time by my first marriage and my second husband had a family that was also Jewish and they were here the family was here visiting while we were just dating and it turned out to be on one of the holidays that they observed. So since I had sent my two children to the Jewish temple to go to Sunday school my in-laws wanted to go to that temple for one service that evening and I took my future in-laws to that temple. And as we approached the entrance before we went up the stairs. One of the ushers recognized me and came down the steps and said that he was sorry that I didn't have tickets for that evening which I thought was rather peculiar because I had been attending up until then and my children were still going through Sunday school there so I had the impression that I was pretty much of a pariah in our Jewish community at that point.

BB: Were you known at that point for your feminism or would that have been too early?

ZN: That was too early for the feminism yes.

BB: Okay so that didn't have anything to do with...

ZN: So I think that the divorce basically was what caused the rift

BB: Okay, okay. How would you say Judaism and feminism... have there been clashes...

ZN: It's amazing

BB:have they come together?

ZN: The Jewish women here in Richmond are not at all receptive to the feminist movement and yet in a national sense all of the practically all of the leaders of the feminist movement have been Jewish: Robin Morgan, Gloria Steinem, Betty Freidan, Bella Abzug. I could go on and on and on there is a long long list. So I can say the Jewish woman here in Richmond are not at all receptive.

BB: Do you have any sense of why that is?

ZN: I have a feeling that it's basically a sense of of being suspicious of a movement and also they're extremely conservative here in Richmond.

BB: Let me go back also and ask you about your education after high school.

ZN: Okay. I graduated from Thomas Jefferson High School and my inclination was at that point to do nothing. I was not at all inclined to want to do anything but my family wanted me to have some college so they sent me to Marjorie Webster Junior College in Washington, D.C., which was nothing more than a finishing school. That's basically what it was. So for two years I learned how to pour tea. [Laughs]

BB: [Laughs] Did you live in Washington?

ZN: I lived in Washington right on the campus. And I most of the girls that were attending junior college at that time were engaged or going to be engaged. Marriage was on their mind; that's all that was on their minds; careers were the furthest thing that they could imagine. So I was caught up in that whole scene of waiting to get married that's what it was called it waiting to get married and that was it.

BB: And what happened after those two years?

ZN: After those two years I did what I was expected to do: I got married. And I don't know why but I chose a man that he and I were not compatible at all.

BB: And we talked about that some in the first interview so...

ZN: Yes

BB: ...but tell me, Zelda, you finished at VCU at some point?

ZN: Right after my second marriage I decided that I needed a college education and I was inclined to want to go to VCU and to study. And at that time I wasn't sure what I wanted to major in so I took a an interdisciplinary course in Mass Communications and I think it was philosophy combined.

BB: And this would have been what period of time for you?

ZN: I graduated in 1985 and it took me about 10 years to complete all my courses because I was raising four children at the time. So I managed to slip two or three classes a semester in during a time that I was raising a family

BB: And did you get any credit for your first two years at Marjorie Webster?

ZN: [Laughs] No, I don't think so because the credits that I had at Marjorie were basically typing and shorthand

BB: Okay, okay. All right. Good. Any favorite courses or faculty at VCU or anybody who was talking about feminism in the classroom at that point?

ZN: Oh at that point between 1970 and 1985 I think there were several professors that were aware of what was taking place in the feminist movement and I can't recall any particular name of any professor at this time but I do know that I enjoyed attending their classes and listening and participating

BB: Diana Scully would have been there.

ZN: Yes.

BB: ...for some of that time.

ZN: Yes and I took all of her classes, certainly. A very, very advanced person as far as her thinking was concerned.

BB: She, of course, is still there as the director of the Women's Studies and I think it's just been in the last short period of time within the last year that they've finally been approved to offer a major in women's studies. It took all these years.

ZN: Well it's to her credit believe me. I'm sure she did it.

BB: I would be interested to have you talk about your recollections of those classes. Were they predominantly female students? Did you ever have men who sit in on them?

ZN: We had mixed classes and Diana Scully's classes were mostly female but there were some men in them and the men that were in these classes were usually progressive in their thinking for that time.

BB: Was it a combination of theory as well as sort of practical experience discussion?

ZN: Basically both, yes. I remember very clearly Dr. Scully discussing some of the other civilizations at that time especially the Arab women and at that time it was much not understood or even discussed the plight of the Arabs.

BB: Zelda, do you have any recollections at this point of papers or projects or special topics you might have been interested in your women's studies classes?

ZN: Oh my classes were tinged with the feminist movement because I was so inspired at that time and so charged with the feminist movement and my conscience was in the process of being raised so no matter what class I took whenever I had to write a paper I made it a point to mention or discuss the feminist movement

BB: Do you recall any particular papers or projects?

ZN: Not any one in particular but I do recall all of them were feminist.

BB: Why the archivist at VCU was interested because they also have the papers of Adele Clark (1882-1983) there and Adele Clark opposed the ERA...

ZN: Unfortunately

BB: ...and I wondered if you had ever met her or had any contact with her or what that was all about?

ZN: Yes, we met and in fact we had public appearances together and ... She was very firm in her attitude against the Equal Rights Amendment. I think the suffrage movement had as its pinnacle, as its goal ultimate goal getting the vote for women and Adele Clark couldn't see anything beyond having that vote as the be all, the end of whatever they were trying to attain for women. But along the way when we had our debates, aid I pointed out that there were basic rights that women were still denied, she was, she was convinced that women could eventually gain those other rights without any kind of an amendment. That it would be forthcoming in time. So I couldn't say she was opposed to the Equal Rights Amendment outright but she was convinced that it was something that would happen any way.

BB: I wondered without having known her if because of her age and her work around suffrage that whether she was also what we used to call a progressive activist and so many of those women did oppose the ERA and they did it primarily because they supported labor legislation...

ZN: That's right

BB: You know the 8 hour day and, you know, just going at things...

ZN: Exactly.

BB: ...protective labor laws for women and children workers and whether that had been her tradition as well.

ZN: It certainly was and women had been exploited in the factories back in those days when she was young. So she certainly had that hanging in her mind as an impediment for women so it was difficult to convince her that maybe

the law had worked its way out of those horrible factories and conditions and that women no longer had the outright exploitation.

BB: Ok thank you. You were involved with several other organizations and I want to ask you to talk a little bit about that if you would please. First the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. What can you and if you can set the stage. I know this was a national and international organization as well as a local chapter.

ZN: Well, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom of course was mostly concentrated on world peace but since women and the women's movement I felt very well were complimentary to what the aims of the women's international league was for I felt it was very much a part of the women's movement. And of course locally there was Marie Cassagalla who was an extremely influential and impressive woman as its leader so I certainly wanted to be a part of that.

BB: Do you recall any of Marie's personal story as to why she became interested in peace issues.

ZN: I do know she was caught up in the Second World War when the Japanese were isolated in special camps and she was a child at the time. I do remember she told me that and that she felt very strongly that it was an injustice.

BB: Who else was um active in the group with you then?

ZN: In the women's movement?

BB: No in WILF.

ZN: Oh, in WILF well it was Phyllis Conklin of course and Maria Cassagalla and Maria Cassagalla's daughter was also...

BB: Maya

ZN: Maya yes. I don't remember any names right off the bat.

BB: What, what kind... so it was a small chapter?

ZN: It was a small chapter and we used to meet I think it was every Friday at lunchtime on the federal courthouse steps to oppose the war and we met there for about an hour to protest the war.

BB: Did you carry ...

ZN: Posters.

BB: ...posters and things and wear buttons?

ZN: Yes, we did. We certainly did.

BB: Okay and what was the public response to your advocacy there at the post office [sic]?

ZN: We had a mixed responses [sic] I mean you know being Richmond it was going to be conservative and it would be the kind of response that we were anti America but then we had passersby cheering us so we had a mixed response.

BB: Wendy Northup actually talked to Maria Cassagalla recently and of course she's retired up in New England in a retirement community and not doing much protesting anymore at least in terms of rallies and meetings and but is doing lots of letter writing to Congress and still working on same issues.

ZN: I'm glad to hear she's there. I'm glad to hear about her.

BB: Right. The other organization I wanted to ask you about was the Women's Political Caucus.

ZN: Ah yes that was getting itself organized at the same time the NOW was getting organized. The NOW maybe it was a year or two ahead of it. But here in Richmond we had Beth Marschak who was an integral part of getting that off the ground in Richmond. And thank heavens, Beth Marschak was... had available to her a mimeograph machine and she certainly turned out tons and tons of literature or fliers to hand out to get that going yes.

BB: Were you actually a member of the Women's Political Caucus?

ZN: Yes, I was a member of that as well and I attended the national organization meeting, the first time, well, the first time the Women's Political Caucus was getting itself organized it was in Houston, Texas. And at that time Bella Abzug, Gloria Steinem, Betty Friedan all the leaders were there at the same time and we had a tumultuous meetings over getting the constitution set. And the meetings went on sometimes all night long the votes that had to be you had to stay up all night if you were going to vote on certain issues that was I would consider one of the most exhausting times that I had ever experienced.

BB: What were the tactics and strategies of the Women's Political Caucus, especially here but even beyond if you could address that?

ZN: The national Women's Political Caucus and the local caucus was basically aiming to get more women elected to political offices and to take a part a very active part in lobbying issues both in Congress and here in the General Assembly.

BB: Were there any particular candidates that you remember the group worked for at that point in time?

ZN: Yes, we decided to put somebody for the State Corporation Commission. We wanted to run a candidate and we wanted to run a serious candidate to bill us a place. And of course the State Corporation Commission was considered a very prestigious position so we had the cooperation and the agreement of Irene Mosher who was at that time was a professor of economics who had written her dissertation on energy economics so we felt that she was more than qualified to fill that position. And at the time [laughs] she was pregnant and being pregnant back in those days was almost an embarrassment. Men were embarrassed especially to look at a pregnant woman but Irene Mosher, bless her soul, stood her ground and appeared as a candidate for the State Corporation Commission.

BB: Was she... um you said she was a professor. Was she at VCU?

ZN: Yes, she was a professor at VCU.

BB: She was. Ok. So she was teaching and getting pregnant and...

ZN: That's right.

BB: Being a candidate for the Corporation Commission?

ZN: Right.

BB: Ok what... Whatever happened to her? Was Ale selected for the Corporation Commission?

ZN: No. We didn't really think she would be because she was female first of all and she was a pregnant female. But she certainly had the qualifications. Certainly more than the person that they did select.

BB: Do you have you stayed in touch with her at all?

ZN: No I haven't.

BB: Do you know anything about what happened with her after all of that?

ZN: No I don't remember but I think she took a private job with Dominion Resources I'm not sure but I think she did.

BB: Okay, were there any other feminist organizations in Richmond at that point? We talked about N.O.W. and the, the E.R. Virginia, E.R.A. Ratification ...

ZN: Right

BB: Council.

ZN: Well as you mentioned there was (clears throat) I consider WILF, Women's International League, was feminist and the National Women's Political, the Virginia Women's Political Caucus at which point we, we wanted to run Flora Crater for Lieutenant Governor in 1972 I believe. And Flora Crater from Northern Virginia was a very capable woman, certainly knowledgeable (laugh) and she made an, a run as an independent. As an independent in Virginia I think you had to have something like twenty thousand signatures to get on the ballot so all of the feminists throughout the state stood on street corners during the hot summer getting the requisite signatures to get Flora Crater to run for Lieutenant Governor.

BB: But it didn't happen did it, so...

ZN: Well you know none of those things happened, everything we did was a kind of demonstration to show the public that women were capable, that women were qualified and to just put a woman before the public as a candidate. I mean I don't think people even considered them as possibilities.

BB: Right (inaudible) groups that I can think of course of Planned Parenthood...

ZN: Yes

BB: The Y.W.C.A. did, was doing a lot of work around sexual assault...

ZN: Right

BB: and domestic violence...

ZN: Yes

BB: Just a, Planned Parenthood around pro-choice, were you involved in any way with any of...

ZN: Very much.

BB: ... that activity?

ZN: Very much.

BB: Talk about that if you would please.

ZN: Well with Planned Parenthood I was part of the demonstration on Saturdays where at the clinic here in Richmond. The people who wanted to disapprove of abortions were out in full protesting and the poor women that needed to be escorted into the clinic without interruption needed people there to help them to get in the front door so this is one of the major things that we did out on Saturdays at the clinic. 'Course we facilitated other women in rural areas to

get transportation to Richmond to avail themselves of the abortion clinic and of the facilities there.

BB: Actually my drive over to you this morning, I passed, I came down Boulevard and there on the corner are three men and one young girl with them and they're carrying their "abortion is murder" posters and what not so it still continues.

ZN: It still goes on.

BB: And we, we know that we're very likely to lose the Supreme Court decision giving us the right to abortion so it's a very critical time with all of that but ...

ZN: It's critical and yet you know I'm really can't bring myself to believe that this right, a woman's right to make decisions about her own body, is going to be taken away. And I just don't think at this point I mean, how many years have we had the right, thirty years, forty years maybe. It's just not something that we can see being eliminated or taken away.

BB: And yet there are pieces moving into place from legal decisions and legislation that are kinda chipping away at that certainly um.

ZN: Well at the same time we're also making advances in medicine so that we have RU487 I mean so that there's no need for that kind of an abortion now we can have a chemical abortion and you know when it comes down to defining what abortion is actually is becoming a lot less available to describe, you can't say what an, what is an abortion.

BB: Well that leads me to ask you to sorta talk with me if you would about kind of a general overview of you know, what, what were the successes of that women's movement, and where are the losses, and where are we today with all of this a little bit.

ZN: Well as far as I know, and I've certainly not been that active in the last ten years, but as far as I can tell women are finding abortion available if they need it, birth control is certainly available to all women, there are no impediments to getting birth control and I don't see anything in, in the negative as far as a woman's control over her bod, her body. A woman can make decisions about what she wants to do with her own body.

BB: How about other areas that the women's movement, that we were involved in the seventies, worked on employment issues, credit issues...

ZN: Well

BB: Umm

ZN: Those things are a, a part of the past thank heavens for that, I recall a very prominent case nationally that took place in Chesterfield County with I think a, a teacher by the name of Susan Cohen teaching in a public school in Chesterfield County who was four months pregnant and the school board req, laws required her to stop teaching as soon as her pregnancy became noticeable. So we took that case to the Supreme Court and it ruled in, in her favor that a women shouldn't be discriminated against in her work because of her pregnant, her pregnancy.

BB: I had the opportunity recently to interview a woman who was a hundred and two in Arlington and she was a pretty independent woman but toward the, in her life, but at the end of the interview I asked her about things that had changed and things that had not changed and she made the point that she thought the change that had been the most devastating for society was letting tea, married teachers teach. That she thought when single teachers had been teachers they could give everything to teachers but when married women were teaching they had to think about their families and that was to the loss of the students and the school system. And I thought, this is just amazing you know, but that's another whole several generations back that she sees it you know that way.

ZN: And to this day I talk to elderly women who have the same attitude and it amazes me that they haven't been, been able to encompass in their minds anything further than a woman's place is in the home and that's it.

BB: So where do you think the women's movement is today in Richmond? Are there organizations out there working on issues that you're aware of or...

ZN: Well I'm sure the Association for University Women is still out there doing its job. The League of Women Voters is still out there doing its job. N.O.W. still has a chapter here in Richmond and I'm not a part of it now I, I, I'm pretty much retired. And I think as far as I know the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom is still working, and the Y.W.C.A. of course is still doing its women's shelter bit, so I think as far as the women's movement is concerned

overall we have not only launched the women's movement in Richmond, we are succeeding in the women's movement. Consciences have been raised, women no longer question whether they should go to college, I mean back in the early days women were questioning whether a college education was even necessary and I remember finding in the Richmond papers an editorial that was written in 1920 I believe it was, right after suffrage was signed into law, the editorial keyed in on what good would a college education do for a woman and the title of it, of the editorial in the Richmond paper was "Oh what will she do with it" like it would be a waste of time to educate any woman, I mean. So I think as far as that is concerned from that point on up to the present we are far removed from the old way of thinking and the old way of accepting a woman as being only proper in her own place in the home. I think women now are getting college educations, more so than men now I understand, thinking seriously about their futures or planning careers or managing to have careers and families at the same time, so as far as I can see we have (laughs) we have moved away from the ice age and we are well into the future.

BB: At the same time there are younger women now who um are, can be a little critical of the women's movement of the past, when they say you know you told us we could have it all and we really can't have it all and so many of us are dropping out of paid jobs to stay at home with our children for a while and as you know there's a whole big dialogue about all of that, that goes on. What do you, do you know anybody personally who struggles with those kinds of issues among younger women, your daughters for example or...

ZN: Yes very sti, very definitely my daughters are all working women. Two of them have careers and my daughter in law is a stay at home mom for the time being, out of choice but she is keeping her hand in her career. She was, um a legal assistant and she now is doing part time work keeping, she keeps books, she's a book keeper now and she plans to go back to work as soon as the children are a couple years older, they're right now seven and she expects to go back to the work by the time they're nine or ten. She has no idea of staying home forever and I don't think any of my daughters have any idea of staying home and being a homemaker. It's just not in their language.

BB: At the same time with, with globalization and the loss of jobs and the pressures of jobs that are here and careers, um you know, they, there are also young people who say, why bother to work in a world like that, you know its not like being a lawyer used to be you know, now I'm responsible for billable hours, or being a doctor isn't like it used to be you know, now I only get eight minutes per patient under managed care and um, um its hard for them when they don't have that personal history but they have the benefits of the personal history, sometimes to reconcile it all.

ZN: Well I believe the nature of work itself has changed. We're in a global economy everything is changing, everything is, is malleable its, its moving its not staying in one place. The relationship between the um boss and the worker has changed and, and there's just no possible way you can compare yesterday with today.

BB: We've, so we've had gains but we've had some setbacks. Are there issues for women today that we could use a little more advocacy for?

ZN: Certainly, women are now beginning to, in a, in effect shape the workforce, the way of thinking about work, relationships within the work place, a woman's input and a woman's , emotions are all becoming integrated in this place that people work. We no longer have very well defined hierarchies and I think that is all to the good as far as the future is concerned and I see this change as taking place from this point on as being a continuous change and it, the more women that get advanced in the workforce the more we're going to call it a, um feminine input its going to make itself known and shown. This hierarchy and this um getting ahead and the competitiveness, the sharp competitiveness that men have always displayed is not going to be the way it has been and I see business in general changing as a result of women having influence.

BB: Okay, and we, we would be remiss I guess if we didn't say about women in politics that people are certainly watching Hillary Clinton closely now with the election next year and just, a recent article in the *New York Times* was very interesting in terms of um, its older women who have less trust of her than do younger women or middle aged women and what not and... What, what do you think Hillary has done for us in terms of the women's movement?

ZN: Well I think Hillary is the first woman to present a serious challenge for the Presidency in this country. She is not like , who was it, Shirley Chisholm, who was more or less an, an image of a woman, of what she could be. But now we have a serious contender for the office of Presidency and that's causing a

little confusion among people because now we're going to have to change our attitudes and way of thinking. Other countries have done it, I mean Germany has a female head of state. Certainly Golda Mier way back in the seventies was a, a good example of a head of state, Indira Gandhi, Margaret Thatcher. What is, is taking place in this country is, I think an attitudinal change and it has to do with men's attitudes more than women's but women too, but women are going to have to look to other women for leadership which is something that's new for women to do. I think it will happen and I don't know whether Hillary Clinton will be the elected President but certainly down the line we are going to have female Presidents because this attitudinal change is in the process of taking place.

BB: Well it certainly makes watching the news and reading the newspapers interesting.

ZN: Yes, yes.

BB: You have given um a very nice collection of women's movement materials to Virginia Commonwealth University and I wonder why did you choose VCU and how did it come about that that you kept all these things for one thing, over the years and whatnot?

ZN: Well I'm a collector, I am definitely one that cannot let something go that may be of use in the future so I, I just felt that VCU had such a wonderful collection of books that were current in the women's movement that I noticed when I was there matriculating that I thought well, they were deserving of any of the materials that I had.

BB: Well thank you for that. Now I think I have one last question but and that is, is there anything we haven't talked about that you want to add to this interview?

ZN: I have um an enduring faith that the evolution of this whole civilization all over the world has become part and parcel of the future for women and I don't see much um hope that men are going to continue in the roles of war-makers. I see women taking a very vital part in calling the signals and I see a only good future for humankind as a result because I think the female influence is what's going to take us into the future.

BB: Are you reading to, to, today about women in er, what, what are you reading that is sort of helping to shape your thinking today or what events are shaping your thinking?

ZN: Well the books that were nascent in the women's movement are still classics and I don't see any new books on the horizon that even equal the impact of... I go back and read some of the earlier books and I think to myself these have still have a lot to say, still have a lot to say. *Backlash* is one of the most recent books that came in the women's movement that talks about how people have responded to women taking a more vital place in society and the backlash is definitely here.

BB: That's Susan Faludi.

ZN: Faludi yes, but the earliest books um Gloria Steinem's books, Betty Friedan's books are still with us and they are still important and they should be read even now.

BB: I'm sure they're being read in women's studies classrooms um, they don't, and they're, they're there on the bookshelves in libraries and bookstores. I just don't know how many younger women are reaching out for that kind of material these days.

ZN: You know I, I talk to younger women sometimes (laughs) and I find them not even thinking about the possibility of, should I or shouldn't I work. I mean we are so far beyond that they are now thinking in terms of what should I major in, and how shall I get ahead, you know. I don't think the two um ideas of what it was like in the old days and what it is today have any common exchange.

BB: And so I, I'm taking from that that you think that this is a very healthy attitude that's come about over the years and thanks in part to feminism.

ZN: And I think there's a reaction something beyond Susan Faludi's ideas but I think that males now are displaying (clears throat) are displaying reactions to women becoming more important in the world by regressing themselves so that we are more inclined to see male aggression expressing itself as, as a kind of reaction to the more feminine attitudes that are making themselves felt in our world.

BB: And how can we get a hold on that with men, because it plays out in both the personal level as well as the political level?

ZN: I don't know how we're going to manage that. It's a problem that I'm dealing with right now, that I think about quite often, but I think more and more women are changing the um way that they're raising their sons so that boys now are no longer expected to pick up a toy gun, I mean too many women now are

discouraging that form of play among boys and I think that's going to have a long reverberating effect on the future.

BB: Well you sound pretty hopeful for the future.

ZN: I certainly do, I believe that the future belongs to women.

BB: Well that's wonderful, that's wonderful. Well I'm gonna stop there unless you have anything else you wanna add.

ZN: Thank you, I appreciate this.

BB: Okay, good.

