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ORAL HISTORY RESEARCH CENTER

STEPHANIE NICHOLSON STRANGE

Interviewed by Catherine Jones  
21 April 1989  
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## INTRODUCTION

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my oral history interview with Catherine Jones,  
Interviewer (please PRINT)

which was conducted on 21 April 1989, to Indiana  
Date

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Stephanie Lynn Nicholson-Strange  
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NICHOLSON

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ORAL HISTORY RESEARCH CENTER

INTERVIEWEE: Stephanie Nicholson

INTERVIEWER: Cathy Jones

DATE: April 21, 1989

SUBJECT: Paoli history, life in Paoli for young people,  
reflection on Paoli.

TRANSCRIBER: Elizabeth Racette

J: Hello, I'm Cathy Jones and I'm here with Stephanie Nicholson in her home right outside the town of Paoli. Today is April 21, Friday and we're talking about the Paoli project.

OK. Well, why don't we start out with some background about your family, when they came to the area, where they came from and stuff like that?

N: Well that I don't know so much about really.

J: Tell me what you know if anything at all.

N: Basically all I know is that on my dad's side my grandparents and all his parents they, the way I take it which I've never been really explained to because they died before I was born...

J: The grandparents?

N: Yes and since they, you know, died we haven't talked too much about them anymore. And so I don't know too much about them any more but the way I saw it they've lived here quite a while and I think even before Dad was born. They were living here and everything and my other grandparents on my mother's side they have been about the same thing because around World War II grandpa was in the service and my grandma and grandpa got married like whenever I'd say she was 17 or 16, something like that. And she was working in, like down in Louisville in a military surplus store and so then they moved up here. I don't know if she was living down there and... I don't know what she was doing down there while he was gone. And then after that they moved here and they built a house and lived there ever since.

J: Ever since. On you dad's side, you said they lived here do you mean right around where this house is now or?

N: They... we'll be, me and Mom and Dad we'll be driving around and they'll say that's the house we used to live or something and they lived in several places.

J: Oh OK

N: A couple of places around here but it was here, you know in town. And like in the country and stuff like that too.

J: OK,...

N: Grandma Murphy, which is my mom's side, she used to live in the country, go out on south 37. Down towards Valeen, do you know where that's at?

J: I haven't been there but yes OK.

N: It's down there and she used to live way down there.

J: On our, that would be your grandmother...

N: Mom's side.

J: So your mom's mom?

N: Yes. That's my living grandmother.

J: So she lives more in the country then?

N: Well she did for a while ...

J: OK,...

N: You see, I don't know, I can't figure out, I don't even know myself... I don't know if she lived there when she was maybe a child herself or before her and grandpa had children or you know what...

J: Yes, she grew up there and then moved to Louisville and then came here.

N: Yes, maybe. Or grew up here then moved to Louisville, then moved out there and had kids and then they moved into town. It's kind of hard to figure out.

J: But so you know if your grandfather was from here? I mean on your mom's side, do you know if either of them were originally from here or why they came here after being in Louisville.

N: I really don't know. I never asked about it really.

J: But then your mom and dad were they both born here?

N: Yes, I think, I'm pretty sure. Either, it's hard for me to remember. I know that Mom and Dad lived in Anderson for a while and my aunt lived up there and stuff like that but I don't know if Dad was possibly born up there maybe or... basically we've lived here. Everybody even if we go some place else we always end up back here.

J: So Paoli is home?

N: Yes it's always been like that.

J: Would both your mom and dad agree to that?

N: I think so. They went to high school here and everything. I think, pretty much think so. This is where they've grown up, me too.

J: So what year were you born?

N: 1972.

J: Now were you born in the house? Were your parents in this house now or?

N: No. We lived down, I can't remember the name of the road, down toward Springs Valley. OK like you just, you know where Death Valley is at towards there.

J: No I don't.

N: It's a little strip that they call Death Valley. My grandparents live up on a hill right there and then you go on down a little bit farther and my grandfather owns all the land all the way down through there. And then you get to a certain point and there's a trailer, we lived in a trailer until I was about 1 1/2 years old. And then we moved out her 'cause it was on my grandfather's land and so the rent was basically free so all we had was the trailer then. So we lived there.

J: I'm sure that was important. Now where is this Death Valley, is it very far?

N: OK you go off the square and you keep going down towards Springs Valley and do you know the turn off for the hospital?

J: Right.

N: OK you keep going past that and you like go around a curb and past the ridge and everything and then you go down a little bitty

hill and it's right in that straight stretch right through there.

J: OH, right, right.

N: And you keep on going, you go around a couple more curves and there's a straight stretch and it's right in there. Somewhere. There's my father. He could probably tell you more about this than what I could. [tape turned off]

J: I guess that history is not about the facts. So that's right basically everyone's from around here. OK, and you were born?

N: I was born in Bedford but then I've lived here.

J: How many brothers and sisters do you have?

N: One sister.

J: Who's the oldest?

N: Linda, she's 21. She's married, it's been almost a year now.

J: Almost a year, does she have any children yet or?

N: No. She's still going to school.

J: OH, Ok.

N: College.

J: Yes. How about she and her husband? Do you think they'll stay here?

N: I kind of think they will, I mean I don't know how they think but Steve, her husband, he has a... his parents have a dairy farm. And they, like Linda and Steve they're always talking about these different things they're going to do. Like buying a bunch of little calves and raising them and stuff like that so that's what kind of makes me think that they're going to stick around here. And they live in a trailer right beneath his parent's house. You'd probably saw it on you way down ... Have you ever been to Valley? Well Ok...

J: I may have but I don't remember.

N: On your way down there there's a little place called Somebody's Place it's concrete. Right before that there's a trailer and a house that sits up here.



J: Hmmm,...

N: And they live down in the trailer and his parents live up here and there's a barn and whatever up here.

J: Is that milk cows you said.

N: Yes, I think that's all they, I'm pretty sure that's all they have.

J: So it sounds like Steve wants to stay and work with his dad on...?

N: Yes I think he probably does. I think he's probably 25 or 26 maybe. And I think he just kind of wants to stay close to home.

J: And does Linda, does she like that kind of ...?

N: Probably I think so. She's not one to..., she's the quiet type. Until she met Steve and then [laughter]. I never thought I'd see her go walking through a cow pasture, you know with tennis shoes on because she's like the type that goes like this and is on her tippy toes all the way through there.

J: So it sounds like she has adjusted to it pretty well.

N: Yes, they get along really well.

J: That's good. Were they the ones that you dad was talking about with the Corvette?

N: Yes. Steve he deals with cars a lot, he works for a guy named [omitted] and he has like a body shop where he fixes vehicles and stuff for people. And does paint jobs and stuff like that for them and Steve knows how to do all that stuff so once in and while he'll buy a car you know pretty cheap and he'll fix it up and resell it and everything and he found a Vet. The front and the nose of it was just kind of smashed so he fixed it all and redid it. And he really likes Mustangs, he loves Mustangs.

J: So just out of curiosity then, will farming be his main, not farming I guess the dairy cows be his main livelihood or? Working on cars or both?

N: Well he's right now, he's like... He works for [omit] but whenever he works for his mom or dad up there he doesn't really get paid for it. I mean it's not like really a job but see it's like he's just trying to help them or make more money and stuff and then in turn they help him out whenever he needs it or

whatever. The way I gather it.

J: Oh, Ok so it's not like he's planning on going on into the dairy business.

N: Well I think he might. I think him and Linda, I don't know if it's going to be dairy cows or beef because they were talking about raising baby cows and until they get older and then selling them for more and they've got some type of deal where they can do that and everything so and he said... they were talking about it one night and they said, or Linda said that she would help out with it and I was really surprised. [laughter]

J: OK. I guess marriage changes people.

N: A lot, oh! dear. [more laughter]

J: I guess I haven't talked to many people who are doing dairy farming I guess but, you know, crop farming seems to me that the impression I've gotten it's almost impossible for a younger person to start unless they, you know, started with their dad or with their family just because.....

N: Yes. Well, plus I don't think the younger you are you don't really know a lot about it and stuff, and you need somebody there to teach you and everything, how to do things and... Steve lived there all of his life, I'm pretty sure and it's like he's just been brought up that way. He's got, I guess he's got two sisters and a brother also and so that has been basically their way of life all the way along. I think he kind of wants to stick with it too, I don't think he would have built... He has a building up there on his mom and dad's land, it's like a garage. He built it just recently and everything. I don't think he would have built that if he didn't think he was going to stay there for a while.

J: Is that like a garage for..., a working garage?

N: Yes.

J: Yes, OK.

N: Yes, he needed some place where he could put all of his tools and everything. And store stuff and that kind of thing.

J: Yes, right. Do you know many, you know younger kids who... well let's see... Do you think many younger kids are... I'm sorry,

N: That's OK.

J: I hope you don't mind me calling you, including you in kids.  
[laughter] But I'm a little bit older ....

N: It's OK.

J: You think many younger kids, you're a senior now?

N: Junior.

J: You're a Junior. Of the Juniors and Seniors, you know your friends, and also just kids you know, what is your impression about how many think they're going to leave and how many think they're going to stay?

N: I think it kind of balances out, because I hear people with my philosophy as I want to get out of here, I'm sick of this town, I've lived here all of my life. And I don't want a part of it any more. That's my philosophy. And I hear others that say, like a friend of mine, which used to be my boyfriend, he said, he goes "I like it here, I really like it here and I want to stay here all my life". I told him, I said "you're crazy". 'Cause I don't, I mean I've lived here for 16 years, I like the surrounding areas and everything but I just want to change. I mean I want to do something different than have, be stuck here all the time and I mean, you can go places and do things but it's just not the same 'cause you're always coming back here. And I just want to go somewhere else for a change.

J: What, what kind, I mean what do you want different? What...?

N: Just a change of, you know like... I mean 'cause like I've lived here so long, whenever I was little, I was 5 years old, we had a neighbor over here and it was like all the time we would go over to Mitchell to Spring Mill. Hey, that's something we did day in and day out in the summer time. And we'd go over there hiking and everything, that kind of became usual. Well, then we got sick of that so then we'd change and do something else. And it's almost like you've done everything around here, so you want to go some place where you can do all the things around there. It's just kind of like that.

J: Well, would you think of going to another small community like this or are you thinking more of a bigger town or ...?

N: I don't know, I mean personally I mean I wouldn't care. I mean I like small towns and stuff because you get to know everybody and it's not like you meet somebody on the street and they'll just, not even look at you. Around here you'll be walking

down the street and somebody will wave at you all the time. I mean I can't go to town without about 5 or 6 people waiving at me because everybody knows me, you know. And I don't think you'd...

J: Do you like that?

N: Yes, I like that but, you know it just depends on what happens... It may not be my choice of what I want to do, you know.

J: Just depending on Danny? And what happens...

N: Yes, it depends on what goes on...

J: What goes on. So it's not like you're dying to go to a big city or something like that.

N: No. I just want a change.

J: Do you think you'll come back?

N: I don't know. [pause] Maybe, maybe not. It depends on how much it changes around here.

J: How would that influence you?

N: If it, I mean if everything was basically the same, I think I would come back and visit. But if things change like, we've got Tillery Hill coming in and stuff like that, something we can do, someplace we can go, and you know like do different things. You know, ....

J: I guess other people have mentioned to you like there's no movie theater here....

N: There's just nothing to do.

J: And like, you were saying there's nothing to do but the drag [laughter]. Hanging out and going to the drag.

N: That's exactly right.

J: Go visit friends.

N: And people, and what gets me is the older people say "Oh they're sitting up there on the square, they're dealing drugs". Where else do we have to go, what else are we going to do? It's like you find us something to do and we'll be glad to do it, you know. It's not our choice that we hang out on the square, we

don't have any place else to go.

J: Do they ever talk about, you know "When I was your age, we did this... or we, you know..., We made our own fun...."?

N: Well, it's more like "When I was your age we didn't even go out". You know, it's more like that. So and ... [laughter]

J: So you feel like you've been unfairly...

N: Yes. There's just no place to go out. In the summer time, like on Tuesday and Thursday nights, I believe, we go to the soft ball field. There's a lot of people who go down to the soft ball field 'cause there's games down there. And it's like each business around town, different businesses, factories will have their own teams and everything. So that's kind of...

J: That's in the summer time?

N: Yes. And then in the summer time and that's part of the drag too. And so then you got that, another place to go to on the drag. [laughter]

J: Limited choice.

N: Yes, that makes it a little bit more exciting. And then there's basket ball courts, which the guys go to but then other than that you got just the drag and the beach during the day, down at Valley. Then you have to drive all the way down there.

J: The beach? What's that?

N: It's just the Patoka Lake. At Springs Valley.

J: I saw that.

N: And they have a small beach, it's not very big. And you can go down there but like kids under 16 they can't go because they don't own a vehicle, they can't drive. There's the pool that a lot of the kids go to in the summer time. But really other than that... And in the winter time there's Paoli Peaks but... Unless you've got the money, you can't go. And there's a lot of little kids I know that would like to go and I tell you if their, if the owner of the place hadn't have lived, used to be my neighbor, I never would have been able to be a part of that because she got me interested in it when I was five years old. And I've been doing it ever since...

J: How much does it cost, like for a day? With the lift and...?

N: For children it's cheaper but basically on the average for adults it's, it would run you up like any where from \$13 to about \$16 or \$18 for a lift ticket alone. And then plus another \$13 or so for rental equipment. And that's during the week. And on the week-ends and holidays, it goes up.

J: Yes, because I remember a couple parents just really being surprised when their kids wanted like \$200 for a season ticket or something [laughter].

N: Yes. It costs \$200 before a certain date, or \$200 after a certain date to purchase a season pass, that's not including your rental. And then, plus, my ski equipment cost another \$500 on top of that. And I used to buy...

J: So you bought the whole thing then?

N: Yes. I used to buy season passes every year, first, whenever I was little, I was about probably 7 or 8 when I started getting week-day passes. Me and my sister would save up money and during the summer time we'd save it up, we'd get \$5 allowance every week and we would save it up and save it up and then by the time winter came along... We had \$150 and that's how much the week-day pass was. So that was Monday through Friday from the morning until 10 o'clock at night.

J: So you'd go after school or something?

N: Yes. And so we used to go at the night time from 6 to 10. So we'd do that and then the last couple of years I got season passes. So I'd save my money and then I'd lose it all and then I'd save it after that all the way through winter and back through summer. And then I'd, you know, spend it again. I could have had all this money saved... I figured it out one time and it was like about \$1600 I could have had saved.

J: Wow, golly... Do all the kids ski?

N: The ones that can afford it.

J: Is that very many of them?

N: Not really. I don't see a lot of people from Paoli up there. There's a few that, you know, and then they're got ski schools for the younger kids, that you can, it goes through school where you can. I forget how much, I don't how much it is but they can buy like this package where they get a lesson for an hour and then after that they can ski free until ten o'clock that night.

On one night and week and then after the ski lessons are over for the season then from there on out they can come on that night and go skiing and it won't cost them anything. Which isn't bad but people still can't afford it.

J: Yes.

N: It's just too big of a... deal for this small town.

J: Yes, it is. [pause] So during the winter you have that. Well, like you know, do very many people have VCRs?

N: Yes, a lot of movie rentals.

J: A lot of movie rentals.

N: We rent a lot of movies [laughter] and I guess there's sports too. In the winter time, well this winter there's basket ball. That was a big deal.

J: Yes, it was, you guys made it to Regionals.

N: We won the Regionals.

J: You won it, that's right. So it was semi-state you went on to?

N: We lost there.

J: That was the first time that Paoli ever got....

N: That was the first time we ever won the Regional and the second time we ever won the sectional. So ... [chuckles] that was something but then..., and there's football but that's, football is every Friday night usually in the fall and then, after that those two sports are the main sports at school. After that you don't have anything.

J: So does it seem like, I mean, you know during the summers, I mean do you actually feel during those times that you're just trying to find stuff to do? You know that you're kind of bored, just trying to find stuff to do, or is it that...?

N: I get so bored, I go upstairs in my room and clean out my entire room! I mean it's just like, I get so bored I just go up there and I start cleaning. And then I just can't stop so, 'cause you know, it's like well I got that done... Well that's going to make this look bad, so I better do that... It's like well I got time. So.... there's just nothing to do around here...

J: Are you in any extra curricular stuff at school?

N: Just Volleyball, sports and during school, school keeps me busy. And this was the first year that I've been able to have a job, so that was kind of new. And it was kind of like, how am I going to keep my grades up and do this at the same time, but I have done it because 4 out of 5 times I made the honor roll this year.

J: Good for you.

N: I'm just so ectatic about it. I can't believe it. Like the first six weeks I had volleyball and after that, it was like, now I've got that out of the way, I can work on studying and keep my grades up and everything. Which I tried to do during volleyball but it was impossible. And so...

J: Plus working too?

N: No, I didn't work until after volleyball, I started working when the Peaks opened. Volleyball season was over in, I guess, I think it was late October. And ski season started in November.

J: Did you work at the Peaks then?

N: Yes, and I worked as a cashier up there, in the cafeteria and it was easy work because all I did was, you know, people would come through and they'd pay me. [deletion]

J: OH, that's good.

N: [deletion] And then after that job was over, after the winter then I started working out at Druther's.

J: Oh, that's right.

N: And that was something. That was another story...

J: I'm sure you didn't have too much time to study at Druther's.

N: because they had me working, the first night I worked, I worked from 4 no from 7 to 12. And I thought well that's not too bad. But then they changed it from 5 to 12. Then it went from 4 to 12. And those nights I was so tired, I came in and I was just dead and I couldn't, it was like my grades just went like this automatically. Just went down. And I had, it was like the second day I worked and I had a major test the next day in English: 45 points and I made about 4 on it. 4 or 5 because of working out there and it showed a big difference and so the next day I stayed



home and I said "Mom, I'm so tired I have to stay home 'till I get adjusted to this." So I stayed home that day and I got caught up a little bit on my school work and then I told them out there, I said " Look", I said "school is very important to me and I'm not about to let my grades drop." I said " I will work out here one night a week, one to two nights a weekend", because like, we go in from 10pm from 12pm to clean the front dinning room, some people do. And so I said "I'll work one night a week and then 10 to 12 one night". And they said "OK, that's fine". So that's just 'till school's out, after that I can work as much as you want me to but just wait until school is out. And they understood and everything so I, between work and school I'm keeping busy now except on the week nights if I don't have any homework and I don't have to work then I kind of go see my friends and stuff like that. But during the school day you just don't get to see your friends that much 'cause the teachers are always saying "Shut up". You know, "Don't talk". [laughter] It's the truth.

J: Why did you start working? Was it just for spending money?

N: Yes, because I, I don't know how others feel about it but it's like, I kind of felt bad asking Mom and Dad everytime I needed money to go somewhere or I wanted to... it was like "Mom, Dad, can I have \$10?" you know. It's like I didn't want to do that to them because look at all they gave me so far. And I just didn't feel right asking for so much and everybody always teases me in school because I drive Dad's truck all the time.

J: Is that the...?

N: It's the grey one. Yes.

J: I thought it was, it's a real nice one.

N: Yes, it's an 86 model and they always tease me and stuff and say "Oh, yes, you got it made. You don't have to pay for this vehicle and everything". I said "Hey, I put the gas in the truck, I'm the one that keeps, takes care of the truck." I said " I treat really good. I keep it up and everything while Dad's gone." I said " I pay for my clothes, I pay for any other little things I want." So I said I don't want to hear it. So and the money I make if I want, I mean it's my spending money. If I want to get me an outfit I can, I can say "Mom, Dad I'm going to go get this outfit and it's going to be mine." And I don't have to run to them "Can I have \$50 so I can go buy this outfit?" It's like I have the money, my money.

J: I'm sure they really appreciate that.

N: Yes, and plus, I mean, they want me to save it but it just, it's like you'd get it in your hands and you just want to go spend it because you've worked your butt off for it and now you want to kind of treat yourself a little bit. That's what I need. [laughter]

J: Well, so then do very many of your friends not work then?

N: There's quite a few that do but around here it's hard to find a job.

J: I hadn't thought about that.

N: Because there's just not that many places to work and like the factories, we've got a few factories around here, but kids can't work there. And then Druthers has probably, I'd say, probably about 6 to 10 people, kids, school kids and I'm trying to think. We used to have 3-D which is a discount, department store and it closed down so that wiped out quite a few jobs for the teenagers. But other than those two, I mean, it's just like, there's just not a whole lot. Little businesses, they have jobs at these little businesses that, you know, that only helps out one or two, maybe three people.

J: I hadn't thought about that.

N: [deletion]

J: Yes, I was more like you, I worked my way through school. You know just to buy pretty much everything so, I know what it's like to have to juggle, you know, science and working....

N: I think, I mean, if I wanted to... If I hadn't of worked and stuff I think I could have been doing pretty good, you know this year. Because my grades have really improved a lot this year and I think without work they probably would have improved quite a bit more.

J: But still if you've been able to bring them up while you've been working...

N: Yes.

J: it sounds like you're really, Do you think you're just becoming more motivated about, is it that or is it?

N: Well, I tell you what motivated me was Danny had got an honors jacket his senior year.

J: What's that?

N: It's a jacket that you get for making the honor roll 5 or 6 times out of 6, 6 weeks and the reason he got was because like, [deletion].

END SIDE ONE TAPE ONE.

N: [deletion]

J: He had like four classes.

N: Yes, actually three and they were so easy for him to pass it wasn't even funny and he made A's in all of them so therefore he made the honor roll each time and I think that really stunk. And so it's like, I'm going to get this honor's jacket and I'm going to prove to you that I can do it and he helps me out too, because he's always pushing me a telling me, like before he went into the service he would, well... In his senior year and then the year after that he would like come out here after school or that night and stuff and we'd just watch TV and if I had homework he'd be always saying: "get you homework done, get your homework done." And I never would do it, I didn't want to do it and then he always made me. It's like he always wanted me to do good, so I did good. You know, 'cause I had somebody there saying: "Come on you got to do this". But then after he's gone, I don't have him here and I know he'd be here saying that so I have to keep it up for him.

J: It sounds like you're still keeping it up.

N: Very much. [laughter]

J: And I hope you let him know, I'm sure you are. Well, so tell me more about Danny, when did you all meet and all that stuff?

N: It'll be three years ago this coming summer. We just met, it's like a fairy book, or a fairy tale or something like that. We were at a dance one night and I told a friend of mine that was, it was my sister's, I guess, it was my sister's. She had already graduated I suppose, I think, I can't remember. And one of her friends was there and he was one of my friends too and I said "Well, Ronnie, I'd like to dance with him" and he goes "Well, go over there and ask him." And I said "No, no, I'm too afraid". So he went over there and said "Hey she wants to dance with you". So we just started dancing and stuff and then, that night he had to go to his dad's down at Crawford because his parents are divorced and he had to go to Crawford and I told him "Well, will you call me tomorrow?" And he said "Well, I have to go to my dad's" and I

said "well OK." And so he called me and everything and the next night we went to play Putt-Putt and all those, you know. So we just started kind of seeing each other. I was only 13 but Mom and Dad would let him come out and then we could go to play Putt-Putt or whatever, you know. We just did little things together and stuff and he just... We've stayed together and stayed together and then we broke up, I guess it was, Oh, I can't even remember. I don't remember, it was either the following summer or the summer after that. I think it was the following summer, it was almost a year and we broke up and I dated a couple of other guys and stuff because I was still only 14 but Mom and Dad said "OK, I know this guy, you can." And so... Then we just kept... and then after that we, he went out with a girl from Mitchell and we got back together and everything because, I mean, I was young, I'm still young but we really did care a lot about each other. Nobody understood that, but we really did and he, I think we both really got to missing each other after we were gone and stuff. So then we got back together and we've been together ever since.

J: Now are you all engaged now?

N: Well, my mother doesn't want to believe that but he asked me but I was like "Well, you know, I don't want Mom and Dad to not be there and you know, understand and everything". I know that we've been together for almost three years but to them, you know I'm still their little baby and everything and it's like they don't want that. And so I'm kind of torn between what he wants and what Mom and Dad want and what I want.

J: Do you know what you want right now?

N: I would like, I want to go to college and everything and I don't see why we couldn't go ahead and get married and me go to college because it's sort of like, you think of college you think of parties... you think of going out and having a good time all the time and I'm not that type, I never have been and I don't think I ever will be because I like to just get stuck on the books, get it done. Get it over with. And so I think that whenever I go to college that's what I'll end up doing, I'm not the party type at all. So I'll be stuck to my studies and I think I could do it because my sister has done it. I mean, you know, like Linda, she didn't get married until a year ago but still, she had been in school for two years and Mom and Dad were afraid that whenever she got married she would drop out. And Steve told her, "NO, if you do we're getting a divorce".

J: No kidding?

N: No kidding. he told her that because he wanted her to finish

and he knew she would finish if he told her that, you know, and so it was kind of like a way of getting her to finish. And I think she talked about maybe dropping out for a semester and then going back and he said "No, you're not doing that." So I don't see what it's going to hurt. It takes a lot to run a household but still, you know, it doesn't... It wouldn't be too bad I don't think.

J: I remember you mentioning in Mr. Walker's class I can't remember if you said it was your parents or your grandparents or just older people, you know. Or was it you or was it your friend? Saying people say "No, No, wait you're just too young."

N: Yes, it's like...

J: [deletion]

N: Oh, yes. I thought she was going to go on. I won't comment any on that but it's like all these older people are trying to tell you what's good for you. They never, whenever they were growing up, they had their parents telling them the same thing and then look they made the same mistakes too. It's almost like a regular thing. It's something that's supposed to happen and I don't think that they should try changing what, what we want. I mean, we may be just kids and stuff but you know, they should let us learn from our own mistakes I believe. That's my belief.

J: When you say it's just a regular thing, you mean their parents would tell them not to get married and they'd go ahead and get married anyway and it's just....

N: And they would make the same mistakes that their parents made and I'll make the same mistakes that my parents made... What's it going to hurt, my parents are doing fine now. I mean, my parents they were together a year or two during high school and then I think they waited a year after they got out of high school. And they got married then, like the following year and they're doing just fine, you know. So it's like they keep telling me "Well, you know, I don't think you should do this". And it's like, leave me alone, I'm going to do what I want to do. And I think also any time parents say "I don't want you to do this" that makes a kid want to do it even more.

J: Do you think that's, do you think it's taken place here?

N: No. No, 'cause Mom and Dad they never really tell me straight out "No you can't do this." They'll say maybe ... Well like if I want to go out or something one night, Mom will say something like "Well, you got out running around too much". And I say

"Well, Mom there's nothing to do here. I'd rather go out and be with my friends and be a teenager." And so then it's like she's not really telling me no but she's kind of voicing her own opinion, in her own little way, so it's sort of like that.

J: Just out of curiosity, are many of your friends, are they planning on getting married?

N: A lot more than you'd think. I think a lot more now than, well for instance my sister graduated in '86 and then I mean, her class mates weren't even thinking of it. And now it's like, there's a girl in our class that's getting married like this summer or something and there are several senior that are either already gotten married or are getting married. And there's just a lot more these days. It's not, I don't think it's, I mean there's no pressure involved. I don't think, it's just what they want to do. That's because they're doing it, because they want to.

J: I guess I would think that just because, I guess my impression was in general people were marrying later, you know. I guess, why do you think, do you think it just kind of worked out this way because... right now there seem to be more?

N: I'm not sure, I think, like I said, that's just how they want it to be. And that's what they're doing. Because it's like me and Danny, I mean, 'cause I met him when I was like 13 or 14 and whatever but it's like I've been with him ever since. I know that I don't want to be with any body else because while he's gone he gives me a chance to go running around with my friends and I run around with my friends that are guys too. But it's like I have no interest and it's not just because of Danny. It's just plain out because I have no interest. Danny is everything I want and you know, I think we could make it together. So... I think it's more things like that. Plus with all the pregnancies around here... the seniors especially. I don't think there's one junior that's pregnant this year. It's either sophomores or seniors.

J: Oh, are there very many?

N: Yes.

J: Like how many? like 5, 10, 15?

N: I'd say all together in the high school probably 10 or so maybe 15.

J: What I remember from high school too there were always a couple. Is that about average?

N: I don't know, it's just been the last couple of years really. I mean, it's just like, well, I did this thing over sex education, a term paper. And I got into some really interesting details about it and everything and research that had been done on why there were so many more pregnancies now than there was before. And it said that, you know, that parents weren't telling their kids enough like they used to or whatever. And the kids aren't learning, that's why they want sex education in schools, 'cause they're not learning. And I think that some of it is, well in Paoli anyway, some of it is like parents who don't really care. They don't really care what happens and their kids are kind of on their own anyway. So you know, what else is there? So, but I think there are a lot more than there used to be. When I was a freshman there was maybe two or three that were seniors and if you're a senior well, that's OK. You know, because you're graduating and you'll be out of school anyway so it doesn't really matter but sophomores... that's another story.

J: I was wondering as I sat there in class, is there any like planned parenthood kind of thing?

N: Yes, there are some planned parenthood around here but it's right across from Pizza Hut. It's like, you get seen down there and it's like, a that -- you're out of the crowd. And it's just, I think it's too out in the open.

J: That's unfortunate location.

N: I think if it was somewhere else than a lot more people would go because it would be their privacy and you know, and if they saw somebody coming in or coming out then it wouldn't be any big deal 'cause it's like, hey I'm in the same boat you are. But now whenever you get in to the fact that it's right there in town.

J: Shoot, that's unfortunate.

N: Then it's like, people see you because people drive by right there on the main drag right there all the time. And people always look down there and stuff just to see who's around and they see you down there and it's like: "Yup, she's got a disease or something". And it's almost like that, like you have a disease.

J: Oh, really? Wow, that's really unfortunate. What will happen, those ten that you mentioned are very many of them going to get married or?

N: [pause] 2, let's see. About 2 or 3 I know are... I can't

remember who all they are really. But I know most of them either already are or are getting married.

J: Oh, really?

N: Yes, I mean, there was a case of a girl at school who was pregnant and she has a baby and the guy said that he was going to marry her and he didn't do it. He didn't want to have anything to do with her, he wanted the baby but he didn't want to have anything to do with her. He just didn't care about her any more. And so they got into a big conflict there, and he in turn, this year, got another girl pregnant and married her. And he's out of school now, he graduated last year, I believe. And so this other girl though, the first one, she's still in school, she graduates this year. And I don't know, she's seeing some other senior guy but it's like I don't see how a senior girl can go out with another guy that, I just can't see it. It's like you have a kid at home, you know. If, I mean people do it all the time but it's hard to believe that she could do that so soon and then .... Like me and Danny, it's like....

J: Maybe she's, after that happened maybe she...

N: I guess, maybe I don't know. But I mean, 'cause me and Danny we just want to kind of kick back and just have some fun and stuff and then in a couple of years, whenever we're married and everything, no problem but.... Right now, I don't think so.

J: Yes, boy, that must be rough though starting a family right now.

N: I don't see how they can do it, I mean I really don't. I know a girl that I think she was [tape turned off -- phone rings]. This girl that was pregnant her senior year, I believe, and then she quit school, went ahead and got married, had the baby. Then she got pregnant again and she had another one the following year and she's got two kids right now, but she should be a senior in high school. My cat, did you hear her downstairs, ignore her. [laughter] But she's doing OK, she's not hurting for anything because they have a house and everything of their own and he's was in service but then, I don't know, something happened and he got out but he's working around here somewhere now. She's got her own little business of some sort.

J: That's good.

N: So they're not doing too bad but I just hate to see people do that. I don't see any problem with getting married but having kids when you're that young...



J: Starting out that way, and plus I mean, I think one thing if you do marry young, you need some time to, just being you two together.

N: Yes, that's the way me and Danny think too. And I think, you know, I want to get through college and all that and plus get a start on my career and everything first.

J: Tell me, before I ask you about that, tell me about Danny and why did he join the service?

N: Because he had no future in Paoli for one, I mean around here you either work in a factory all your life or be a bum all your life. And well, not the case really with my parents because my mom she kind of worked her way up to the top really. Because she started out as a teller and now she's vice president of the bank.

J: No kidding. Where?

N: Down at Springs Valley. She started out as a teller, she didn't ever go to college, nothing. And she's the vice president now.

J: And actually we haven't talked about your parents. What's your mom's name?

N: Reita.

J: Reita Murphy was her maiden name?

N: Yes.

J: And you dad's name is Homer?

N: Omer. O-M-E-R.

J: Oh, you know what? I thought the H was off. That's real funny. [laughter] Omer OK. So did your mom work when you were growing up, when did she start working?

N: Oh, yes, she's worked all of my life.

J: I figured that.

N: She's, I don't know what she did whenever me and Linda were just babies, but I remember whenever I was about 3 or 4 years old, I would go to the babysitter's every day. And it wasn't bad because we had all the other little kids running around too. And

that wasn't bad at all but then when I stated school it was like, you know, I don't want to go to school. And Mom didn't take me to school, it was, I don't remember the first day of school or anything, but I remember Mr. Fancher. It was a friend of mine's grandfather, he was taking care of me and this little girl and he would take us to school and pick us up and everything 'cause we went to school together. I cried and I screamed and I don't know if I would have done that if my mom had of been there, you know. But I mean, it wasn't like she wasn't there for me, 'cause she was.

J: Like would she be home when you got home? Like during elementary school?

N: No because first grade and stuff I'm not sure, but in Kindergarten we'd get out half a day and so i'd have to go back to the babysitter's and she'd pick me up.

J: But how about like 2nd, 3rd, 4th grades?

N: I can't really remember. During, well at about 4th and 5th my sister and me would be here and Mom and Dad would be home later on about five o'clock usually.

J: Did your mom work, was it pretty much that two wage that the family needed both salaries or did she just want to work?

N: I think, I kind of think it was a little bit of both. I think we kind of needed the money but, I don't know about that really. 'Cause Dad works in a factory, he still does, except right now he's on the road. He goes places and fixes buses instead of having to bring them to Mitchell town to fix there because it's cheaper just to send a couple of guys somewhere and fix them. So he just does that, he used to do that also I guess it was back in '78. I think he quit that job in '78 and he had that for 4 years. And so I can just barely remember that but other than that he was a welder over at the Mitchell plant. The bus plant, Carpenters.

J: It's in Mitchell, it's the Best plant?

N: The BUS plant.

J: Oh, the bus plant, OK.

N: It's called Carpenter's.

J: Ok and he was a welder there?

N: Yes, well he basically still is except they put him on another

job for a while.

J: Oh, so now he goes out and ...

N: And whenever he goes back to the plant, one of these days, after he gets done with his road job, it's like if he doesn't want it any more, then they'll put it up for bid. And somebody else that wants it will take it and he'll go back to his job.

J: Ok and your mom's working at the bank. Well how does you dad feel when he hears you say that there's, you know, that there's nothing to do in Paoli except work in a factory?

N: He's like "Well, I got a few jobs I can have you do around here". You know, I don't know he just. That's hard to say 'cause he never really says too much about it. It's like I said, he says "Well I got plenty of things you can do". Especially in the summer time. But like Danny that's kind of his philosophy too. there's just not much around here. It's not like we hate the town or anything, it's just that we both want a little bit more out of life. It's not like we've had any thing bad provided for us, 'cause we've... well, I don't know, he's kind of had it a little bit rough because of his parents being divorced and all. But I mean, I have nothing to complain about, you can see. I mean, I've got everything in the world I could ever ask for or even want. But I mean, he didn't have the money to go to college and he didn't want to spend the rest of his life working up at Riley's and so, well got to go in the service. Well, he wanted to go in the Air Force but he couldn't do that and so then they took him in the Navy so he decided to go. I was heart-broken, I was like "No, you can't leave me here." And he said "Well, I'll be back, we'll be together." That's all he could tell me, "we'll be together one of these days, we'll be together". Yes.

J: So how does it work? Does he, did he sign up for, does he have a commitment for so many years or?

N: Yes, until '92.

J: So like 3 years?

N: 4.

J: OK and when he's finished with that, what's he doing there? What will his specialty be?

N: He's aviation electrician which is a pretty good field.

J: Yes, so then after that he'll have something that he can...

N: Well, now see he wants to stay in, I think. I mean he's not real sure, at first he really didn't want to stay in. He wanted to get out after four years. But it's getting better, benefits are getting better and the all around job is getting better. And so I think that maybe he'll want to stay in.

J: Just out of curiosity, it just occurred to me for both of you, for Danny too, if there was a possibility, I guess for you I know the answer that you probably wouldn't want to stay. If there was an opportunity to get the type of job that you wanted here, would that effect your decision to leave or not?

N: If I could, well see I want to be an accountant and he really doesn't have anything he wanted to do, I don't believe. Like whenever he went into the Navy they told him these are the jobs you can do. You know, pick a couple of them and so that was something he picked. I kind of wish he would have went into drafting because he's an excellent drawer, I mean he can draw anything. And I mean drafting is a lot different from just free hand but still it's got a lot to do with it. But I think that we would probably both stay here, I mean if we could, if it was what we wanted. I mean if there was more around here.... More....

J: So it's not just the job, it's just like you were saying before a bit more...

N: A bit more stuff, for kids to grow up around. Not just hanging around the square every Saturday night 'cause I don't like to, I like to be up there with my friends and stuff. I just wish we had some place else to go.

J: How many kids hang out there? From the way the parents talk about it I just except this mob or something.

N: Well, not basically on the square. They try, we spread it around town because if we sit up on the square we're considered hoods. We can't go to Pizza Hut parking lot like we used to because the police run us off. They say "No this isn't," you know " You can't be here unless you're a patron of Pizza Hut" or whatever. And so they say that we're always over there busting beer bottles and stuff like that, some of the kids do that but not all of them. And it's like some of us just want to stop and talk and you know....

J: Have a place to go?

N: Yes, but that's just not possible around here. They were talking about getting a teen center going. I really don't thing

that will work.

J: Why? Just ....

N: Well, they were talking about like, video games and pool tables and all that. Well pool tables, if you want to go play pool you go up to the pool hall. No matter if you want to be around the hoods or not. My friends even go up there and they're not hoods. People just think you go up there and you're a hood but you're really not. And video games every body has got computers these days and a lot of kids would much rather be at home, sometimes. Like by their selves because I think, like with me, with Dad being gone all the time and every thing and my sister not living at home any more, it's just me and Mom really. I come home after school, and if I don't have to go to work I kind of enjoy time alone. And it's not like, whenever Mom comes home, I'm leaving but it's not because I don't want to be with her, it's just 'cause I want to go out and do stuff then. It's not like I just don't want to stay here and stuff.

J: But you enjoy the kind of quiet?

N: Yes, by myself, more or less. Just to have a few minutes to stop and think about stuff or watch TV or do whatever I want, you know. Little bit of freedom.

J: Do many people join, you know sign up for service?

N: They have been lately. I mean, in the last couple of years ... Danny's senior year especially, the following summer on there were several in his class that signed up. An ex-boyfriend of mine did and the twins, there were a set of twins in his class, they both did. They were both at Danny's...

J: Oh, that's who I talked about I think. Carol Morris Mark and Mike....

N: Morgan.

J: Morgan. No.

N: Mark and Mike Morgan.

J: Oh. They're... how can that be, they're from a first marriage or something?

N: Yes, probably yes. She's been divorced and remarried.

J: Right that must be it. OK right.

N: Yes, they were both in, they were all three in Boot Camp together. And that was something because they were all in the same squadron, platoon, whatever, and they were always getting them mixed up because they're identical twins. It's like they were always getting them mixed up. So, but it's kind of like Danny the way he did, because there was nothing around here for him. So and they don't have the money.

J: How do you think your parents feel about you taking off? Seeing what they do? Do they think about it, do they know about it?

N: Well I was telling a friend of mine, the other night I went to a tanning bed, I was changing, I was getting ready to come out and I told the friend of mine that runs it. I said "I think me and Danny might get married next summer but not too many people know about it." I said "You know, it's kind of what we're hoping for but we don't know for sure". And she, I heard her talking to Mom and she said "I hear Stephanie's getting married next summer." And I thought I was just going to die, I thought Oh! No!, 'cause Mom didn't really... She kind of suspects I believe. Mom believes that... but I don't think she really wants to see it 'cause she thinks like everybody says "You're making a big mistake, you're going to regret it."

J: You're too young.

N: "You're too young to be making those big decisions." And it was like, well, it's what I want to do so if I make the mistake that's my problem, my problem to correct. I'd rather be happy with what I'm doing and have something go wrong and be down in the dumps about it and then correct it and be OK again. Than to have somebody tell me what to do and it not be what I want to do and be miserable the rest of my life, so... That's kind of my philosophy.

J: [pause] What do you, let's see. What, you've been here 16 years now,...

N: Almost 17, I'm counting.

J: In your 17 years' of experience here, have you seen any changes? Do you feel like anything has changed?

N: It may not look like it to you but we have grow a little bit. I mean things or new places are popping up, like Paoli Peaks for instance, and we got this Hillery Hill thing on which I don't know too much about. And I don't know there's not a whole lot to

be changed I don't think. Except for...

END SIDE TWO TAPE ONE

N: I never shut up so I'll be a good subject for it, you know.

J: So the Peaks and what else? And you mentioned... I don't mean physical things but just is there anything about, you know, the feel of the place or the people or just anything that seems like it's changed that you've noticed?

N: I don't really know 'cause I haven't paid too much attention before, you know. It's kind of like I've always been here and I've gotten to know everybody. it's like I said a while ago, I can go into town and have 7 people wave at me.

J: So do you pretty much know everyone in town or?

N: I know a lot of people, I don't know everybody. The younger generation yes, I know a lot of from about 15 to 21, that age range, those people are the ones that I kind of know and can wave at whenever I see them or whatever 'cause I know. I don't know them personally but I know them and I talk to them once in a while and ....

J: So things seem pretty much the same to you?

N: Yes, I guess so, same old boring stuff. [laughter]

J: But you said too that you like walking downtown and knowing a lot of people?

N: yes I used to, before I got my licence last summer, I would ride my bike all the time, in the summer time and I mean, everybody knew me as the girl on the red 10-speed. Because I rode my bike every day, ride into town, go down to the pool, ride around town a little bit then come home that afternoon. Because Mom and Dad was at work so I didn't have anything to do during the day and stuff and I kind of got to know more people I think that way and stuff. And you kind of notice things, you hear about things, people did and things like that. And some of the things you're kind of shocked at. It's like in a big city, you hear somebody that you've heard of that has died or something like that and you don't think too much of it. Here somebody dies, you know and it's like you're amazed, you can't believe it. There was a guy just recently that he had been in the Druthers that same day. And then that night at midnight he died, and I knew him ever since I was this big. I mean, because he would, everybody knew him because he would go around giving the kids gum all the

time. He would buy packs of gum, you know, and just go around giving them gum. And he was the sweetest old man you ever saw but everybody kind of thought he was a little bit weird. But everybody knew him and it was like, I don't know, whenever he died everybody kind of felt it like that because we're so small. Such a small community then everybody knew him.

J: Who was this, by the way?

N: His name was Louie Baker.

J: Well, so do you think that you pretty much hear, either through your friends or parents or what not, pretty much what's going on in the town?

N: Yes, there's a lot of gossip. Town gossip. It reminds me of Little House on the Prairie, the little town that "Oh, did you hear about so and so doing this?". You know, and stuff.

J: Pretty much at school or everywhere?

N: Everywhere.

J: Everywhere.

N: I can't think of anything that changed. How it's changed, that's a hard question. It's hard to say.

J: Well how about your parents or older people, do they ever talk about, 'this changed or that's changed'?

N: Oh, my! Popeye and Sally. It's an older couple, they live down the road from us and I've known them ever since I was born they've always been there and everything, my mom used to work with Sally. And they were just like my grandparents, they never had any kids. Sally has a sister that lives here and I think Popeye has a brother and sister maybe that live here, and they call him Popeye his real name is Norman. But I don't know how he got the name Popeye. He used to drive the school bus and everything. It was just like they know, you can ask them, they know the whole town, I mean they just know everybody around here. And we, me and my sister, we used to go down there all the time when we were real little and now we go down there: "Oh, I remember the time you did this, and oh yes." They remember exact words of what we said, and it's like "I said that, I did that?" And it's just hard to believe, that's, you know, it's hard for me to believe that they can remember all that really. I mean they remember a lot and it's kind of embarrassing whenever you go down there with friends or whatever.



J: Right, a boyfriend?

N: Yes. Especially.

J: But so is your impression that things get around pretty well?

N: Yes. The problem is you can say something and it will end up on the other side of town as something else, you know. Totally different story but it's still the fact that you say something to one person and the whole town knows.

J: Does it seem that way? Does it seem like you know pretty much what's going on in the whole town?

N: Yes, always.

J: Not just with your group of people?

N: No, you always. I mean, in my personal opinion, I mean it's like you always know what's going on. If there's something that happens, a car accidents, you know about it. It's like you hear the sirens or the whistles, I mean as we're closer to town we can hear the sirens and whistles from town and we call, immediately we call and find out, you know, somebody who's got a scanner, like my grandparents have a scanner and stuff. We say "Well who was it? What's going on?" And like at the peaks there was an accident or something during the winter and it involved some friends of mine, she's not really a close friend but she goes to school with me, she's a junior. And we heard about it, it was a senior and junior, a senior girl and a junior boy's mother had collided with this other junior girl. And it was a pretty bad accident because there mother was almost to the point where she died. And you know, you hear about it just like that, it was a major accident and probably in a big city you wouldn't have heard too much about it. But around here, I mean everybody was concerned, everybody was going "Oh, I feel so sorry for those kids", you know. And everybody knew both of them. So ...

J: Is that just for like really bad emergencies like that or in a more general way?

N: Just everything.

J: Like "Oh, that Stephanie she's getting married."

N: Yes. Everything. Stuff like that, you hear all that all the time. Like "So and so is getting married" or "so and so's got a divorce" or even like "so and so got a speeding ticket," you

know.

J: I've never really, I did not grow up in a small town. So I guess I was wondering how does it make you feel when you think that people know your business?

N: I don't really care, I mean if it's something I don't want people to know about, I've got my friends that don't tell things and I've got my friends that if I want something to be known then I tell them, you know. And so it's like if I'm really dying inside to tell somebody something then I'll tell these friends over here but then if I don't really care what people say, I'll tell them both, you know. or something like that.

J: I guess that's what you work out?

N: Yes.

J: Well, all right. I'll keep that in mind. [laughter]

N: Yes.

J: But I think, we started talking about whether older people ever tell you that things have changed very much?

N: They [pause]

J: Let's start with your parents. Do they ever?

N: Well, not really. I can't, I can't ever remember them, I may just have forgotten about it but [pause] it's well like there's little things like they did in high school that they'll maybe say "well, that's changed since I was in high school". Just little stuff like that. But as far as the whole community goes, I really don't think it's changed that much.

J: Is that your impression?

N: That's the way I take it, I really don't think it's changed a whole lot. I just don't see how it could really because it's so small that ... I don't think so. I just don't think so. I don't know what other people have said about that.

J: Well, I really haven't talked to very many of them, you know people. Actually in terms of, you're the youngest person yet. I think the next one is 21 or something, yes and Susan was 21-23. So, but still.

N: Now maybe if I come back in about 10 years or something like

that then I could see a big difference. But things that happened when I was like 5, any where between 5-10 I don't really remember. And I think that, you know, being older I'll remember it later on and stuff. So I would say it will change but I just haven't noticed it too much. It's always been good old Paoli to me.

J: [pause] OK at the high school. let me ask you about that. Well, one of the things we're talking about change. One of the things older people had mentioned to me, and I think I may have mentioned it to the class is that, before there was more of a distinction made between town and country people? You know, or town and farming. And I wondered is that still?

N: At school you can always, people always know if you live in town or in the country. I don't know why, everybody just knows, it's kind of like "I know you live in the country and you live in town and you live in the country." And like that. It's not like it's a curse or anything, it doesn't make any difference. I think everybody tries to treat each other the same whether they live in country or not, but people, I think people from the bigger towns might think, seeing a small town like us that in the country it's the poor people or the less fortunate and in the city it's the business types. And that kind of thing. I don't think that's true because I'm sure, I can't think of anyone off hand but I know that there's people that live in the country that are business type and stuff like that around here and just because you live in the country doesn't mean that you have a farm, and you do all this. Because you can live in the country just because you want to get away and it helps you out, I mean like form a hard day's work. You can just get out of the town and go home and be nice and peaceful and quiet. Have few cars drive through in the afternoon and that's it.

J: Have a big yard to look out like you all have.

N: Yes. And if you want to go mushroom hunting, or something like that, just to relax and stuff like that then you know, it's no problem. But it kind of makes me, doesn't really make me mad but it kind of makes me wonder why people think that "Oh, this is a hick town", you know. And we're really not.

J: Do you think people do?

N: I think people do.

J: What people do? Are these like tourists?

N: The bigger cities.

J: OK

N: People think of a smaller town, they think of a hick town. But I don't think we are because we have businesses in town just like a bigger city but yet we don't have like New York City the Stock Exchange and all that stuff, you know. Millionaires running around, 'cause we don't. We've got our few rich people here and there but just because you live on a farm... I know there's a farmer at school that's a teacher, I believe you interviewed him, Mr. Jackson. [deletion]

J: I know.

N: And he's a farmer. Now you tell me if a person came from a big city and they met this man, they would think "Oh, he's just an old hick farmer."

J: And he lives in this town of 3500.

N: And he has a job, he's got all this money and yet he lives in the country. What makes the difference whether you live? Shouldn't make any difference.

J: That's really interesting, for whatever reason kids still, I mean people, or anyway at school kids still, kids are aware of what their, if you're from the town or from the country?

N: Yes, and I think like more the, this will probably be something I'll mark out but.

J: That's why we do it this way.

N: But doctor's kids I think that they tend to associate more with each other maybe. And, or more people of the higher class instead of the kids from the country. But there's kids from the country that are just as smart as the sons and daughters of the doctors and that irritates me sometimes whenever people... Like my parents aren't extremely wealthy but they do good, I mean there's nothing that we don't have that we really need, 'cause we've got everything we need really. But yet, I think some of the wealthier people here in town think that we're not in the wealthier class so they should associate with them. But yet they do, but it's only like if they get to know somebody from the country or something like that, then that's fine. But me, it's like if they don't get to know me, they'll never find out who I am and stuff like that. I don't know if you know what I'm talking about.

J: So...

N: It's like they are here and I might be down here. But the farmers and stuff, they think are below me but they might by accident meet one of the farmer kids and something like that and "Hey, I like him". But yet they won't give me a second chance.

J: Right, so if they get to know the person almost by accident... If they get to know the person and get to like the person then it won't really matter but just as a way of framing up the world, those are farmers and ....

N: But then those of us in school that have lived here all our lives, that are my age, like we've gotten to know each other more and stuff like that. And I don't consider, ever since I was little I've always wanted to be by myself, I didn't want to have a lot of people around me all the time and a lot of friends because I think whenever you do that you get into trouble. Why not just be friends with everybody and not have your own little group. I think if more people would just try to be on their own and not try to do what other people want them to do, and just do what they want then they'd be much happier.

J: The way I remember high school, it may just be part of high school. There are a lots of cliques and stuff.

N: Yes.

J: Like kind of what you're talking about and that kind of thing. And you're saying that it would be better if people had a bunch of little cliques they associated with and not just one?

N: Yes. That's what I do and I'm happy. I mean I go out with my friends and stuff and one night, like on a Friday night, OK tonight. I'm planning to go to town, look to see who's in town, there are a few people I need to see, you know. And few of my friends I need to ask them some stuff and whatever. And if I see a couple more of my friends I might say "well, come on let's go riding around a little bit or let's go to Valley or Orleans." Or something like this. And then maybe tomorrow night I'll see a couple of different friends and I'll go out with them and it's not like, I don't see how people can stand to be around the same group of people all the time. 'Cause I'm just the type of person where I've got to have different people around me, 'cause I get sick of people after I'm around them too long. I mean I get so sick of them being there, day in and day out, all the time. Calling me everyday, me calling them everyday, whatever.

J: Plus seeing them at school a lot.

N: Yes. It's almost to the point where you get sick of people. A friend of mine that I've had ever since I was in kindergarten, like me and her we'll stick together for a little while and we'll see each other all the time. And I'll go to school and "Hi. Steph. how you doing?" and everything 'cause she's Stephanie too. [laughter] and I'll say "Hi. Steph how you doing?" and everything. And then like that night we'll plan to go and do something and then the next day we'll see each other at school and then that night we'll go do something. And that gets kind of old and you get kind of sick of each other and you kind of get on each other's nerves. And then we take a break and she goes with her other friends and I go with my other friends. Then a few weeks later, you know, it'll be the same thing, especially in the summer time. Ever since I can remember, every summer we practically spend the whole summer together. And we don't get sick of each other I mean, because, you know, we've been really good friends ever since kindergarten, so... which is OK, I mean it's OK to have a close friend that you get sick of every once in a while.

J: Yes and the whole thing about cliques. You mentioned that doctor's children and of course I've heard a lot about doctors and stuff like that. What I was going to ask you about is have you noticed many newcomers coming to town, like in your classes are there?

N: There's like one or two every year. There's a couple...

J: like a couple new kids at school show up?

N: Yes. Like, well I take that back. it's like a couple about anywhere from 2 to 6 during the whole school year in our class alone. That's not including all the other classes and everything. And like they'll have brothers or sisters in a smaller class or whatever and then they'll be a few in the seniors and sophomores and freshmen. And all that. It's kind of like in a way whenever they come in you would think that they wouldn't be accepted but what I hear all the time is the first thing people look at "Oh. She's ugly." or "Oh. She's pretty." or "Oh. He's cute", you know. "OH, gosh. He's such a dog!" or something like that. And people go by looks, well then somebody will eventually go up to them and say "Hi, how are you? My name is so and so." And they get to know them and they kind of become a part of everybody in that class. And then they kind of associate with everybody else and kind of just fit in. I think it would be a lot easier coming into a small town than a big town. Easy.

J: Why do you think that?

N: 'Cause there's not so many people to know and if I, I always wondered what would happen if we ever moved to a bigger city and I had to go to school because I would be the outsider and all these people would be running around knowing what they were doing and I'd be just standing here, going "Where am I?" Our school is so little, I mean it's pretty small compared to the bigger cities and people come here from bigger towns and bigger cities and I say "Whatever made you come to a town like this?" I said "This is such a small town, how did you even find it?" I always ask them this and they say "Well, my parents moved here for business reasons." or something like that. "They found a job in Paoli?" And "well, no, not exactly in Paoli but around here." And so I ask them after a couple of days "Well, how you liking it here?" "Oh, yes, I like it just fine. Everybody is real nice and everything". And it's because they get to know everybody just easy. It's not like, sometimes there's people that come in and they think they're the big shots and everything and that makes everybody mad, that kind of upsets everybody because we've been here longer than you have, so you just kind of let us lead you along. And then you can be part of us but I don't know as long as they don't do that, I don't think there's any problem but... some of them just get big heads about it. And some of them, right now, it is almost like a job. You come in and you're at the bottom of the ladder and you have to move your way on up and I kind of feel like I've been here 16 years and you know, all my life. So I think I should be a manager or something like this you know, and people come in and they'll be all the way down here and they'll pass me up. Just like that and it's like all my friends will be hanging around them more than me because they're new and they want to get to know them and everything. And yet they're ahead of me now, and I got to catch up to them and yet I don't. More people come in and everything but I don't know. I think it's easy for them to adjust 'cause there's not so much to know about the town and everything. Like, it's easy to get around because it's not so big and everything like that. I think the size has a lot to do with it.

J: But what you're saying about cliques, though, there are cliques but they're not, you know, so no one can get in?

N: Yes. It's, I don't know. Well, like some of my friends and stuff, they're my friends but yet they go and they do their own thing and it's like you might not be a part of their group but they'll say "Hi" to you and stuff. I mean, you don't have to be part of that group or whatever.

J: The kids you were talking about that go straight up like that, are they like, you know, you were talking about...

N: the doctors' kids?

J: yes.

N: No. I don't think, no.

J: Is it more kids like that from that kind of background?

N: No. They just, I think it's got to do, I like it whenever somebody new comes in because it's a change. It's another change, like I was saying there's nothing around here, well somebody new comes in you want to hang around them and hear their stories, their things. Somebody else you can talk to and share with them your feelings and stuff.

J: Yes.

N: There was a girl that came here this year and she was a sophomore, she was married. And everybody in her biology class couldn't believe a sophomore married, you know. And we knew the guy she was married to, he was from here, he was in the service. He graduated with Danny and we couldn't believe, you know. Man she's married to him. But then we got to know her and it was like, well, she's OK, she's a nice person. She was like a lot like me because we both worked on school work a lot. And didn't, during school we didn't have time for extra stuff and so me and her during biology everyday we'd get to talking and stuff. We had a lot in common because of Danny and [deletion], her husband. And so we'd sit there and talk about them and "Oh, yes. He wrote me today" and all this. He's not in the navy he's in the air force, I think. So and it's easier to relate to people if you have something in common whenever when they come in.

J: Yes, and actually that's a good point too about kids from different places are just someone new. You know everyone else, you've been going to school here for 10 or 12 years. I hadn't thought about that.

N: But like Stephanie, her parents and my parents have known each other for a long time and everything and we didn't really grow up together until we got to know each other in kindergarten and all. And so there we had a lot in common because of our parents and all. I don't know, I think they, her dad is, he works in the factory and her mom's a teachers aid for a school teacher and [deletion]. But they're like us, they're doing OK, I mean they don't have that much problems. Me and Stephanie do have a lot in common and I think that's why we get a long, I think the more you have in common with somebody the more you get along with them and



that's why the doctors' kids, the upper class, middle class and lower class that's where they're all separated. Because they don't have as much in common with each other.

J: Do you think like someone mentioned to me before, like in the 50s or something like that, that they thought there were more distinct classes, you know. And this women, she mentioned that when the doctors came in somehow it may have kicked that up into gear more. Do you think that, does it seem to you like there are different classes, you know of people?

N: Oh,. yes. I think anywhere you go there is. 'Cause like the doctors, and then I don't know, it would be the doctors and lawyers and that type of thing and then the major business people. And then just like people like us, you know that have good business jobs or whatever. And then there's the families that have both factory mother and father, people that both their parents work in factories. And then you got the parents who the man works and the woman stays home with the kids. And then you've got other classes put in there, like the farmers and stuff like that too. And I think there's a lot of, it kind of depends on... I think, well, like if I was, if I was real poor or whatever, like there's one section of town over by school that kind of the poor lower class. You kind of drive through there and you see all these little kids that are just filthy and dirty and all this and everything.

J: Is that like Sandy Hook?

N: No this is over by school, there's ummm.

J: Oh, yes. Like on the left side.

N: And you just drive through there and it's like all these old houses and everything and you can't believe these people are living there 'cause you see your house and then you compare it to their's and it's like, there's no way. And I think that if I was on a lower level then not so many people would associate with me. And since I'm up here, you know and I've got all, what all we have, then people... In English we were talking about friends and the ten commandments that friends should have. And one of them that somebody made up was don't take for granted your friends possessions. And I think that was a good one because if you have a friend that doesn't have as much money as you have or whatever, that shouldn't make any difference. If I had a friend that had all this stuff, that I wish, I wish Oh I could have. Or clothes I wish I should have, then I shouldn't worry about how much money they have or how much stuff they have, I should just worry about their friendship and stuff.

J: And not like them because of all the things that they have. Do you think, I just want to ask one more question about all these, the newcomers. I guess my impression was, or is, that like parents or families or whatever that have more professional type jobs or something like that that move or something. Is that true or some of them also coming in to work at the factories?

N: I think that it's mostly commuting and something because they can't right away afford to move into that town like Louisville, for instance. Since this is a smaller town, we've got a lot of houses being built so therefore people are moving out...

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N: And then they move and commute back and forth and then after they get enough money, after they get going and stuff then they move to Louisville where they can, if they can afford it they move down there. Otherwise they just keep driving back and forth. So I think it's because the smaller towns it's cheaper, it is to rent or to buy a house or whatever. I think that's why.

J: Maybe some of them, some of them have mentioned anyway that people come because they want their kids to be raised, to grow up in a good environment, you know.

N: Yes. Paoli is not that bad of a town, I mean you've got druggies and stuff like that, like people say who hang out on the square but not all of them are. And then you've got things that happen around town and stuff like that, break-ins, once in a while, once in a great while. But other than that it's just kind of a good little community.

J: What to you have been the good points and the disadvantages of living in a small town like Paoli?

N: That's a hard one. Well, I met Danny, that's good. If I hadn't lived here I never would have met him. I don't know I think it's kind of easier growing up because you didn't have to worry about all the pressures of knowing people and stuff and I think I would just be lost if I moved to a big city. Like Danny was talking about he wanted to move to Norfolk and everything. Norfolk is big and yet it's not. I've never been there, I don't remember ever being there. But if I had of grown up in a big city I think I would have been a lot different. Because like now, I mean I'm real open because I grew up in a smaller town and I know everybody and I can talk to just about anybody I want to. But in a bigger city I don't think I'd have that freedom of doing that. So that's, I guess that's one good thing. I think now, like if I

in later years, after college and everything if I wanted to go to a job interview in a big city, I wouldn't feel so bad about it because I would be like OK, you know, I can handle this. I've been with so many people in my town and stuff, I can handle this. So that's kind of good I guess. Bad, I don't know.

J: Maybe there aren't any really....

N: Well, it's just it's hard to say, I mean. I've had a pretty good life, I don't really have too many complaints.

J: OK, [pause] well, let's see. Do you have any other thoughts?

N: I don't know what. For once I think I'm talked out. [laughter] I'll go to town and talk some more tonight.

J: Let me just look at this for a second and see if I got everything. [pause] No. OK, let's see. Well what do you think Paoli means to you? Oh, I guess I thought of one more. It's just about, and it just kind of came up in class and it just occurred to me right now. Differences between southern Indiana and northern Indiana. Do you think that, that there are or do you feel like there are any difference maybe being from southern Indiana or being from northern Indiana?

N: Of a town the same size or?

J: No. I mean more, do you think people have the impression that people in southern Indiana, that there's a difference between people in northern Indiana and people in southern Indiana?

N: Yes,...

J: Well, all right, let's say from a town, the same size.

N: Well, people up there would probably. I don't Indiana is more of like crops and stuff like that kind of state so there really wouldn't be too much difference. I think there's a lot of farming no matter where you go in Indiana because no matter where you go you see all this stuff, you know. I don't know, I kind of whenever I think of northern Indiana I kind of think they're about like we are, I would think, you know. I've never really visited, I mean I've been through towns and stuff but I've never really visited anywhere but I think they'd be about the same as we were. I mean, I don't think there would be that much of a difference. I just don't think there would be.

J: And then just any last thoughts or what does, you know, this is impossible... What do you think of when you think of Paoli?

N: Just a quiet little town that not a whole lot ever happens. [laughter] I mean, not a whole lot of big events and stuff. Yes, we have our little 4H fairs and that kind of thing but as far as in big cities you hear of all these people getting murdered everyday and all these big exciting things happening everything. Here it's just not like that. It's lie whenever people come from out of town, like I'll be skiing or something up at the Peaks or I'll be working up there and people will ask "What's there to do around here?" Well, not a whole lot, it's just kind of our own quiet little town. And they kind of look at me like, you mean there's this place here and there's nothing to do. But I tell them "I've lived here 16 years, I like it but I'm kind of like you, there's not much around here to do." And it's just like it is just our own quiet little town. And everybody knows everybody and I don't know, it does remind me a lot of Little House on the Prairie. [laughter]

J: I'm not that familiar. Just what about it?

N: Well because like you go into town, Charles Ingels he goes into town, he goes up to the general store or whatever and Mr. and Mrs. Olsen yell "Hi, Charles. How you doing?" you know. It's like here you walk out of Hooks or something and it's "Hi, Steph. How you doing?" And you get to know everybody through their businesses or whatever, I mean it doesn't....

J: It doesn't matter how much... OK all right, I guess we're both talked out.

N: Like I said I'll probably go to town after a while and talk to my friends though for another four hours.

J: Well you'll have to tell them that we got talked out. Thanks a lot Stephanie.

N: Your welcome.

J: I appreciate it.

END OF INTERVIEW

Interview with Stephanie Nicholson Strange, p. 40. Conducted by Catherine Jones,  
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