Andrews: The following interview is being conducted with Dolores Gilmore on behalf of the Washington Women’s History Consortium for the 1977 Ellensburg/Houston International Women’s Year Conference’s Oral History Project. The interview is taking place on May ninth at Dolores’ home in Kennewick. The interviewer is Mildred Andrews. As a beginning, Dolores, would you tell me briefly about your growing up years? Something about your family, your community and school? And how you developed your ideas about your role as a woman in the home and in society?

Gilmore: I was born in Osage, Iowa, on a farm. And I’m a middle child with a brother and sister on each side. No, I said that wrong. Yes, that’s right. And I had two sisters that did housework in the home. And my dad needed more help out on the farm, so I milked cows and did the farm work. And I made up my mind that farms were awfully hard work. And if possible, I would find a husband who was not a farmer. So I graduated from high school and wanted to be a nurse so badly, but my father couldn’t afford it. And in those days, there wasn’t government money to get loans.

So I was married, and we went to California. My husband finished getting his engineering degree. Now I will skip right to the number of children we had. We lost our first son. Then our next child was a daughter. The next two were sons. And then we had a set of twin girls that were born on the son’s birthday that we lost. And we always felt that God sent us those two to take the place of our first son. He was a hydrocephalic baby, and I carried him full term, in fact, two weeks over. And then another girl came, and then the set of twin boys. And they were only seven months old, but again the Lord was real good to us. They came out just fine. And one’s a doctor now and the other one’s a priest. And this is the home that we’re in here today. It’s our twenty-third home. My husband was an aeronautical engineer to start with, and then we moved here to Hanford for atomic energy. So this is where we’ve been now since 1968.

But before we came here, we lived in Mississippi for four years and I went to nursing school. I’ve always wanted to be a nurse. And it was the first state in the union that the government was, for a hundred dollars you could go two full years and get to be a nurse. But the class had to be half black and half white. So there was the six of us that got through nurses’ training, and I just loved it. And at the time I was in nurses’ training, I had gotten MS [multiple sclerosis]. In fact, the first parts of MS had come on before we moved there, but it just comes very slowly. I did graduate and worked in a hospital, and just loved it, for about two months. We moved to Washington.

My husband’s jobs have always depended upon the Congressional budget. Every two years they went through the budgets, and we had to move where NASA was hiring.

When we got here, I couldn’t work as a nurse, because I’d had brain surgery. The laws in the state of Washington were if you’d ever had brain surgery, you couldn’t work.
in a hospital. It is changed now, which is all right. So that’s when I got very active in being a Girl Scout leader. In fact, I was the girls’ leader all the way from Brownie till they’re seniors. And of course the twin girls were always in the same group. I had three Girl Scout troops at the same time. Took my boys through Cub Scouts. And usually, if we lived long enough in one place, was the city’s neighborhood chairman. Because I loved to organize things and help the girls get their badges. And it was just lots of fun.

I was in the church organizations for the youth. Always worked with the youth. So then when Referendum 20 in the state of Washington, which was the abortion law, Washington was the first state, the only state in the union, where the people voted in abortion. And then of course shortly after, the next year, it became a national law. So I organized Citizens for Youth to be pro-life and pro-family. We always went as teams, I and another man to lecture. We went around the state of Washington. We were hoping to overturn Roe vs. Wade. And we’ve been working on it ever since. Some day, with lots of prayers, we hope that it will come back to pro-life.

But I also got very interested in what was going on in education. My girls were bringing home material that was being taught in the schools that went against a lot of our Judeo-Christian values. So as I would lecture, I would lecture on pro-life and how it was being taught in school, and the other things that the young people were being taught. And that’s what I was doing when I got the tape from Oklahoma. The tape that I got from Oklahoma came to me about eleven days before the actual Ellensburg conference. I listened to it and knew that I really didn’t want to go, because I was real busy, and I had the children, and a lot of things that I had planned. But I prayed about it, because it kept bugging me that maybe I should go. And so I prayed to God that if I should get a phone call from someone who knew more about what was going to happen at Ellensburg, because I didn’t have a clue. I had not heard about it, didn’t know what it was going to be all about. But if it was anything about what was on the tape, I really didn’t want anything to do with it.

So I got a call in forty-five minutes from Dr. Kathleen Skrinar. She told me she was going to be a speaker. I cannot remember on what issue she was going to speak. She told me about the conference in Ellensburg. And she said, “Dolores, I really think you should go, because it will give you more knowledge, when you’re lecturing in the state of Washington.” And so I told her that yes, I would go, because I didn’t want her to be the only conservative lady there, and she’s a real good friend of mine.

So I called a meeting on Sunday. And that would have been the Sunday before the Friday when the conference opened. We had a meeting in my backyard for twelve ladies.

Andrews: Was Susan Roylance one of the twelve ladies at your meeting?

Gilmore: Susan was one of the twelve ladies. And one other Mormon lady came with her, whom I didn’t know at the time, but since then I’ve gotten to know her real well. And by the way, now, she has Parkinson’s Disease and is in really bad shape. And her husband was a lawyer. And he drove her up. He was the only man from the Tri-Cities.

Andrews: And what was their name?
Gilmore: His name was Lee Kerr. And I can’t remember her first name, but they still live in the Tri-Cities. But we talked about what we were going to do, and a friend of mine from the coast had a motor home. And we talked about that we were going to have to find housing for the ladies that would want to go. So Lorraine Job, who is now deceased, and myself, went to Ellensburg. Not on the Monday, but the Tuesday before the conference. On the Monday, I did phone calls for my Citizens for Youth chapters across the state, asked them if they had heard about it, and none of them had. I told them a little bit about what it was going to be about. It sounded like it would be very educational for our Citizens For Youth group. And if any of them would like to get there. And a lot of them did come from all over the state.

So then on Tuesday—oh, and my good friend, Dolores Glesener, who later on, after the Ellensburg conference, she was asked by our good friends, Dottie Roberts and Marcella Smith, that lived in the Tri-Cities, and another lady, I cannot remember her name, if she would share, or be the committee person for ERA, to educate people what ERA was. And she did decide to do that. But that was after the conference. We had no clue before what ERA was all about.

Andrews: So you didn’t know that the state had ratified an ERA?

Gilmore: No, our state hadn’t. No, we hadn’t ratified.

Andrews: For the state. The state had an equal rights amendment.

Gilmore: Did we? I didn’t know that.

Andrews: Everybody was trying to get the state to ratify the federal amendment.

Gilmore: What it was then to ratify the ERA. So she gave talks then, and I would go with her. She was on the TV, I remember, in Spokane. But it says in the material that I got from the library that Dolores was the chairman of that before the Ellensburg thing. She was not. But anyway, getting back to Lorraine Job and myself, we went to Ellensburg. Her niece lived in a home and was going to college in Ellensburg. She lived at the home with a number of other girls. We stayed there that night and the next day we went throughout the city of Ellensburg to find schools, gymnasium and church halls. And I forget all the places. But mostly they were going to have to bring their sleeping bags or their camp cots. A lot of them did bring their camp cots. We found many places. In fact, we had more places than we did women that needed them. So we wrote them all down, and came back home. And I spent the rest of the week trying to coordinate where all these places were, get maps, so that when they came to the camper that we did have, did I already tell you that we had a motor home out there, in Ellensburg?

Andrews: I’ve heard of several motor homes.

Gilmore: I just know of ours. This was a big one. This was where our office was. Citizens for Youth office, the Blue and White. And we did name our conference going up
there, even though it was organized by the Citizens for Youth group, we named it the Blue and White.

Andrews: Excuse me, did that come before, from Citizens for Youth?

Gilmore: No. That was just for that conference. We called it the Blue and White, and we wore blue and white ribbons so that we would know each other.

Andrews: Okay. Was that your idea?

Gilmore: No, that was Dolores Glesener’s idea. The colors of the Blessed Virgin Mary are blue and white. She has a great love for our blessed mother, as I do. So, Citizens for Youth members, and others who were with us, knew that they were to come to the trailer, the blue and white trailer. And it was kind of parked out the north side of where they were registering, but by the street. There was a sign on it that said Citizens for Youth, the Blue and White, whatever we called it.

Andrews: Coalition?

Gilmore: Yeah, something like that. And they would come there to find out where they were supposed to go with their sleeping bags and everything. And that was my job for the whole part of the conference was to be there at the trailer. There were questions constantly. “Where do you think I should go?” “What issue should, do you think I would like, where is it?” I showed them how to get to their sleeping quarters, and the food, where the registration was.

Anyway, that’s really all I remember about the conference is getting the people and answering their questions, because it was, for some people, it was kind of a frightening experience to come there and see all of these people. In fact, there were two ladies that came back to the Tri-Cities, because they were too late to register, and so they came back. And so that’s how I got there, and that was my job there. So do you have another question that can take me on further?

Andrews: I want to backtrack just a little bit. You were talking about the Oklahoma tape. And I wonder if you could say a little bit more about that.

Gilmore: I will. The reason I got the Oklahoma tape was because I was asked to go to an educational conference, a national conference, in Oklahoma. So I went. It was a three-day conference. And some people down there knew what I was working with, and had continued to do. So they mailed me the tape. To this day, I do not know who mailed me the tape, and I couldn’t tell you what was on that tape.

Andrews: Was it an IWY conference in Oklahoma?

Gilmore: It was the one in Oklahoma. It was the one in Oklahoma. But I think, if I remember correctly, they were telling on that tape what maybe happened in other states as well. And maybe not, I’m not sure about that. But it shows here in the booklet--
Andrews: *The Story of Ellensburg.*

Gilmore: Yes, that’s the book. That there was a number of other states maybe mentioned on that tape. Because I don’t remember it being on that tape. But I remember reading it since I got that booklet. And but it didn’t inspire me to go that much, because it just didn’t seem to fit in with what I was doing, because I wasn’t going to be doing any work in minorities or that sort of thing. I was pro-life, pro-education, and pro-family. But as I’ve said further that I’ve changed my mind through prayer and went. Any other questions?

Andrews: I think you’ve answered this, but how did you view women’s role in the home and in society at the time of the conference?

Gilmore: Oh, at the time of the conference. Okay.

Andrews: Did you see any need for change?

Gilmore: Oh, definitely. But I didn’t know that women felt downtrodden like I heard up there. Because I was always out organizing things. Even though I had eight children, I taught all my eight children to cook and clean. And we even had baby care, the older ones, where my home was not just my life. My home was, I mean, my life was out organizing many other things and doing many other things. So what I heard up there was kind of new to me, too. Although I had been working in Mississippi, in fact, Mississippi was the first state that had schooling for kids to get started before they started. Head Start. Mississippi was the first one. We were down there during the Civil Rights Movement. In fact, I worked with the black people. I was one that felt that they should be able to go on the beach, and they should be able to go to the Catholic schools when the civil rights opened up. So my boys, my two oldest boys, even took a rebel flag down that flew up above an American flag. I mean, I was kind of a rebel, in Mississippi, at least.

And I remember the priest coming to me one day and said, “Aren’t you afraid of what you’re doing?” Because I sent my twin boys, who were blue-eyed and white-haired, to Head Start, because the government planned on getting the blacks and whites started in Head Start early, so that they could mix together. So I sent my boys, and I became a member. They didn’t call it parent teacher, we didn’t call it PTA. I don’t remember what they called it. But I became a member of, they were the only white kids in the school. The rest were all black.

And when the black Catholic school couldn’t afford to be kept open down there -- this was at Pass Christian, Mississippi -- they of course could then come to the white Catholic school. But the white Catholic school immediately got full. Well, I was working with the youth in the school, and I was teaching religion to the sixth graders. And I knew that there was room for the black kids to come to school. So I went to the priest and I said, “We have room for the black kids to come over here to the school.” And they said the whites would leave. And they would. Which was all new to me, being born a Yankee. I didn’t realize what it was like.
And so anyway, the priest said, “Aren’t you afraid of what might happen if you continue doing what you’re doing?” Because it was the first state in the union that the Girl Scouts were going to mix the blacks and whites. In my Girl Scout unit, I was going to take the blacks. All the white girls quit, but I took the blacks. But we moved shortly afterwards, so I wasn’t able to finish the year.

Anyway, when I said, “Now, I’m not afraid what anybody will do to me.” Well, we lived only a half a block from the beach in Pass Christian. And there was a cross burnt, a white cross burnt, on the beach in front, there was a house that wasn’t, we were the carriage house behind the Dixie White House. We rented the house behind the Dixie White House. And it was a big mansion. The white cross was burnt on the beach in front of that house. I was the only one that lived on that little half, my family, because the Dixie White House was empty at that time. And they reconstructed. But it did not scare me at all. I didn’t figure that they were going to do anything to me.

But I did have really good friends that were doing the same thing that I was doing. But they were Southerners. They’d all lived in Pass Christian. And they owned a drugstore, and they got no business, because the blacks couldn’t come into their drugstore because they worked for the white people. And of course the white people would not come to the drugstore, either. But they lived through it. Finally the civil rights calmed down a bit.

So I’d been through a lot of tougher things than Ellensburg. I got off the track a bit there.

Andrews: Well I think it was a very interesting answer when I asked about how you viewed women’s role in the home and society at the time of the conference, and did you see a need for change?

Gilmore: Oh, yes. For change.

Andrews: That was the second part of the question.

Gilmore: That was the second part. The change, and that’s why I went into the civil rights. That’s where I saw a need for change, more for minorities than for myself as a white woman. Because the way I saw it is, why would women think that they couldn’t get out and do the things that they wanted to do? Because I was brought up to do things, and taught to be responsible. And why wouldn’t you, just because you were a woman, be held down?

Since then, I have learned that the young girls that get pregnant when they’re fifteen or sixteen have tough times. And I think that’s where, and the things being taught in school, that’s where I saw the need for change. I saw the need for something to be done to help what was going on now at this time. I think most of the people that went to Ellensburg, maybe I shouldn’t say most. But most, a lot of them were thinking that well, we need childcare, or we need this or that. I guess I, my mind didn’t work the way the conference was set up for. So I guess that’s my answer.

Andrews: Okay. Let’s see. Were there issues of major concern to you at the conference? I know you said you were mainly involved with the logistics.
Gilmore: I wished that I had the time, and did not have the job I had, where I could have gone to the education one. And I did notice things that were written down that I would have really enjoyed going to, to see what was it. I do know that the minorities, the black people when we first moved here, there were a lot of black people, there aren’t so many now. It’s more the Hispanic culture.

Andrews: You mean the Tri-Cities?

Gilmore: Here in the Tri-Cities. But it was when we first moved here, there was a lot of blacks. I was the first Girl Scout leader that had a mixed Girl Scout troop. And it worked. It worked here. So when I saw a problem like that, I was there to help fix it. So I never thought when I went to Ellensburg, I didn’t think in the line of minority, I thought things can be fixable. Why did you have to go to Ellensburg to talk about it? I was not thinking along those lines. So that was a surprise to me, that there were so many people that thought women were being held down by something. I didn’t realize that many thought that way.

Andrews: Did you go to any of the workshops?

Gilmore: Just the lesbian one. And that was out of curiosity, because I had never met a lesbian before. Didn’t really understand them. And I don’t think the, of course they had it all day, but I just went to one. I don’t know of any other ones. But it turned out to be more of a circus type of going on. I mean, I think it was brought on because most everybody didn’t understand it. Couldn’t understand the logistics of lesbianism, or the why. That’s all I went to, so I can’t speak to any others.

Andrews: Was it confrontational?

Gilmore: I heard from others that it was. But mine wasn’t so much as, you wouldn’t call it catcalling, but ideas were so different. Somebody would talk, and their idea would be something, and somebody else would get up to confront that idea. Say something different that they believed different. So nothing was ever settled. There was nothing settled in that forum I was at. I don’t know about the others.

Andrews: How did the conference influence your perceptions of women’s role in the home and in society?

Gilmore: It didn’t change my ideas of my role in the home. But I see that the role in the home now really needs fixing, because children are being put in daycare so early. And they don’t have a mother. Mothers leave at six weeks to go back to work. And I see the kids being lost. They’re losing the childhood that my kids had. And that really bothers me. Thank goodness all of my children stayed home with their little ones. However, after they started school themselves, we have teachers in our family. And the women have gone in, done what they wanted to do. But they all stayed home, took care of the babies.
And I guess I feel sorry for the children nowadays. They’re lost. They suck their thumb. They don’t have Mom.

Now is there another part to that question that I might have missed? I get talking.


Gilmore: Changing society. The question of home and society. And I just answered the home. In society, the women’s change in society. Well, I have done both. The home and out trying to help society as I see problems. And I know that everybody can’t do that, because they have a career and their homes. And that’s tough, because careers are eight hours a day, or maybe even nine or ten. And that’s where I see the problem. The mom is out, too busy.

Andrews: Actually, the question was how did the conference influence your perceptions of women’s role in the home and in society?

Gilmore: It didn’t influence me, because I didn’t go to all of the things. And I guess I was older. I don’t know how old I was. I’m seventy-eight now.

Andrews: So thirty years ago, you were forty-eight.

Gilmore: I guess I was grown up enough that to me it was seeing what was going on around more, although I had worked with all of the problems. I had worked with the minority problem, and I had worked with teenage pregnancy program. I had a phone in my home where girls could call me when they got pregnant and didn’t want to talk to their folks. And I’d help them through their pregnancy and offer them a place to go, or money or doctors, that’s what Citizens for Youth was, start out to be, to help the young girls. So I was already doing what they were talking about in Ellensburg. So it didn’t change my perception.

Andrews: In your opinion, what were some of the positive and negative outcomes of the conferences?

Gilmore: The positive was that more women woke up. And more women got involved. They saw there was a problem that they didn’t know before. Negative? I think the only negative that bothered me was without talking to me, no one talked with me, they wrote things that weren’t true and that were negative about Citizens for Youth and about my role in papers that I didn’t even know who they were that were writing them. So that was just a personal negative. As a whole conference negative, I don’t see a negative there. All I see is a positive that people woke up.

Andrews: This is a slight digression, but what were some of the negatives, the untruths, about Citizens for Youth?
Gilmore: Oh, that we were all Mormons and that the men were running us. And that we knew about it way before it happened, January, I think, the date they put in there that we knew about it.

Andrews: Citizens for Youth, by this definition, is the whole conservative group that came to the conference.

Gilmore: Well, no. a lot of Citizens for Youth, but there was other women that had their own groups. Groups like I didn’t even know. But they came under the Blue and White. And in the material written out later, it was the Blue and White which caused the negativity which I didn’t know anything about until I was called to let the news media know that Susan Roylance was not responsible for all the people being there, and that it was not a Mormon group, and that I was the president, that she was not the president of Citizens for Youth. And the other groups I had never met or known.

And Bev Jacobson was one of the media ladies. And she had known me for a long time. In fact, she had put many articles in the Tri-City about me for years when I was trying to stop Planned Parenthood from moving into the Tri-Cities. So she knew me, but she never believed that I organized that in six days. And she never did. I said, “Bev, you know me.” And she was very, very angry that I had not let her know that I was doing this. In my mind, I wasn’t doing anything. I just decided to go to Ellensburg, and use the resources I had to do it. That was mostly getting places to sleep and all that sort of thing.

So it was a whole different, like you said before, every person’s view of it was 100 percent different.

Andrews: So many diverse perspectives, it’s very interesting. Did you have anything to do with Referendum 40 to rescind the state women’s council?

Gilmore: No. No. I maybe shouldn’t say no emphatically because I was with Dolores Glesener as a companion when she gave speeches. But she wasn’t even involved with Referendum 40, if that’s what it was here in our state. I didn’t know about Referendum 40 until after the conference. In fact, neither she nor I knew about Referendum 40 before the conference.

Andrews: There was no Referendum 40 before the conference. That was a backlash after the conference.

Gilmore: Oh, and that’s why she then became Tri-Cities chair after the conference. That’s news to me.

Andrews: In your opinion, what was the significance– Did you go to Houston?

Gilmore: No.

Andrews: In your opinion, what was the significance of both Ellensburg and Houston, of the conferences?
Gilmore: Oh, I do want to tell you something about Houston. I didn’t go. The reason I didn’t go or wouldn’t even, didn’t put my name down, is I didn’t have the money to go. And I found out later, from reading the material, that there had been money allocated for people. And none of the conservatives that were with Blue and White knew that, except Susan. Susan knew it. Maybe others did that I didn’t know of. But none of the people I knew, knew it. Okay? Anything else?

Andrews: I was wondering what the significance of Ellensburg and Houston was, in your opinion.

Gilmore: About the same answer I gave when I answered–

Andrews: About the positives.

Gilmore: Woke people up. And you know, I never read anything about Houston. I don’t know what happened there. I don’t know anything about it.

Andrews: What kind of follow-up activities did you participate in, both in the short and long term?

Gilmore: I just kept on doing what I was doing, which was most all of the things that they talked about up there, except gay rights. I didn’t have anything to do with that. I didn’t even know we had a group here. Oh, and there was the NOW organization. Oh, yeah, that’s one thing that came up afterwards. National Organization of Women. They came to Tri-Cities to open a chapter. And I did read about that in the paper. And they met over one of our hotels around here. Everybody knew me because I had been in the paper a lot. What was the word I said before? I was always into things. A radical, thank you. I went incognito. I had a brain tumor, and I did have a sandy brown wig. And my hair was black at the time of Ellensburg. So I wore that sandy blonde wig, and I wore glasses that I needed to read, but I couldn’t see out of them when I was looking. So I had these glasses on. And a friend went with me.

And did I ever learn a lot at that meeting. They were organizing, trying to organize the NOW organization in the Tri-Cities. So they talked about all the things that they were going to do. And the thing that I remember is they were going to use one thing, pillow talk, to get men to do things they wanted them to do. They were going to boycott Penney’s, because Penney’s did men’s pants for them, and didn’t hem ladies’ skirts. And there was a third thing that I thought I was going to remember. But anyway, things like that that really blew my mind. But there was a couple of ladies that I know they recognized me. They sent around three lists to put your name on. And my friend that went with me, I used my maiden name, so I remembered. And my middle name. Mae Helfter.

Andrews: What was that?

Gilmore: Mae Helfter. My middle name is Mae, M-a-e. And my maiden name is Helfter. It’s a German name from Alsace-Lorraine. So I remember what I wrote down.
You’ll never find that name. I had an uncle who looked through every telephone book wherever he went. Never found it. They came from Alsace-Lorraine. Do you know where that is?

Andrews: Mm hmm.

Gilmore: Okay. So the three lists were your attendance, and then another list was to sign up to get the newsletter. And I do not remember why they signed up for, I think it was for a door prize. The third thing you had to sign your name for was something that I do not remember right now. And of course, I remembered what I signed. So I signed my right name each time, I mean Mae Helfter each time. My friend, she did not put down her maiden name, so she forgot what she wrote down the first time. [laughs] So I knew they knew who I was. But they didn’t dare come and talk to me about it.

But anyway, we’re sitting across the table, my friend and I, from two ladies that were across the table from us. And they were talking about the women that get together at United Presbyterian Church every May, and they could have a speaker. And I don’t know what they called the day, but I was the speaker that May. And I was to talk about my MS, because I had a miracle. I don’t have MS now. And talk about what I know about Citizens for Youth, and about what was going on in education, so I was the speaker. And they were talking about that May thing, and a lady says, “Did you go to the, the Presbyterian church, the UPS?” Anyway, it was that church. She says, “No, I wouldn’t go to, that Dolores Gilmore was giving the talk.” There I was, right across the table from them. And we had chicken. And boy, that chicken got interesting real fast.

Andrews: Oh, dear.

Gilmore: I had a lot of real strange experiences going through, I had gone incognito to another one over in Seattle and that was interesting, too.

Andrews: Was that also a NOW meeting?

Gilmore: No, it was a Catholic Daughters meeting. And I was the speaker. And I was letting the Catholic priest and the nuns that were in the school know what was going on in the Catholic schools, as well. And I had a book that they were using. Terrible, terrible sex book. Gordon was his last name, the author. And on the back it gave a list of people that supported that book. And the name of a priest was on that, so I talked about it. Well, I was at the head table with a bishop on one side. And that priest was in the audience. They didn’t believe what I was saying, and so I used sayings right out of that book that you really had to be brave to say to them. Because it talked about stuff. I showed the book and I turned it around and showed it to the bishop with the priest’s name. And he’s not a priest anymore.
But anyway, I’ve had an interesting life. And when you ask me, do things need changing, that’s what I was doing. My life may have been different from what the other people were there for. I just found it interesting.

Andrews: You were very much an activist.

Gilmore: I don’t like being an activist, but I can’t sit and watch things go so wrong without doing something about it. In fact, I wasn’t ever a talker before I got married. I would go to parties with Dick, and I would sit there and not say a thing. And he would scold me afterwards. So I think the Holy Spirit changed me, because I was not a talker or a speaker. My son that’s a priest now, he was a talker when he grew up. He talks now at big conferences. I don’t know how he came from our family, doing the stuff he does. He’s such a good speaker. But he was the speaker in the family. You couldn’t shut him up at the supper table.

And that’s one thing I really, really would like to see families do is sit down and eat one meal a day together, and talk to each other. We ate breakfast together and we ate supper together every day. And they went to Little League and all their other things after we ate supper. And I think that’s, kids don’t go home now. They stay right at school and play soccer and all that stuff. And Sundays they play their games. It’s not family anymore; it’s community. And the community is going wrong, in my estimation.

Andrews: I think you’re already talking about this, and I don’t know if you have more to say about it or not. But from your perspective, how have women’s lives changed since the conferences? And in what ways have they stayed the same?

Gilmore: They certainly haven’t stayed the same. More families are left without their mothers with them. And what, have they stayed the same? Was that the question? The same and different?

Andrews: Yes. How have they changed, and how have they stayed the same?

Gilmore: Yes. The change that I see happened from Ellensburg is just women becoming more aware of their community. And that would be the change, I would say. Did I answer that okay?

Andrews: Sure. You’d already talked about it, but I just wondered if you had any more thoughts on the subject.

Gilmore: No, I don’t think so.

Andrews: If there were specific issues that concerned you during the Ellensburg conference, how have these issues been resolved? Or are they still being debated?

Gilmore: Debated even more. The debate has become stronger with more people involved than before. And maybe Ellensburg helped in that respect, that more people have become involved. But I still find that maybe it’s the next generation down. They
don’t seem to be interested in politics. They’re interested in themselves and what they can own.

Andrews: I was just looking at the questionnaire that you filled out sometime back to see if there’s anything else on here–

Gilmore: I did that so fast.

Andrews: Is there anything else you’d like to add?

Gilmore: I can’t think of anything. That’s what I told you to begin with. I probably wouldn’t have much to say on the Ellensburg subject, since I went there to do a job, and that’s pretty much where I stayed.

Andrews: Oh, I think you’ve said a lot. So many people say that you and Dolores Gilmore got the Blue and Whites started.

Gilmore: We did do that, but you know, it was so easy. It does not seem to me that Blue and Whites should be in those papers and in that book as much as it was, because to me–

Andrews: And she’s talking about *The Story of Ellensburg*, just so our listeners know.

Gilmore: I see. Because it was so easy to put together and just go up there. And that’s kind of just the way I think about it is just, I will always remember, though, Ellensburg. It put Ellensburg on the map, too, in people’s minds.

Andrews: Yes, it did.

Gilmore: It means a lot, Ellensburg. My oldest daughter went to Ellensburg School. She’s a teacher.

Andrews: So are you saying that Blue and White maybe was less encompassing of the whole conservative group than it’s given credit for being?

Gilmore: Yes, it’s in that book too much. In my estimation, we didn’t do any, in my estimation, we didn’t do anything. We just went there and did the job that I went there to do. And they were afraid of us because they thought we went there to do something. And in my mind, what was there to do? But they were afraid of the Blue and White. And I knew that right off the bat. It was very evident. And it was puzzling to think, because Blue and White had nothing to do with those issues at Ellensburg, well, except education, and pro-life, abortion. I think those were probably the only two issues that Blue and White, although I guess you could think of more. Family life.

Andrews: Something just occurred to me. I’m sure you read in *The Story of Ellensburg* about the men that were supposedly there. People have such divergent opinions about the story of men that were there telling women how to vote.
Gilmore: I know, I read that. That they were in the back, and that people looked around at the men. I didn’t even know, I know the two men from Tri-Cities. No, the one that brought the motor home was from the Seattle area. The man from here was the lawyer. Maybe I just didn’t see them. I saw no other men. But then, I wasn’t looking for men. I didn’t see any in the whole, running that big room. I honestly didn’t see any. Because Mr. Kerr didn’t go in that day. And the man that owned the motor home, he didn’t go in. So I don’t know where they were.

Andrews: Did anybody try to tell you how to vote?

Gilmore: No. But I tried to tell some women that, “Look at that way that it’s written. You are voting for abortion if you are voting for that one.”

And this lady that was sitting by me, she said, “But that poor lady that cried.” A minority lady got up and told her story and cried.

I said, “I know. That’s why they had her get up and talk. So that you would vote, and you will be voting for abortion.”

I mean, they had never worked with this type of people before, where I had. I had known this type of people. I knew what tactics they used. But they’d never been in politics, and they didn’t know what the outside world was like. I think that was a lot of Ellensburg. Most of the women there did not know what was out in the outside world.

Andrews: When they voted on the issue of minority women’s rights, the ERA was attached to that, so you couldn’t separate it.

Gilmore: It did not pass. But it lost very little. I mean, it could have passed easily, the abortion one. It didn’t, however. But now you see, you watch the news at night, and they’re doing the exact same thing. Putting bills together. It’s not a nice world. It used to be, when I was a kid.

Andrews: Well I think I’ve covered my questions. Is there anything else you’d like to add?

Gilmore: No. I probably talked too much.

Andrews: Oh, not at all. Well, thank you so much, Dolores. This has been a pleasure.

Gilmore: Thank you.

Andrews: And it will be a great contribution to our project.

Gilmore: Well, I hope. I don’t think as much as other people that were more involved in it. But I hope it helps some.

Andrews: Absolutely.
Gilmore: Okay. Thank you very much.

[End Session.]