LEXINGTON ORAL HISTORY PROJECTS, INC.

Interview
Emily Frankovich
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Interview conducted by Bonnie Jones
Videotape length 73 minutes

INT: Can you tell us who you are and how you were involved in this event in 1971?

EF: My name is Emily Frankovich, and I was—had just been—Chairman of the CPPAX[1] (then called Citizens for Participation Politics or CPP) group which had been running peace actions since 1968 and 1969. Let's see, about that time I was doing fund raising for Mass PAX, and I was beginning to get very interested in the McGovern Presidential campaign leading up to actually running fund raising for McGovern in Massachusetts in 1972, but this was before that, and I was just about to get into that, and this [event] came at the end of a long series of peace actions that we ran.

INT: Can you talk a little bit about what how you got into that event on that day?

EF: Jean Rubenstein, my neighbor across the street, told me that the Vietnam Veterans were having problems. They'd been able to bivouac in Concord, but Lexington would not allow them to bivouac on the Green. She had gone to a Selectmen's meeting, and she'd never been to a Selectmen's meeting before, and she found it pretty hard to deal with. Having heard that from her, I went down to the meeting; it was in Cary Hall. I thought it was a Selectmen's meeting, but I guess there were more people there, and there were a whole lot of us there, and they heard Bobby Cataldo continue to say that he was going to keep up that splendid notion of

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[1] CPPAX is the result of a merger between CPP, Citizens for Participation Politics, which supported anti-Vietnam War efforts, and Mass PAX, a statewide organization that worked for peace, nuclear disarmament, and the end of the war in Vietnam. The Lexington branch of CPP was asked to assist the VVAW with logistics during their march and expected bivouac in Lexington in 1971.

keeping the Green pure for American History. [Laughter] I began to realize this wasn't just a peace action issue. It was a free speech issue. I always thought it would be nice if the Lexington Green was a place where people would go and discuss the issues of the day at a certain time of the day or something, which was obviously totally alien. Then I realized that really people don't like to talk issues. They like to talk about gossip and all those things, so that this would never happen, even if it was allowed, but it was a nice idea. [Laughter]

INT: What for you, what was important about the experience of being involved in that?

EF: Well, it was a terrific peace action. We got on television; we got all this stuff, and it also was a community thing or civil liberty issue. Another thing that was interesting was how strong the people in Lexington were in spite of the harassment by the government, how willing they were to go out and sit on the Green with all the vets. I had decided in my own mind that if a single other woman went onto the Green and spent the night that I would do so, too. I didn't want to create a scandal by doing this alone.

INT: How long have you lived in Lexington?

EF: We moved in 1961.

INT: Were you involved in the community from the beginning?

EF: No. I'd just had eight years as a reporter on a fairly crummy newspaper in Waltham, and at that point I felt that I sort of looked down on doing things as a volunteer. Then finally the League got me to do their publicity the year of the Question 5 [state referendum] thing.

INT: The League?

EF: Of Women Voters. And they got me to do their publicity, and I got involved in this Question 5 thing, which was to get rid of the Executive Council.

INT: There was an Executive Council?

EF: No, no, this was to get rid of the Executive Council in the state government.

INT: Okay.

EF: It was "Vote no on Question 5," and I got money from Lexington and Lincoln to give the Burlington…I had this idea that it would be a waste of money to put this in Lexington newspapers, because everybody was for it, but Burlington…and so we got money. I did it. I got money from Lincoln and Lexington people and gave them to those Leagues in Burlington and Bedford where they might have other kinds of people. Bedford was less of a liberal town than it is now, I think.

INT: Can you tell us when you first got involved in the peace and anti-Vietnam War movement?

EF: In 1968 in the summer when there was a Democratic political convention my husband was away and my son had strep throat, so I had nothing to do except watch the convention on television, and I realized as I saw those…I was not an enthusiast for [Eugene] McCarthy. I just didn't feel he was Presidential material, but I saw these kids and I realized that twenty years, no, ten years earlier, that would have been me. I would have been there, and so originally I was more interested in a civil liberties or free speech issue than in Vietnam, and then I began rethinking because my son was my first-born child. How would I feel about this boy having to go at 18 off to fight a silly war like this? It really made me rethink that. Before that I'd been more or less a containment supporter, and so it was a big change for me. Then I got into the CPPAX. We had had a terrible person in CPPAX who was ready to kill the organization because he was so interested in moving commas and periods and things around in the by-laws that he almost brought the state CPP to a halt at their convention. Then he came back to our little group and he started to do it again, and I fought

back and I said this is ridiculous. At that point Herschel Jick was supposed to be the Chairman. And so I became…anyway, somebody nominated me and I said that I was going… This guy said he'd run CPP by the book, and I said the chief thing I know that I'm going to do is run CPP *not* by the book. And so all of a sudden I was Chairman of this peace organization that I hadn't expected to be, and then we had this very small meeting at Leslie Davies' house, and we were trying to…and Jerry Grossman had asked if we could…(you see why I write rather than speak!) Jerry Grossman had wanted to have a "moratorium"—you didn't go to work that day, you went to do something—and we felt that just not going to work and not having something else to do was kind of pointless. So we thought we wanted to have a big thing on the [Lexington] Green, and this idea spread to other groups, and so lots of people had the idea, but we had seven or eight thousand people on the Green on October 15th.

INT: In 1968?

EF: I think that's 1968, yes, because I think it happened right after. Then Jerry had this notion that we should do some peace action every month, which was absolutely out of our depth.

INT: Wow.

EF: But we did have another thing on November 15th. A whole bunch of people—not me, because I was exhausted—went on a bus to Washington. Did you go on that?

INT2: I think that was 1969.

EF: Well, there was one in 1968, and then I can't remember what other things we got into. I organized a delegation of sort of Lexington VIPs, people who were well known in different fields like Eunice Alberts, David Epstein, Jack Nolan, and we all went down and lobbied the Congress. And the Congressmen were quite…this was a pretty good idea for getting Congressmen to listen to you. The only problem was that we were in a

Congressional District where our Congressman already agrees with us, so we weren't that effective. We did try to lean on Senator Brooke who essentially said yes, yes, yes, and did absolutely nothing that he said he'd do.

INT: So, seven thousand people on the Lexington Green in October of either 1968 or 1969?

EF: I'm pretty sure, because I remember that we had that meeting at Leslie's house, and then I called John Wells and said…

INT: John Wells who was the Unitarian Minister?

EF: Yes. I said, "Do you know how we could get McGovern on the Green?" because I knew he knew that kind of thing. And so he started to work on it, and he worked on it for quite a long time, and then at the last minute he realized that he wasn't going to get him. He was down at the State House, so he wandered over and he said, "I should have called you," but I didn't mind, "but I think you want to get Governor Sargent." And then I got taken to task by the peace groups inside that I was bringing a Republican governor into their moratorium, and we should get him to promise to speak against it. And I said he wouldn't speak at our moratorium unless he was agreeing with us.

INT: Did he come?

EF: He came and he made a splendid speech. The only thing I can remember is he was saying "I have seen war" and then he went on about how awful it was. I was at the podium. I didn't introduce anything, but I just was sitting there. To the left there was this riot squad of State Policemen. You may have been working at that time or something; I'm amazed that you weren't there.

INT2: I may have been.

EF: Because there was this unit of riot police with helmets and billy clubs and guns. And real big, burly guys. They were saying that we were

going to have some kind of insurrection. I mean, Bobby Cataldo had obviously called them.

INT: Could I explore this?

EF: Sure.

INT: That demonstration was in 1968, or was that a rally, it sounds like?

EF: It was like a rally, right. They also had Tom Atkins.

INT: You had speakers?

EF: Right.

INT: The people who attended were not strictly Lexington residents? Seven thousand or eight thousand people…

EF: I'm sure they came from other places, but I don't know how they…

INT: But did you attempt to draw from a wide area, or were you actually just attempting to get the local community involved?

EF: We wanted people from everywhere, and by that time the Moratorium was big news in the Boston papers, so people who didn't want to go into Boston for obvious reasons came to us. I don't think we did a lot of particular outreach. We might have called some Bedford people we knew, you know, say you want us…I think we did do that.

INT: So these are people who stayed out of work and came to a rally during the week?

EF: Right. That was a very dramatic occasion. It was a beautiful day, and Sargent's speech was splendid; Tom Atkins' speech was not so splendid. We wanted a black leader from the city and he was the best leader, but he was a very dry speaker.

INT: This was before the event that you were…

EF: Oh, yes. Then I wrote down a few…we used John Wells to kind of…well…you want to ask me about the CPP?

INT: Yes. Can you tell us a little bit more about the organization that you were involved with?

EF: CPP was a statewide organization formed mostly out of people who worked for {Eugene] McCarthy for President. It had other people in it. It was sort of a coalition and the Lexington CPP—we decided that we liked the name "Citizens for Participation Politics" and we decided to be a Lexington CPP. But once we took the name it felt that we had an affiliation with this statewide group because we used the same name, and we did begin to have some connection between us and the statewide group, but it was a very difficult organization to deal with. Subsequently CPP merged with Mass Pax and I was active in Mass Pax rather than in CPP which wasn't congenial to me. It became CPPAX.

INT: And a pax is?

EF: P-a-x. Peace. It was Jerry Grossman's organization that came up with this idea of a Moratorium. I got along better with them than with CPP. It was more like personality differences of the two organizations. I got along well with Jerry who taught me most of what I know about fund raising.

INT: Getting back to the day of the arrest, do you have some memories about things that were important to you that day or the night during the arrest?

EF: Oh, yes, I do. I first heard that the Vietnam Vets Against the War were having problems getting a place to bivouac in Lexington after they were in Concord. This was their idea of a peace action, to go on bivouac in these different towns and get support from the citizens. They found that in Lexington they wanted to bivouac on the Green, and they couldn't get the permit. Jean Rubenstein had gone with them to the Selectmen's meeting. This is why I wanted to tell you about that, and she said—well, she had never been in a Selectmen's meeting before and she didn't really know how

to deal with them, although she's usually very good at politics. She knew the vets because she worked with them in Cambridge. I went down to the meeting on Saturday afternoon in Cary Hall, and I put my sleeping bag in my car, because I figured I would stay with the vets on the Green as long as some of the people were going to be doing it besides me. After hearing Bobby Cataldo saying these people couldn't sleep on the sacred Green, and then going out and sitting on the Green and talking with these guys who'd been fighting in the war—they told one story after another. I can't remember the stories, but I do remember the mood and the tone, and they thought we were so great because we were interested. Apparently most people hadn't wanted to listen to what they had to say, and this apparently was a big problem for Vietnam veterans. People who didn't approve of the war didn't want to listen; people who approved of the war didn't want to listen to these particular vets. So it was really a very exciting experience, and there were quite a lot of people on the Green. I noticed some of them left, and other people with their families came bringing sleeping bags, and so I went out and called my husband who had been listening to the radio, TV, whatever it was, so he knew there was going to be a gathering on the Green. He said, "I figured you were there," and so he took care of the kids that night, and I stayed with the crowd. After we had a lot of interesting conversations and it became clear who was staying and who was going, we went to sleep in the sleeping bag. We were campers-outers, so this was very natural for us. Some people didn't like the ground because it was hard and all that. Then we were woken up in the middle of the night by the loudspeaker saying the police are coming, and they told us how to be non-violent arrestees, I guess.

INT: Who taught you?

EF: I think it was somebody from the vets. It was a male voice that I didn't know. It wasn't John Wells. It wasn't anybody I knew. That was the

first time I was scared because I remember that State Riot Police that had been sitting when we had [Governor] Sargent on the Green, these big, burly guys with billys and guns. So for the first time I was scared, but it was kind of an anti-climax. The first thing that happened was these school buses appeared. And the police were all the cops we all knew. We couldn't figure out where they were taking us. Were they going to take us to Concord? Where was [a place] big enough to have us? Then buses would come and then they'd disappear and then they'd come right back, so we knew it wasn't very far away. I realized if I didn't move quickly—I'd been standing very politely and docilely in line—I would not get arrested because there were more people. The last two buses came and they weren't bringing them back anymore because they thought that the jail was full, and so I got on one of the last two buses, and some people, I'm afraid, did miss out on being arrested.

INT: What was the spirit of that particular moment when people were not being able to get on the bus?

EF: I sort of looked at the situation and people were still half asleep, and we trying to figure out where we were going. I had been standing there talking about all these things, and suddenly I realized I was going to miss the bus, so I swooped down there, and I don't know whether I pushed in front of people or what. I know I got on that bus. And I didn't mean to be pushy, but also didn't mean to be left behind. Our “prison” was the D.P.W. [Department of Public Works] place where they keep their trucks and tractors and snow plows and all those things, They'd moved the trucks out into the parking lot and moved us in. The floor was kind of oily, and it was definitely on the dirty side, and somewhere along—I think it was at night—we had to pay five dollars bail. Why we had to pay bail—I thought you paid bail when you left, but no, you had to pay bail when you were arrested. I haven't had a lot of experience with that. So I had my five

dollars and I paid it, and then I went and lay down and went to sleep, and then in the morning we woke up, sunlight came in the windows and there was a big table full of cold cereal and milk and juice and it was like a picnic, and then the vets started doing guerilla theater,[2] which was fascinating. The policemen, who were the same age as they, were sitting there watching this guerilla theater. I really wish somebody had taken some pictures, a movie or something, because it really was quite different, acting out these scenes where they were being ordered to kill gooks and that kind of thing. The policemen, some of them had been in Vietnam, and they were just as fascinated as we were. It really was quite an experience. It's funny, I don't remember much about how we got to Concord. It must have been the school buses again, and somewhere along the line Julie [Julian] Soshnick—well, he's a lawyer in town who's on the Democratic Town Committee because he thinks it might be good for business, at least in those days. He came up with this notion that what we should is plead guilty to a misdemeanor, and then we'd be let go, and the misdemeanor was violation of a park ordinance. I was sort of uncomfortable about this. I didn't feel it was the right way to go, but he was the only lawyer around.

INT: What were you charged with? Do you know what you were charged with?

EF: Well, yes, we were charged with sleeping on the Green, which was a violation…I think that was the only charge that they could come up with that made sense. Oh, they could have charged us with contempt of Court, because there was a Court injunction at some point that said we shouldn't do this, and we did it anyway. Anyway, I remember we got out of the buses, and some of us walking in with our hands like this [raised hands] trying to—because we knew the television cameras were on us. I saw the

[2] Guerrilla theater was the VVAW's name for their use of street theater to "bring the war home," i.e., to visually demonstrate in public places how American soldiers were dealing with Vietnamese suspected of aiding or being members of the Viet Cong.

biggest surprise—saw a cousin of mine who I didn't know was involved in liberal politics at all as I walked in. And there was a big crowd from Concord that came down to see us all arrive and have our court session. They had a special court session. It must have been a Sunday morning. I can't imagine how they did it, but I guess the cops didn't want to keep us for twenty-four hours in the D.P.W. place with all our kids running around peeking in the windows and…[Laughter] I found my kids anyway: "Hi, mommy!" [Laughter]

INT: The next morning you found them?

EF: Yes, between guerilla theater and eating corn flakes.

INT: What were the kids' ages, your children's?

EF: My children? Let's see, Jack the youngest must have been around—what year was it?

INT: 1971.

EF: 1971? He would have been six, and Lydia would have been eleven, and Caroline would have been ten, and so it was all very exciting for them, too. And none of them are particularly political, but they all vote right. [Laughter.] So far.

INT: It sounds like you've got some feelings about the charges and the plea?

EF: When you asked me, I really should have known what the charges were, but maybe Julie Soshnick had gotten us to agree to this pleading guilty to a misdemeanor and so they agreed. I kept dropping back in the line, because I didn't want to do this, but I was a little bit confused in my own mind, you know. Then later I heard from Jean that a lot of the vets were very upset about it. They didn't think we should have done it either, and I should have been talking to the vets, not other Lexington people, and at that point I just didn't happen to be—you know how you have to sit in these rows of chairs in a court? —and I wasn't near any vets.

INT: Did the vets take a different stand?

EF: No, they didn't, but then there were some others among the vets who felt as I did—that we shouldn't do it—only I didn't know that, and they didn't know I felt that way and so we didn't get together.

INT2: What did you want to do? What would they have preferred?

EF: Just said we were not guilty, and this is a free speech issue, and then taken it to a higher court.

INT: So it sounds like you were somewhat disappointed in that?

EF: Our legal advice was not quite what I wanted. Somebody explained that Julian was…it was like treating it like a marijuana bust, you know, you try to get the least charge possible and…

INT: Do you think there was some pressure among some of the people who were arrested to lighten the sentence or lighten the charge?

EF: Well, there weren't very many lawyers with us. I think lawyers generally did feel that they couldn't get whatever this was going to be on their record, so they weren't with us in the thing. Not all. There were some lawyers that did stay. Nancy Earsy said there was some friend of theirs that stayed. But I think it was awkward if you were in a profession where you can't have a thing on your record. Well I was a housewife. It didn't make that much difference. Of course, it would have been interesting when I tried to get a [security] clearance when I did technical writing, but that didn't happen. Nothing happened. So it's just one of those things, I guess. Opportunity missed, because I think that would have made the issue much more significant.

INT: Do you have any thoughts about what happened afterwards in the town politically?

EF: Well, Bobby Cataldo lost the next election. That was easy.

INT: Were you involved in that political campaign?

EF: I never…the only time I ever did was once for a School Committee candidate that I thought would be good. I really haven't been involved in *town* politics. And I ran for…oh, yes, one of the peace actions we were talking about earlier, with CPP. We circulated a list of liberals to be elected to Town Meeting. They were all people we knew or people that eventually got arrested or, you know, the liberal faction in town. Every single one of our candidates except me got elected. I was unfortunately notorious, so I did not get elected, but that scared the living daylights out of the Selectmen, and that's when they formed FACT, the acronym for Friendly Association of Concerned Taxpayers, and they formed that in response to us. They don't like that acronym being…although Al Busa told me that. I didn't make it up. They had some other words later that were more respectable. Friendly Association of Concerned Taxpayers was what it began as, to fight against us bad CPP people. [Laughter.] So, I guess in a way it was the election right after that, the one that we got rid of Bobby Cataldo and got a lot of liberals on the Town Committee, and then Al Busa's organization has been fighting us ever since.

INT: Were you involved in the efforts to get a pardon on the State level after this? Do you remember anything about that?

EF: I remember I didn't think it was a good idea. I didn't need to be pardoned. I wasn't guilty of anything. I'd forgotten all about that. It's funny. I remember talking with [the other vets] about that because I was down at Mass Pax doing fund raising. I had to go three days a week or something and get money for the peace effort. I found out then that the vets felt that way and they also felt that there shouldn't be a pardon. Pardon for a misdemeanor? Come on! They didn't do it, did they? Did [Governor] Sargent do it? I don't remember.[3]

INT: I don't know.

EF: Sometimes there's things which I really don't believe in that came up in the peace movement like that Shea-Wells Bill. It was really nullification, brought from Dixie by John Wells.

INT: And it was to do what?

EF: "No soldier from Massachusetts shall go and fight in a war that has not been declared after 30 days of the war." That's what the Shea-Wells Bill[4] was about. And its nullification was totally…it was just terrible law. It was great peace action, but terrible law.

INT: And you were not in favor of that?

EF: I think it's great to have peace action, but I think bad legislation is bad legislation.

INT: Why was it a terrible law?

EF: Do you know what the Civil War was about when southern states tried to nullify the Federal laws? This was the same thing. We were trying to nullify the Federal Draft Law, and so that's why that's…doesn't that make sense?

INT: I'm sure it does. I just want to understand it.

EF: That you can't have the states in a federation. You know there are certain powers left to the Congress, one of which is this: the ability to wage war. If that power had been given to the Federal Government, and if you don't agree with it… See, the Shea Bill was going to nullify the effect of the Draft Law, our Federal law, and Federal law does… In our government the Federal system, the national laws have authority over state laws, and you cannot have this kind of a law.

INT: So, it was hopeless?

EF: It was pointless, except we got a lot of publicity out of it. And John Wells wrote a book.

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[3] Julian Soshnik filed a pardon petition on behalf of all who signed it. However, it was never acted upon by the Governor.

INT: [Inaudible phrase] …constitutional questions that you would agree on that method?

EF: I worked as a reporter and I studied a lot of government in college, and I think occasionally a little knowledge is a good idea. [Laughter.]

INT: Yes. What I get from the concept that the Shea-Wells Bill was bad legislation, a preferable way to work events in undeclared war would be at the Federal level?

EF: Yes. I did ask [George] McGovern—at that point I was his contact here in 1971 for a while—and I asked him if it was possible to have a law like that in Congress that no draftees shall be required to fight in a war that's gone on for more than 30 days without being declared. That bill did get [filed] in the Congress, and that's why, I guess, when we sent the delegation, which I organized of sort of prominent people from Lexington—people who are prominent in different fields, like Jonah Kalb is a singer; Jack Nolan was a President of a small college; and Dave Epstein conducts with the MIT symphony orchestra—and I had some business types, so I can't remember who they were, and they were very successful, because the Congressmen were fascinated by the people who were in different fields. Everybody—every Congressman—seems to have a son or a daughter or a nephew that's trying to get to be a singer, and the vets thought this was a very elitist delegation. I said, "Sure it's elitist, but Congressmen listen. What difference does it make?" I'm quite pragmatic. I want to get…so that's more my idea of what a peace action should be.

INT: And this was after the arrest on the Green that that delegation went?

EF: Yes, June 1970. That would have been the year before.

INT: You really believed in using the system as it is to pressure for change?

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[4] The Shea-Wells Bill was enacted by the Massachusetts legislature and signed into law by Governor

EF: Right. I was always in touch with CPP and groups like that because I felt that we should use the process, since I knew how to use the process, which a lot of people don't. It's amazing. They think that if they go down to see their Congressman they can insult him and get him to listen to them, but you really had to kind of… They think they're very important people. You may not, but they do; so you have to sort of work from where they are to change people's minds if you go down and confront them.

While we were down there, there was a delegation. I think it was the Vietnam vets, and they had made no appointments in advance and were furious when people wouldn't see them. We walked right by them and went in to see Senator Brooke. They were sitting outside seething that Senator Brooke wouldn't meet them, but we'd gone through channels. I think if you're going to make change you have to do it through the system. That's why I ended up working on the McGovern Presidential campaign. As I said, I was his contact from Massachusetts until September 1971. It was right after this because I know it started then, and so I was first the contact and then I just did the fund raising for the State. I sort of got people to call people and get them running.

INT2: So this arrest that you were involved in 1971, it was quite a different method for you to be demonstrating for social change.

EF: It's not my usual style but that doesn't mean that it's not valid. I think those big demonstrations, all the things that we did inside the system would never have worked except for the fact there were people out there walking around. Do you remember the time we all walked down the middle of Lexington because of the Vietnam War vets? You were there. They'd bombed in Cambodia. It was after Christmas or something, and we walked right down the middle of the traffic and stopped all the traffic. That's not the sort of stuff I usually do, but that seemed to be…everybody

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Francis Sargent in 1978. Upon appeal, the U. S. Supreme Court refused to hear the case.

was so outraged. I actually went and joined the people. There were some things that were not effective, like the people who were walking around the Green [as a form of vigil] are only seen by other people who are walking around the Green. One of the "best" ones: I was at a Mass PAX meeting and these people were planning to walk around the Old State House—the one that hasn't been even a seat of government since 1789—ridiculous, but that's what they were doing. The Quakers were always doing that stuff. And I always felt that that was a total waste of effort. The things that were meaningful were where you somehow got different people elected, which I really think is the best way to go, or getting the ones that are elected, bending them a little bit.

INT: Do you have any sense about who was involved in this in terms of the total Lexington community, like who was arrested, and who was involved in the demonstration, and the people who weren't involved and how they felt? Do you have a sense of that?

EF: Well, the people who were involved became the liberal…the arrest list. Remember that list? The big list for the political fund raising for everybody? Some of them got kind of sick of being phoned for contributions. You can't blame them. But it was kind of a core of Lexington liberals. Many people were active in the McCarthy movement; it was big here. I think Sandy Tishman, my next-door neighbor, somehow was involved. There was an ad in *The New York Times* and she had gotten the money for it in Lexington. People who I never think of as being active in politics at all got drawn into this anti-war stuff. And then there was this group that Mimi Landau belonged to with University Women. I don't know. I can't remember what the connection was, but those were involved. There is a big liberal crowd in Lexington, which can be tapped when the need is great, but are remarkably unable…they don't keep up on the

political scene, and many of them don't vote in town elections. Then there's just a liberal group that's interested in national issues as opposed to the…

INT2: I have a slight question, if it's not too much of an interruption: You were talking about when the buses came to arrest you all, that it was important that you hurry up and at least get on that last couple of buses.

EF: Right.

INT2: How many people, approximately, do you think were left behind?

EF: I think about 25 or 30, something like that.

INT2: Okay. It wasn't a giant group?

EF: No. It was a very small group, but a lot of them were very sore that they weren't arrested, and some of them…

INT2: They were a part of it.

EF: Yes, right.

INT2: What about the people who were opposed to the arrest? Do you have any sense about that part of the community and how they felt?

EF: There were people who grew up in town and had been brought up to revere the Green as sort of a sacred spot, and again with the Moratorium—sacred for what, you know, to do what? I never felt that that was a significant but [it was a] particularly large group in East Lexington. Another thing we marched in the parade with a float dressed like Colonials: "No taxation without representation!" It was great fun.

INT2: Was it with the Patriots' Day Parade?

EF: Yes. April 19th, and don't ask me which year, but I know we were hissed as we walked through parts of East Lexington, and cheered as we got to the Center. There are two very large groups of liberals—almost radicals really—and then ultra liberals there, I guess, just like a lot of them live around here. Then there was another crowd that was not involved, which was Lexington "civic," the ones that are liberal but they run for Town

Meeting and they do things at the local level, and that's quite a different group, and I think some of them may have gotten sucked into this thing. Most of them thought Bobby Cataldo was being kind of stupid, but you know, they weren't one side or another about it. They thought we were also a little bit extremist group, neo-pacifists. They could have slept over by the other side of Hayden Recreation Center and there wouldn't have been any controversy, but they wanted the Green. I always think of the town as having those three groups, and it shows up in elections. When the liberals vote as they voted, and the liberals and the civic people vote together, they win elections. When the civic people and the right wingers—these born in Lexington, the other people—[vote together] then we lose and a more conservative person gets in. I think that in this case the people lined up against us were Bobby Cataldo's people; those Lexington Green people—I mean, those people who were Lexington, born and bred in Lexington people—and the people who were on the Green [voted] with the liberal group, and the middle group I'd say stayed home, mostly.

INT2: Do you think they supported or…?

EF: No. I think they were very embarrassed by it, because it's… You know, for these kind of "civic people" going out on a limb is sort of indecent, but they really perform a very useful service, which I hate to do because I tend to fall asleep if I listen to too much Town Meeting. I'd never make it. It's just as well they didn't elect me. [Laughter.]

INT2: Many times people do have a role that's very important.

EF: That's right. All of them do in a way, because I think that these right wing conservatives out there are totally ignored and should not be totally ignored, and when Stephen was—that's Steve Doran—ran his first election campaign, the great…

INT: He's State Representative.

EF: He's our State Representative now. The first time he ran one of his great values was that he was a liberal in his ideas but he had townie credentials. He was Catholic and he grew up and went to school and he played ice hockey with the cops after—you know, the cops get Hayden in the middle of the night for ice hockey, which I never knew until I worked for Stephen. And the first time he ran we didn't get the civic people, because they didn't…Stephen was a little young to have gotten…you know, he'd been in Town Meeting. He had actually been some kind of youth representative on the School Committee and he'd done all that sort of thing. Actually some of the liberals wouldn't vote for him, because they didn't feel they knew him.

INT2: He was very young.

EF: Right. Yes, he was. He was just out of college. But we ran a good campaign, and we learned a lot about how not to run campaigns. The way you run a campaign for winners, you have one issue and you say it over and over again until it drives you absolutely bananas, but at least then one issue gets across to the voters. Stephen had five or six he was running on. That just doesn't wash. It doesn't win elections.

INT: How do you think the town was changed by this event in all?

EF: Well, I'd say it was the high point of that kind of know-nothing conservatism, and that these people are still electing people. I don't think it was a turning point in that sense. It certainly was the end of Bobby Cataldo's career in politics because… I think that a lot of the different groups sort of learned a little bit more how to deal with each other maybe, I don't know. I haven't seen a terrific polarization that we used to have in town. We seem to have it nationwide more than we had it.

INT: You think we're less polarized now?

EF: In Lexington, yes, I think so. I've had people pay more attention, too. And here we've got an election and there's no contest at anything. That's weird. I don't think that will last very long, but…

INT2: Why was this event so divisive?

EF: I can tell you where I saw a microcosm was in the Unitarian Church. John Wells came as our new Minister to Lexington. He had obviously come with the intention of using this church as a political vehicle for his ideas, but he felt very lonely until our little group contacted him, and then he did… He has a tremendous talent for promotion and dealing with famous people and all that stuff that I don't know how to do, and the people… Of course the conservatives in the church became so bitter that they felt they were being used. They didn't believe in this peace action, or they felt that the war was necessary. They hadn't really looked at the old line Unitarians. And the new Unitarians were split. The new people who are Unitarians very often have been something else, and this is a great step to freedom for them. But for all the old type of Unitarians they're really very bitter at having their church used, and they felt that they were being used. Some of us joined the Unitarian Church to help John Wells, and that only made them madder. One year I actually ran the church fair for the Unitarian Church, and I did a lot of promotion and we had a slogan that "May Fair is for children and other living things," taking [the slogan] from the peace [movement][5], and this also annoyed some of the conservatives. There was nothing we could do, and a lot of it was a clash between the new and the old. It's also a clash, and it's [between] new and old residents. I think that that's again very much a part of this thing that we saw before on the Green. People who had been in Lexington all their lives were really quite bitter because the schools were very expensive, and they wanted someone to blame for the fact that they were caught in some kind of an

[5]A frequent slogan for signs or bumper stickers at the time was: "War is not good for children and other living things."

economic pinch, although actually a lot of them were making a lot of money by selling off their land. There was a man who sold shoes in town, and his business was certainly helped by the fact that all these limousine liberals had moved into town because that's where they could buy their shoes inexpensively. They really resented us.

I wonder if I should tell the story about the…there was a man in town—I don't want to mention his name—and he had some children at Diamond Junior High where my daughter was at school. They were a little social group and they began having birthday parties, and Lydia had the first birthday party in the group with boys at it. We had them out here on the terrace, and we had ping pong and lots of things to run around where everybody could work off lots of energy, and it was a huge success. He came to pick up his kids and the party wasn't quite done, so I said, "Would you come in?" And he obviously didn't want to get contaminated by me, because I was this notorious character. And the parties went on all spring, and finally in the summer it became his son's turn to have the party and I came to the house bringing my daughter. Then I heard the family talking about going out, and I didn't want to leave my kid if they were going out, and so I asked them, "Is somebody going to be here, some adult going to be here? Because I don't want to leave my daughter if there isn't." They were so surprised that a famous radical like me would even care, they invited me in for coffee. So you're really dealing with the fact that there are people in town like Ann Scigliano [Lexington *Minuteman* editor] who came to a meeting—we had this very dramatic meeting before the Moratorium—and one of the right wing guys was sitting in the front with a tape recorder taping everything I said. It made me feel very unrelaxed. I'd never run a meeting with 200 people in it before, and I was ruling people out of order and all sorts of things, because we'd ended up approving the plan to go on the Green, but Ann Scigliano said to me "I just wasn't comfortable with

those people. These were all my friends." You know? So there was a real feeling…She was the newspaper editor, but she also really came from that very narrow group of East Lexington people that were really threatened. I think they were more threatened by the fact that the way people—later on it was McGovern people—dressed and did their hair than by their policies. I mean, that this was a lifestyle thing. And the hostility still goes on.

INT: One question that was sometimes asked, is there in your view of these kinds of—it sounds like a cultural differentiation—do you see that there is a class thing involved?

EF: They think so. Mary Miley used to win elections and she said "I look conservative, but I think quite differently." [Laughter.] But you know, what difference in social class are you talking about? You get the relatives of people who work the high tech industry. They're either scientists, engineers, or they're in business. And these guys in the Center—they don't have quite as much education, but they really aren't that different a class, but they may think of themselves as a different class.

INT2: You're talking about sort of like socio-economic…?

EF: Yes, right. Because actually some of those people make a lot of money.

INT2: The merchants who have a retail situation?

EF: Right. But for some reason their experiences have made them narrow and clannish, rather than liberal. Then I guess scientists and engineers are apt to have liberal wives whether or not they're liberal, I think.

INT2: Why is that?

EF: I know a lot of situations with friends, the guys were quite conservative and the women were really into this stuff, and I don't know that… It wasn't my case. My husband's been very supportive the whole time, but I do know that that wasn't true in a number of cases.

INT: Any thought about why that might be?

EF: It's the same as the gender gap that Reagan had, you know. Whether you change stuff by force or you change it by getting together, consensus, talking things over.

INT: Just among females?

EF: Yes. It's partly that.

INT2: You're the first person who talked about this. The needle goes either all the way over here: it's *not* a class thing or all the way over here: it *is* a class thing. And this notion that it's not a socio-economic difference as much as a self…

EF: A self-image…?

INT2: A fine difference. Well, you said that their experiences…

EF: Frank Belotti [Massachusetts Attorney General] in those days was a bad guy. And what was the name of our Governor? Peabody was running for the nomination. Well, nobody is standing there for Peabody, so I got home and I called up all my friends which you're absolutely not supposed to do, and tell them to get down there and get the hell out and vote. And I got all the more wonderful arguments from Lexington liberals.

INT2: There were arguments about Lexington?

EF: Yes. I mean, how they had a dinner party that night and they couldn't possibly spend 15 minutes at the polls. There were no lines, so there no reason why they couldn't do it. That's when I began to realize that limousine liberals are …they don't vote in town elections. There's a big split between them, although there are some people who are both things, you understand, some people who are both civic and into liberalism in the sense of anti-war and national issues and stuff like that, but there are some that don't even read *The Globe*. They read *The New York Times*, and nothing else. That makes them really up on who's who in Lexington! [Laughter.] And they were the ones that told me that Stephen [Doran] was

too young and inexperienced, and he'd had more political experience than they had, because they didn't stick their noses in it, but I wasn't supposed to say that. I was very annoyed with many of my friends who at twenty-one were not going to vote [him] as State Rep, and so they waited till he was twenty-three. Right?

INT: How did this affect selection of the people who ran for School Committee and so forth?

EF: I worked with Florence Kaplow, because I thought she was a catalyst for change, but that was rather personal. I really haven't done much town stuff, except the Democratic Town Committee.

INT2: Then let me go back a little bit to ask you to talk freely about the kinds of experiences that make us into conservatives or liberals. You defined there being a distinction between the guys in business in the Center and the more liberal folks who were in the same economic range.

EF: Yes. I think money-wise they were pretty much the same.

INT2: But what were the life experiences that make them different?

EF: Well, living in the same place all their lives. The Nolans and the Frankoviches are the only people on Dewey and Gould [streets] in the swimming pool area that were born and bred in Massachusetts. Everybody's from outside, but I think it's more than that. I think that there's a definite difference in academic degrees, that liberals often have either master's degrees, Ph.Ds, all that sort of thing. I don't have those things, but I went to an Ivy League college. All of these generalizations there, you can think of a half dozen exceptions. Then I think there was also on the part of these town people, I think there was a certain amount of anti-Semitism. On the other hand, trying to get limousine liberals to vote for an Italian named Sam Rotundi was almost impossible. There is ethnic group [politics]. A lot of these conservatives are Catholic or belong to these…the kind of Baptists, Methodists, and then there's the old line Unitarians. So

you can't generalize about anything. And for some reason or other, if you're conservative you hate these other people a lot, which I find unfortunate. There's a lot of resentment that these people are rich and they who think right are poor, which they're not but…

INT2: There's mythology there. Myths that people maintain.

EF: Right.

INT2: How do you think that period of time during the Vietnam War protests, how did that impact on the Democratic Party process?

EF: Well, I went to a caucus. Remember, we invented the caucus. Do you know the kind of caucus where what you do is you get all the different people who might be involved? The first candidate to come out of this was Father Drinan, and his people—or at least Jerry Grossman and Al Levin—those. Jerry Grossman was PAX, and Al Levin was CPP, and PAX and CPP worked together on these things, and they'd get every liberal of every different kind to come and try to make a liberal endorsement for the office and it was a very effective thing.

INT: And that really has changed the national [Democratic] Party, hasn't it?

EF: Well, may I say one thing, that I think what the McGovern and all of that movement—we scared the pants off Middle America, and that's what brought us Ronald Reagan.

INT2: Are you still trying to figure out what to do?

EF: Yes. And now they're calling Paul Tsongas [the late US Senator, MA] a conservative, which I find just amazing.

INT: Could I back you up to where you invented the caucus?

EF: Well, Jerry Grossman and Al Levin invented it.

INT: Really? And what year was that?

INT2: It was the '72 campaign.

INT: 1972?

EF: Well, yes. And John Kerry almost got the district, because you get all these liberals and John Kerry was just out of Yale, and he has a silver tongue and he almost got the nomination. But he didn't get the nomination, so in 1972 he decided to switch and live in another district, and that really didn't work at all. He tried to run for Congress in the Fifth District, which was Lowell, Lexington, and now there were these young men in John Kerry's campaign—I think of his brother Cameron—who had a real hostility toward the sort of conservative police who were very similar to the kind of people that were in…and there was a put-up job. Somebody called the Kerry campaign the night before the primary and said that somebody was going in and was going to pull out all their phone lines into this telephone headquarters. So, instead of calling the police, these stupid boys went down to try to intercept whoever was doing this and they were trapped. It was an entrapment set up by the conservatives. You don't remember this?

INT: I think it rings sort of a vague bell. They went to a telephone headquarters and…?

EF: I don't know. They walked in a door which was…

INT: A door of what?

EF: It was where all the switches were in the telephones.

INT: The telephone company?

EF: I don't know where these were. This stuff is in *The Lowell Sun* and I think it was the 1972 campaign.

INT: This is the primary?

EF: Yes, it was the primary.

INT: John Kerry had lost out to…

EF: No, I guess it was the election, because I worked for John Kerry very briefly. I knew him pretty well—close up. Some people think they're

born for the White House, and… [Laughter]. Where are you going to show all this stuff? [Laughter.]

INT2: I realize that you are absolutely clear for these two guys about the caucus, but I don't know enough for it to have been clear to me when you said Grossman and what's-his-name invented the caucus and then Middle America got scared, and then to Reagan. Do you mind sort of giving that in sort of simplified form?

EF: Let's see, the caucus was a meeting of liberal groups, liberal people, and general anti-war persuasion, all the way from moderates like me all the way to the people that wanted to demonstrate in front of the Pentagon and maybe blow things up. You know there was a big range of people, okay? We'd get together and all the candidates would come and make speeches and then they would be voting and then their people would have to bargain and try to get to agree on one person, and it was a very effective way of sorting [it] out; instead of having five liberal candidates that everybody was endorsing you'd have one. We did it for McGovern also and we won that caucus. They had a caucus in Worcester for McGovern and we went up there.

INT: So this is part of the Democratic Party's…?

EF: It became briefly a part of the Democratic Party structure. The conservatives in the party, of course, were not wildly enthusiastic about this process. They used to always just run…make sure that two or three liberals ran for an office, and then they could kill them off with one of theirs, and since we outfoxed them on that… So, we had one for McGovern, it must have been the spring of 1972 and Marty Peretz brought a whole bus load of welfare people from some project, and they were all black, and he expected them to vote for McCarthy, but when they got there on the floor they voted for…

INT2: Shirley Chisholm.

EF: Yes! Shirley Chisholm. And Marty was furious. I think that's when he quit politics and went and bought *The New Republic*.

INT2: What did you think of that?

EF: What, *The New Republic*? I tried to…

INT2: No, the caucus?

EF: I think it was very effective and it was just sort of exhausting. I had a lot of trouble trying to explain it to Gary Hart when I was…at that point John Reuther was running the McGovern campaign and I had been just put in charge of fund raising, and we had this guy who was on the Planning Board who was head of the McGovern campaign. I can't remember his name now.

INT: Fowle.

EF: Fowle, right. He kept calling the campaign and saying, "Should we get buses to go to the caucus?" and the campaign officially didn't want to do this. I sent a letter to Gary Hart explaining what was happening and he fixed it. But before that got fixed I talked with—what did we say his name was, Fowle?—and he said "Should we bring the buses?" And I said, "Yes," and he said, "Well, why can't I get an okay from the campaign?" and I said, "You can't. Would you please get those buses, get as many people to the caucus as possible. We can't afford to lose it." See, John Reuther came from labor union politics and they didn't like… We were trying to merge at that point with the labor union and peace people, which was like oil and water together. It was just amazing. Neither understood the other and were very suspicious of everything. I wasn't suspicious enough. I was done in by a lot of those people, those professional political people.

INT: How so?

EF: Oh, the McGovern delegates. Never mind. I should have been a convention delegate for McGovern and I wasn't, because I had actually started the campaign in Massachusetts.

INT: The delegate slates were selected at the caucus?

EF: We had a caucus, and then I didn't get on that because Jean Rubenstein was on it for Shirley Chisholm. And I thought two Dewey Road addresses next-door to each other might look bad on the ballot, instead of looking out for me. Then I thought I'd be able to go on the statewide one, and they didn't put me on the statewide one. In fact, I had a lot of trouble with that campaign. I felt that I was in the political jungle and I really wasn't prepared for it. So, I went off to become a technical writer instead of a pol. [Laughter.]

INT: Any more thoughts?

EF: I think this is a wonderful project, and I hope that they do put together something. I hope you'll delete some of my indiscretions, because I'm comfortable with all you three, and I can't imagine where it all goes.

INT2: That's a very good point and we can talk about that. In fact, you can see it, and see if there's something that troubles you. Do you have any thoughts about what this project might achieve?

EF: I think that it's time for some of the hatreds to die down, and I think they probably have, although people are saying why do you bring this all up again; maybe they haven't.

INT2: You're talking about in Lexington?

EF: In Lexington, right. But I think that we've got to come to terms with this period, and that the last—nationally, anyway, the last so many years since Reagan's twelve years have been a reaction against this kind of thing, but people… I hope that when the generation that was sent—that was young—during the Vietnam War which was the very idealistic generation—things will get better when they get old enough to come to power. This was a very potent educational process for very many people.

INT2: You think the country has not resolved it?

EF: No, and I was truly shocked from the Clarence Thomas hearings by that Senator who started waving copies of "The Exorcist," and saying… There was nothing, you know, there was absolutely no link, but the conservatives have this idea that you've got to win: it's more important to win than to win fairly. I think this is a very serious problem that we have to address. I don't know whether this thing will help. I think it's always better if people remember the times in their lives when they actually did something to go beyond themselves. I think it's been good for me to remember because I really had pushed a lot of it in the back of my mind.

INT: You think it's important for us to have the views of the total community of Lexington in terms of opinions?

EF: You can't do that, there's too many. There's a different opinion from everybody you get, but you could certainly get difference…I mean, obviously you've gotten some of the extreme…there are far less people who are supporting it, and you probably hadn't been… Will Bobby Cataldo talk to you about this?

INT2: Do you think it's important?

EF: Yes.

END OF INTERVIEW