

**Kathryn G. Heath Oral History Interview – JFK#1, 06/29/1971**  
Administrative Information

**Creator:** Kathryn G. Heath  
**Interviewer:** William W. Moss  
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**Biographical Note**

Heath was the Assistant for Special Studies in the Office of Education of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. In this interview Heath discusses her family and her childhood; how she reached her chosen career path; obstacles to her advancement because of her gender; studying at American University and at Syracuse University; myths of the “male chauvinists’ world”; taking a women’s studies course; working while in school; running a cost of living survey for the Department of Labor in Rochester, NY, and then in Richmond, VA; the Temporary Emergency Relief Administration; working with the disadvantaged during the Depression; the “great American dream”; the effectiveness of institutionalization and the rise in bureaucracy; the National Association of Deans of Women; stigmas attached to higher education; the Civil Service Commission; working during World War II with various organizations, including the Norden Company in Elmira, NY, at the bombsight plant and the United States Army; the attitude towards women in war work; and writing her dissertation and getting her doctorate, among other issues.

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Oral History Interview

with

KATHRYN G. HEATH

June 29, 1971  
Washington, D.C.

By William W. Moss

For the John F. Kennedy Library

MOSS: Dr. Heath, let me begin by asking you to go back to the beginnings. Let's go back to your childhood in Cincinnati, Ohio, and tell us a little bit about this. What I want to do is find who this person Kathryn Heath is, and how did she come to be an officer of the U.S. Office of Education. What was the development in your childhood, in your adolescence, and college years and so on that led up to this?

HEATH: I was born in Cincinnati and I was an orphan and was an adopted child--adopted by two wonderful people, very poor. My father was a printer for the Cincinnati Enquirer. And he had only gone through the eighth grade and my mother through two years of high school, but I used to say if I got as well educated as he was, I'd be happy because in the kind of business he was in, he really got himself an education. He was in the composing room. And we struggled along through high school, and I wanted to go on to college and we didn't have any money. So my father said if I'd just wait a year he'd help me to

go to the University of Cincinnati. We were living in Portsmouth at the time. But I didn't have enough patience to wait. So I came off to Washington with about five dollars, five or six dollars in my pocket.

MOSS: Excuse me. [Interruption] All right. We were talking about your childhood in Cincinnati.

HEATH: So, I had a foundation scholarship to the American University.

MOSS: The American University Foundation?

HEATH: An American University Foundation Scholarship it was called. They had them for people from the different states. And I got one of those, but that wasn't enough to put me through so I needed a job. And they said, "Oh, you couldn't work and go to school on a foundation scholarship." There was no hope otherwise so I got a job too.

MOSS: What led you to American University?

HEATH: I had a very interesting English teacher at Portsmouth High School who took an interest in me. She was looking around for scholarship possibilities. There weren't nearly so many in those days as there are now. I remember one was at Coe College at Cedar Rapids, Iowa, that she unearthed. But I'd always had an interest in what was going on in the world, so Washington appealed to me, and that's why I came here.

MOSS: So it was your interest in getting an education that led you on beyond high school in an age where women were not frequently going beyond high school.

HEATH: Yeah, I began to work when I was twelve. They wouldn't let you do it now.

MOSS: What sort of jobs did you have when you were young, when you were in high school and so on?

HEATH: Oh, me. I started out, before high school, in a resort hotel in Saratoga Springs, New York because my family was up there for a year. And then when I got back to Cincinnati my brother put an ad in the paper--his name was Kenneth Heath, mine's Kathryn Heath--and the ad was K. Heath and I answered the ad and got the job. I mean somebody answered this ad and I got the job.

MOSS: Your natural brother or your stepbrother?

HEATH: No, he's not a stepbrother. He was adopted too. Wonderful person. I wish I had his enormous talent for creativity, just fabulously creative person who's missed his calling.

MOSS: What subjects in high school, other than English, interested you?

HEATH: Well, I was particularly interested in civics and things of this sort, what was going on in the world. I guess they called it civics back in those days. But I concentrated on business courses because that's what I had to have to earn a living.

MOSS: As you look back on your experiences in the civics courses in high school, what do you remember of the quality of them, the kinds of things that were being transmitted from teacher to student?

HEATH: I remember less of that than the effect the teachers had on me, and I have many times said to people who have consulted me that my own experience is that you study under people rather than subjects. When I was in college I had no interest in history at first because I was bored to death with learning dates which had no particular meaning to me, this sort of rote history. And then I had a history professor who made the world come alive. And when I finished college I had practically a major in history.

MOSS: Who was that?

HEATH: Well, he's a man who went out to the University of Maryland afterwards and is now gone. He's now dead. And I can't recall his name right off. I could if I thought a while, but he was a remarkable person --Dr. Wesley M. Gewehr.

MOSS: Would you say your development toward a career was primarily an economic necessity, or did you have a . . .

HEATH: I had an interest in things that most women aren't interested in: economics and politics. And I majored in economics in college as one of two women. The other was Barbara Evans, who became Dean Acheson's assistant through the years. And I began working in the Cost-of-Living Division in the Department of Labor. And I realized very quickly that I couldn't go anywhere. So I decided I'd better get out of that, and even before then, I'd been interested in the law too. Law, economics, and politics.

MOSS: Why did you realize you couldn't get anywhere?

HEATH: Because the women weren't the ones who moved up. And I know when I was interested in the law, there was a congressman who had taken an interest in me just because his daughter was one of my friends. And he wanted me to go into law because I used to like to chew the fat with him on law. But I was blocked all over. You must realize that I come from the era when women were stopped cold on many things unless you had a family that could promote you or the financial backing.

MOSS: I'm very interested in this because as a successful career woman in the federal service, this is interesting. How did you break through this? And I think we'll get to that along the way. Let me ask you specifically about your experience at American University. How did it feel to be a woman with different interests? How were you treated at American University? What obstacles did you have to overcome?

HEATH: I was treated splendidly there. The university didn't put obstacles in my way. In fact, they gave me many opportunities. I was secretary to the Dean of Women for four years I was there--part-time, after classes and Saturdays. And of course, she took a great interest in me, and I was given many opportunities.

MOSS: What about generally? What was the atmosphere in the university towards women in general and women students and women scholars?

HEATH: Well, I think the attitude was that we weren't going to go on, that we would probably all get married and that would be that, but that it was nice for us to have an education anyway.

MOSS: Did you contemplate getting married at this period?

HEATH: I always thought I would, and for one reason or another, passed it by. In fact, when I was a youngster--and there were lots of kids around the neighborhood--I was the only one who was going to get married. None of them were. And I'm the only one who didn't out of the whole collection.

MOSS: Because this is at least one of the myths of the "male chauvinists' world," I suppose, that the woman who doesn't get married and who takes a career, takes the career because she can't.

HEATH: That has been a view.

MOSS: And I want to develop this a little bit, at least, to see how you coped with this kind of thing.

HEATH: I remember one man who proposed to me off and on. He proposed to me and I didn't accept, and then he married somebody else. And that was unhappy for him. And he was back on my doorstep off and on through the years. And he finally said to me, "Kay Heath, the whole trouble with you is you're not looking for a meal ticket."



MOSS: Do you think this was partly because of your childhood and the need for self-reliance and so on in the family situation, or what?

HEATH: No, no. I do think this made me a much more independent creature. You do become independent if you must fend for yourself, or you go under, one or the other. I finished one year of graduate study owing fifty-five hundred dollars in the Depression because I was going to go on, period.

MOSS: All right. As you are approaching the end of your undergraduate career at American University, what things were you looking for? What opportunities were you seeking?

HEATH: Well, I decided that I would probably have to shelve my economics. Actually I had an opportunity later, but at the time, I could get nowhere. They simply didn't want women.

MOSS: What sort of attempts did you make, and what were some of the roadblocks thrown against you?

HEATH: Well, it's the subtle thing. You know there's a position and you're told there isn't one, and then you find somebody who's been put in it. These things happen. They happened all over the place. So I, having worked with the Dean of Women, had become very much interested in that field, and I got myself an assistantship at Syracuse University in the first student dean's class up there.

MOSS: Let me back up a minute and ask you what sort of problems and things were interesting you in the Dean of Women's responsibility area?

HEATH: Well, that's where I began getting awfully interested in the status of women. In fact, I had seen the Dean of Women just plain weep one day because a scholarship fund had been made available and all the women were ruled out of getting any of the scholarships. They were just for the boys.

MOSS: Was there a reason given for this, or was it simply--what?

HEATH: They--the boys--needed the education--not the girls. That was still the view. And you see in the Depression years this view was very strong. The boys presumably were the only ones who had to earn a living. This was really where I started to be actively interested in the status of women field.

MOSS: All right. What sort of activity did you begin to undertake?

HEATH: Well, I started by getting some training in this field. I took a course at Syracuse University on the Genteel Female. It was wonderful.

MOSS: The Genteel Female?

HEATH: Uh-huh. It was just wonderful, all about the things that had happened historically. Now, of course, these women's studies programs are all over the country. They've just been popping up like weeds, there're all kinds of programs of this sort, but this was very unusual when I took it. And I had a remarkable person as the head of the program. Her name is Dr. Eugenie Andruss Leonard. Later, she wrote the scholarly and highly readable book--The Dear-Bought Heritage. It came from the press in 1965, is about colonial women, and is dedicated to the women of today. She was, bar none, one of the most brilliant women I have ever known, and it was quite an experience to study under her. So, whenever I could, I've always picked people to take my courses under. This has taken me into all kinds of avenues, and someday I'm going to take geology that way. I want to know more about the drumlins of Syracuse, the fault country out West, stalactites and stalagmites in caves, spar and other minerals, the geodes and crinoids in Iowa, the Dells of Wisconsin, and all the ores in "them thar hills." Another field I'd like to study under an inspired teacher deals with the religions of mankind.<sup>1</sup>

MOSS: Let me ask you about the atmosphere at Syracuse. I asked you about the atmosphere at American. Is there any difference between the two? What differences did you find?

HEATH: Yes, Syracuse was a much larger institution at the time, and as I said, my interests were in politics and government, and the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs up there, which was very interesting to me, was headed by a man by the name of [William E.] Mosher at the time, and while he would come over and talk to our student dean group, he didn't want any women students in his school. Just plain didn't want them. That has changed, but there were practically none there then. I don't know whether there were any, but there may've been a few. The attitude was very much against women being in such fields. So it was very hard to do the things you wanted to do.

MOSS: You were directing a women's dormitory while you were there. How was that experience? What do you recall from that as a . . .

HEATH: Well, one thing I recall particularly is a young woman who came up from Florida and had never seen snow in her life. And we had an unexpected snowstorm sometime before Thanksgiving, a real deep snowstorm. And I understand why people who run dormitories get gray hair fast. She went up to the third floor and jumped out the window.

MOSS: Oh for heaven's sake.

HEATH: She thought it was like a pillow. And because she was so relaxed, she didn't hurt herself, but she scared the living daylights out of me because I was responsible for her.

MOSS: Did you find yourself having to cope with the psychological problems of women attempting to go through the education process at this time when there was a bias against it?

HEATH: No, I think that came a little later. And there were enough women at Syracuse, and because of that student dean program, there was a more wholesome attitude, I think, than there was on some campuses. The Forestry College and the Maxwell School were the two that didn't cater to women.

MOSS: And in working on your M.A., what did you concentrate on besides the problems of women?

HEATH: I had a break, that is before I finished the degree --now it takes two years. Then you could take it in a year and some summer sessions. And I had to earn a little money along the way. So then I had a lucky break and was invited to come to the Department of Labor. And ran the cost of living survey in Rochester, New York and then, went down to Richmond and headed up the tabulation for a whole bunch of cities, thirteen cities, I think, throughout the country. And this was in stuff that I was terribly interested in, in economics. And so when I went back to campus for the summer session to do a thesis, I really was bored with many of the things that people were doing their master's theses on. So I got my major professor to be willing to let me use Department of Labor stuff on the condition the Department of Labor would let me do it. And the Cost-of-Living Division said, yes, indeed I could. And so I tied it into education, but it was on the cost of education in Rochester based on all the hidden things. How much of your water taxes go for education--this kind of thing. So it was kind of fun to do it. I don't consider it a very high quality thesis today, but at least it was a different slant than anything else other people were doing.

MOSS: Let me ask you about the work that you did in Rochester. Exactly what were you doing and who were you working for? How did they accept you as a director?

HEATH: Oh, boy, That had some repercussions. Rochester was an open shop town. And the big companies like Eastman Kodak weren't at all sympathetic to unions. There were some company-type unions like the Filene people

had up in Boston, paternalistic types of unions. The spots where you had the regular unions active were in the clothing manufacturing establishments in Hickey-Freeman, Hickok belts--mens's clothing primarily. So my job was to go to these companies and to get a sample of their employees who were white collar, the lower grade white collar and the other lower grade employees--the wage earners and low salaried employees, for interviewing with one of these great big schedules. Nothing like the size of the schedule they have now, but it was a very substantial schedule on how much they earned and how they spent their money. It had a very detailed supplementary schedule for a one-week period. And this was used in weighting the cost of living index numbers.

And of course, I had to get to the companies, and I was young and I had no trouble with the union companies. They welcomed me with--unionized companies--they welcomed me with open arms. The other companies didn't want to have anything to do with me. And being young and being determined that I wasn't going to go back and not have any success at all and realizing that the Secretary of Labor, who was Miss [Frances] Perkins at that time, had been up to Rochester and had sold the bill of goods to have Rochester be one of the cities and everybody had cooperated then, I didn't want to be the one who came along to do the job and then couldn't be successful at it. So I went out to see Dr. Rush Rhees who was the President of the University of Rochester and an old man at the time. And he said he'd be glad to help me, and he would get the economics department to bring some economists together. So they had me out there for a luncheon and there were twenty-one men and me. And I laid out my problem. And they helped me work out a new sampling technique for the places that were unwilling to open up their rolls to me. And when I had that all worked out, I sent it back to the Department of Labor and they bought it. So we did that sampling in Rochester differently than any other city. And it was done partly by this special method and partly by using the rolls of the offices. So it was successful.

MOSS:      What sort of sampling?

HEATH: Well, we used the City Directory for one thing to find out where these people were. And I've forgotten all the details that they worked out with me, but they were a wonderful group of fellows who just tackled this as something exciting.

MOSS: You went out and approached individual employees, did you?

HEATH: Then we did, yes, when we had their names. Of course, we did it in every case. We were approaching individual employees, but we preferred to have the company tell them that this was going on.

MOSS: What sort of a staff existed in Rochester, or were you on your own?

HEATH: I had to get my staff. And those were Depression days and so I used the state labor offices and the University of Rochester and there was some other outfit that helped me recruit the staff, made referrals to me.

MOSS: What sort of supervision did you have from the Department? Did you have people coming down and looking to see what you were doing, or did you make regular reports?

HEATH: A higher ranking staff member came up to Rochester with me and stayed a couple of weeks to help me rent space, get furniture and equipment, and get started. After that, nobody ever visited in Rochester because my material was flowing in. When I was down in Richmond they did because we had--they came twice I think--because we had thirteen cities and they were quite different. There were different problems.

MOSS: How did you get the appointment to Richmond?

HEATH: Because I had been to Rochester and I had done that job all right. So they called me in on this one.

MOSS: It was on the Labor Department's initiative, was it?

HEATH: Uh-huh.

MOSS: Do you know who specifically?

HEATH: Well, I know how I got the first assignment. There was somebody over in the Civil Service Commission who had been in high school with me. I didn't even remember her, but she had come across my name and saw I graduated from that school and she'd seen my background and she was hunting for papers for people for this assignment for the Department of Labor. So she sent my papers in and then called me up and told me she'd done it. So these are the peculiar things that happen. Dr. Faith Williams, Chief of the Cost-of-Living Division, asked me to come back on the Richmond assignment.

MOSS: How did you find Richmond? After your self-reliant upbringing, how did you find dealing with the patrician Virginians?

HEATH: Oh, I don't know. I think it wasn't the patrician Virginians. It was the political squabblers in Virginia itself. They had a State Labor Office and a State Labor Assisgnment Office and never the twain shall meet. If one wanted them to send. . . . If one wanted you to pick up their referrals as employees--this still is the Depression--the other didn't and vice versa. So I got them all together and said, "Look, I don't care which of your offices these people come from. I have a proposed minimum test. And if your people qualify, I'll take them in the order they come." So then they really started feeding me people. That's how I got the rest of the staff.

MOSS: Do you remember any particular problems other than that that faced you there in Richmond or you had to overcome?

HEATH: Yes, there were problems of personnel. Depression you remember, and these were people--they were getting off of welfare. And so I had a few drunks

and I had a few addicts, and I used to send my timekeeper to court every once in a while because somebody had landed in the pokie. And I had a man who had committed murder and really a collection that spread the gamut, but they were kind of wonderful too.

MOSS: Do you remember any involvement of blacks in your study at that time, or were they largely ignored?

HEATH: Not down there. Oh, they were included as far as the interviewing in Rochester was concerned, yes.

MOSS: But how about Richmond?

HEATH: Richmond I was tabulating material from other cities, tabulating material from Los Angeles and so on.

MOSS: Oh, I see.

HEATH: Thirteen cities.

MOSS: So it was nationwide rather than regional.

HEATH: That's right. So I knew what their sex was, but . . .

MOSS: Why did they choose Richmond for a nationwide tabulating center?

HEATH: Tabulating center. Well, it just had tabulation for thirteen cities. There were several other tabulation centers, but I just happened to be running the one in Richmond.

MOSS: Just off the top of my head, it would seem logical to do it on a regional basis when you threw in Los Angeles on me, I began to wonder at the rationale for distributing the . . .

HEATH: I don't believe I ever questioned why I got what cities I got except that no tabulation office was to handle schedules from the local area. There



had been somebody else who had been in Richmond and he was moved out. He was a wonderful person, but he had gotten into all kinds of trouble with the State Labor Office and the State Labor Assignment Office on the politics of it. And sometimes there's an advantage to having a woman instead of a man. And it was an advantage when I went down there knowing the problem in advance and got together with those people.

MOSS: In what ways was it an advantage?

HEATH: Number one, they didn't expect a woman. And number two, it took some of the swearing out of the disputes, kind of calmed people down. I certainly had this when I got to Europe in the work after the cessation of hostilities.

MOSS: How long were you in Richmond now?

HEATH: Oh goodness, I don't. . . . It was a matter of months. I left before it was finished to join the Deans Association [National Association of Deans of Women].

MOSS: Okay. And so you went from there to the Deans Association. And how did you get there and why?

HEATH: Well, while I was in college I used to go down and help the Deans Association get out some of their mailings. And so the executive secretary down there knew me, and while I was down there I'd met various and sundry of the deans. And when Irma Voigt of Ohio University became President and my name was suggested to her, she thought I was the person who ought to be there. So that's how it happened.

MOSS: I note here in your résumé you indicate that between 1932 and 1934 you were executive secretary of the Woman's General Study Club of Rome, New York. This was a paid position, was it?

HEATH: Yes, it was. It's something like a YWCA [Young Women's Christian Association]. That's what I did immediately on going from Syracuse University. As soon as the school year and summer school finished, I went there that fall for two years, and then I came to Washington in a temporary job and on into that one with the Labor Department.

MOSS: What do you remember from that experience in Rome that may be significant in your whole development? What did that contribute?

HEATH: It contributed most, probably, in learning to work with a board. I've watched people fall on their faces working with boards because they get all enthusiastic about the board that's in office now, and they forget that some of the people who aren't in office are going to be, and you'd better not make enemies with them, you know. So I think I learned more on working with a group of women who were divided somewhat on how they thought things ought to go, and the fact that the next year there were new people in there, some of whom had been bitterly fought before. Now they were in charge. I think that was my first real eye-opener in this sort of thing.

MOSS: What sort of things were you dealing with? What sort of programs were you developing?

HEATH: Well, the Depression was on and this is where I gave another shot to my concern for people who were disadvantaged, like women. But in this case it was Italians. The Temporary Emergency Relief Administration was on in those days which preceded WPA [Works Progress Administration, which became Work Projects Administration under a reorganization effective July 1, 1939]. And there was such a group in New York State and as the paid head of this organization I was invited and the head of the YMCA, and there were different community people. And I had gotten disturbed by the--not second rate status, but the tenth rate status of the Italians, in the mucklands along the Mohawk River, who grew these gorgeous vegetables everybody liked. They were treated like dirt. And of

course, they were at the lowest level in getting jobs. So one of my suggestions in that committee was why not have something that would take their kids off the street and put them in our club. And one of the things that seems silly now, but it was effective and seemed awfully interesting both because I knew a woman who was very good in art and because I'd seen what some of these kids had just naturally done of an artistic nature. So we ran an art program and we hired her as a Temporary Emergency Relief art teacher, and we brought these kids in there. And at the end of the year we had quite a show and got the whole town interested in it. And these youngsters had lots of talent, and they were youngsters from, oh, twelve to nineteen and twenty. So this sort of gave some of those people a feeling that they counted.

MOSS: What sort of problems did you have with them?

HEATH: We didn't have trouble with them. They were wonderful. We also ran a clinic which I hadn't started, but which I certainly promoted. People came in from Utica--doctors from Utica and from Rome, and we had this clinic on Saturdays. And it was once a month at one time, and then more often. And they brought youngsters in from all the poverty-stricken areas. And I remember one youngster who had a wry neck, and they'd spent a great deal of time building up the family to be willing to let this child have an operation and explaining how critical it was. And by golly, when the great day came, the child didn't show up nor did the parents. But about a month later the child was brought in and her neck was perfectly all right. And the doctors just couldn't believe what they saw. And they investigated and they found out that Poppa had decided they didn't need the doctors and he'd strapped her down and he yanked her neck around, but it worked.

MOSS: For heaven's sake.

HEATH: And they took pictures and everything of her neck and she came out all right. So there were fantastic things of this sort that happened, really appalling things.

MOSS: Let me ask you something about general attitude. I did not live through that period, but I have vague recollections of the Thirties and the atmosphere and things that I've read about it. It seems to me that there was a more open, candid, perhaps naive approach to the whole business of working with the disadvantaged, and the disadvantaged themselves were more open. I sense in the present time a kind of suspicion, a hostility towards do-gooder programs and this sort of thing on the part of, say, the slum dwellers themselves. Could you comment on that?

HEATH: I think there was a vast separateness. There was this group on this side of the railroad track, and there was this group on the other side. And I know that I was something of a catalyst between these two as far as that club was concerned because naturally all the wealthier women and so forth were members or supported the activities, and I was constantly bringing in these people who didn't have any opportunities.

MOSS: Did you sense any hostility on either side or any holding back?

HEATH: No, I don't think so. It was just keep them at arm's length. But let's help.

MOSS: Patronizing kind of thing?

HEATH: Yes. Not by everybody, but this really existed.

MOSS: Because this is the thing that people are coming to sort of sense now, the patronizing attitude is counterproductive. It builds up hostility in the recipient and so on. It seemed to me a more innocent time with respect to this sort of thing. We didn't appreciate the sophisticated involvement of things.

HEATH: Well, we didn't have television, and we didn't have many things that focused attention differently, you see.

MOSS: And at the same time there seemed to be a kind of --more than hope--there's nothing we can't do if we only put our minds to it, which is not prevalent today.

HEATH: This was the great American dream. And this is before Social Security. I happen to be a Republican, and I argued for Social Security, which was not considered the thing to do if you were a Republican, even though [Marion B.] Folsom from Eastman Kodak was brought in to head up Mr. [Franklin D.] Roosevelt's economic commission, whatever it was called. And he was certainly a Republican, but I'd studied my history and had known what had happened, or was happening in Germany and how their system was falling apart in those years. And I had watched what Folsom was trying to do in that commission. I read the reports. So I was generally in favor of some kind of a security system. But what you're talking about was before we had it, so you had to depend entirely on you.

As far as I'm concerned, one of the tragedies was that when the system went into effect, and it got oversold, like most things do politically, the idea was as social security went up, the welfare would go down. And of course, the welfare didn't go down. It was sort of like VD. Once you started looking into it you found a lot more of it than you knew was there, you see. And they started family welfare programs by working out individual family budgets, which to me was sheer ridiculousness. I think part of the failure is this. No family formula that was nationwide, but dealing with millions of people on a person to person basis on something like this--I don't think it's realistic.

MOSS: Let me turn that around a little bit and ask you about the systematic, institutional, programatic answers to what are human individual problems. There seems to be a dichotomy there that we have to live with. Once you begin to institutionalize and build programs, you're in a sense, abstracting. You're intellectualizing a real, individual, human problem into a generalized kind of thing. How do you feel about the effectiveness of that?

HEATH: I don't know how quite to approach what you say.

MOSS: There's a growing suspicion, I think, that once you--in this day and age--that once you take observed problems that are real human problems and begin to develop rational solutions to them, what you do is to over-generalize, to over-intellectualize to the point where it becomes alienated from the real problem itself, and therefore, no longer an appropriate answer to it. Here you have, yourself, developed through the whole development of this approach over the past thirty or forty years. How do you look at this?

HEATH: Well, I guess you hit on something that I have come to feel very strongly, but didn't when it was first called to my attention by this same Dr. Eugenie Andruss Leonard. I happen to be a generalist, deduce from the general to the specific. Most people, I now realize, are not. They are specialists who move to the general. And I think somewhere in here is where we get lost on some of these proposals. I don't know that I can think of a good example right off, but we do sometimes lose the person in starting with a general solution to a problem without realizing the way you get to the individual. I think this is true. But it often is worse when we start with the individual and then generalize for a solution.

MOSS: But, and more particular to put us back in time perspective, was any of this appreciated or even guessed at at the time? You say that Dr. Lender, is it?

HEATH: Leonard.

MOSS: Leonard--mentioned something of this to you. Did you see any other evidence of it, or did you . . .

HEATH: What she said to me, and I now agree, was, "You can make a generalist into a specialist, but you can't make a specialist into a generalist." And I argued this down, but I know she was right today. I've seen it over, and over, and over again. I think Ambassador [W. Averell] Harriman made a comment one time that I noticed. He said we couldn't have some problem handled by the bureaucracy. They would have developed so many specialized little

points that we would've never gotten it off the ground. And you have to take a grand sweep on some of these things and then work out your problems down below. Well, I agree with this now. But I had to live and watch people perform before I agreed with it.

MOSS: Because we've got two things going here. You were talking about the unrealistic approach of beginning with the individual family. It simply is impractical. You have to assign a caseworker to each individual family.

HEATH: You know what that did? It created hundreds upon hundreds of untrained (quote) social workers (quote). You had the same sort of thing when we had the National Defense Education Act of 1958 with its title V on guidance counseling, and testing. There was an attempt to train people but schools often put in somebody who was just a nice teacher here, there, and the other place. This can be chaotic. And this was the same sort of problem. I don't know what the answer is. I would have to take it from the point of view of a specific problem that I wanted to work on, and try to weave my way through it. I keep coming up with staff studies in my place that are a little bit too much for the office at the time, but I've discovered that in ten years they get to them.

MOSS: Well, this is the classic way of doing things, isn't it? Give somebody more than he can chew, let him bite at it for a while.

HEATH: And eventually they come to it.

MOSS: And eventually something comes out of it. It's not challenging otherwise.

HEATH: Yes, I would be bored to death if I couldn't plan some of these things, see.

MOSS: Let me go on then to your period as executive secretary of the National Association of Deans of Women. You began talking about it a little earlier

when I brought you back to your other thing in Rome. How did you get this position again? This is from '36 to '43.

HEATH: Well, Dean Irma Voigt of Ohio University was impressed with my record and . . .

MOSS: Dean Irma Void?

HEATH: Irma Voigt. V-O-I-G-T.

MOSS: Voigt. V-O-I-G-T.

HEATH: She was the dean of women in that college for more than twenty-five years. She went there in 1913 and she was an innovator too. When she got there the first year the women students--and there weren't very many of them--and the men students were up in arms about all the rules. There were too many restrictions on the women. Dating and all this stuff, you see. So she called them all together and announced they'd take out all the rules. And the old newspapers show that this story spread across the country. This was something you didn't do. You were supposed to protect these young women, you see. Well, it wasn't very long before both the men and women decided they wanted rules and they drafted their own, and they drafted thirteen, and that's all they had in that university for years and years and years. So she was an innovator who did things. And she had sort of sensed that in my record and so she brought me to the Deans' Association.

MOSS: How did your record come to her attention? Do you know?

HEATH: It was this. She was president, and the president inquired of the executive board and others to make submissions, and the Dean of Women at American University suggested me, the former executive secretary suggested me, the Dean of Women at Syracuse University suggested me. And I didn't even know they were doing it.

MOSS: How did she describe the job to you that you were to do, or what did she want you to do?



HEATH: She really didn't. She told me I already knew, and I did. I did.

MOSS: And so what was that? What did you do?

HEATH: Well, I edited their publications, such as they were. I made speaking trips and served as one of the NEA representatives on Professional Relations Institutes involving National, State, and local professional associations. I put on their national conventions. I didn't do the program. I helped them get speakers and so forth, but mine was booking them and all the mechanics of it. I also booked hotels and necessary commercial space for ten to thirteen guidance and personnel organizations which wanted to meet in the same city as the Deans Convention.

MOSS: The logistics of the convention.

HEATH: And my first one was in New Orleans, and that I inherited. And I would never let them go to a place like that again.

MOSS: Why is that?

HEATH: Well, it was the fact that our Negro deans were unwelcome. We had, what, twenty or twenty-one of them, but they were crème de la crème of women. These were outstanding women. And I came to the Association and found out the hotels had been booked and Negro women would've had to enter the back door of the hotels, go up the freight elevators, couldn't have any food with any white person, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. I could not make any inroad except an agreement that we could have black women and white women eat together if we closed off the room, and it was just ours and nobody knew. Now this was pretty awful, and prior to this my predecessor had written around this problem to Negro members. And I decided I simply couldn't do that. There was no integrity to this. So I drafted a letter to write to all those deans that the conditions were not good for them to come. And then I called up the dean of women at Howard University, Dean Lucy Slowe who was quite a magnificent woman, a woman of firsts.

MOSS: How do you spell her last name?

HEATH: S-L-O-W-E, I think it was. She had been a tennis championship of some sort--and she'd been a great leader of Negro women and she went out and did many things that she didn't want to do, but because it was necessary to make a stand. And I had known her when I was assisting the dean of women at American University. We had some conferences, you know, so I met all the local and nearby deans in the regional association. And I said I would like to come out and talk over a letter that I was going to send to the Negro deans because of what had transpired in my negotiations with New Orleans. And she said, "I will be in your office tomorrow." We opened at nine o'clock. I got there about ten minutes of nine and she was already waiting for me. And we went over this letter and I said, "I think you should tell me what I should do, how I should reword it, or what." And she said, "I would not change a word. It's the first time we haven't been lied to." So I sent this out. She volunteered to send her own letter to the same Negro deans, too. And our letters had both a happy and unhappy reception. The women appreciated them and yet were outraged at the situation. Oh, and I might mention. You may've heard the name, Dr. Hilda A. Davis.

MOSS: Oh, yes.

HEATH: Well, Hilda Davis was the dean of women at Talladega at the time I came to the Deans Association, and I came from Richmond. And when my appointment was announced, it was announced that I'd come up from that assignment in Richmond, and she wrote a letter of objection because I had been appointed. Appointing a person from the South was just hopeless and particularly Richmond. And since our president was out in Ohio and I opened all the mail for the organization, that was the first letter that greeted me when I arrived at the Deans Association. But the following year we had a convention at Atlantic City, and I invited the leaders among the Negro group to meet with me after the banquet. Well, when that huge hall was cleared away, they had a spotlight on our table, and I was sitting there with those women. And that's when I got acquainted

with Hilda Davis, and we've been wonderful friends ever since because she's magnificent. But she responded exactly the way she had a right to respond, because this was the kind of treatment they usually got.

MOSS: Well, what sort of things was the Association doing at that time? What were the objectives of the organization? What were the successes, some of the problems, some of the failures?

HEATH: There were several different schools of thought in counseling at the time. The Western Electric Hawthorne Works<sup>2</sup> and literature on non-directive counseling was being published. There was the Cornell University system where you did not intrude on the privacy of others--specifically you paid little attention to your students unless they came to you. That counseling was only intended for people who had the rug pulled out from under them, such as an automobile accident killing their whole family, you know, or some tragedy of that sort. And there were those who felt, as Syracuse University did, that there was a major problem to be worked out with women students and that you needed to be concerned about university policy and practice in relation to their personal welfare, their status, and their careers, how they were going to use their education and so on, as well as academic counseling. And then there were the smaller types of programs, such as Irma Voigt ran at Ohio University, for five or six students on a highly individualized basis with a person to person focus.

All these philosophies were floating around the country, and the Association focused pretty much on getting counselors in the secondary schools and improving the status of women on the college and university campuses. And they had conventions that were concerned with these subjects, plus a few interesting highlights thrown in extra.

MOSS: What sort of highlights?

HEATH: Oh, unusual people who were brought in to speak.

MOSS: Feature speakers and that sort of thing.

HEATH: Yes.

MOSS: What about the relationship between the Association and the NEA? Was there any problem here?

HEATH: It was wonderful as far as my association with Willard Givens. He was executive secretary then, and I was absolutely devoted to this man. He was extremely tolerant. This was before NEA had set up their systems of departments, associate organizations, and national affiliates. Our members should all have been members of the NEA. They were not. And NEA was extremely tolerant. They gave us our space and our telephone and basic equipment, you see. Otherwise we couldn't have kept in business with the number of deans there were in the country. So the trouble was more with some of the members who didn't-- particularly at the higher education level--who looked upon the NEA as an elementary and secondary type of outfit.

MOSS: This was my next question. How much of this had developed by that time and had split in the NEA between the higher education and the elementary and secondary?

HEATH: Oh, a great deal, a great deal. I have said so many times in meetings when maybe the NEA is fighting the American Council on Education or the Office of Education doesn't agree with some one of the other organizations, if you would just recognize that these all have a particular area of competence and take advantage of it. For instance, I can certainly cite it as far as the NEA and the Office of Education are concerned. NEA often comes out with proposed legislation that we couldn't possibly support. But what's wonderful about it is they lay the groundwork for the day when we can support it. And therefore, I'm rarely inclined to quarrel with them, you see. But I think it's partly having worked on both sides of the aisle that teaches you these things.

MOSS: I was thinking two ways: One, the lack of appreciation of the higher education people for the problems of elementary and secondary education and vice versa, each one grinding his own axe for relative

advantage. How much of this was going on at that time between '36 and '43 when you were associated with them?

HEATH: I think a fairly substantial amount. I think there was somewhat a different focus. The land-grant college legislation of 1862 and Morrill Act<sup>3</sup> later had encouraged education such as you didn't have in Europe--agriculture and mechanic arts and so forth. Yet, there was still a certain snobbery about higher education because only a tiny fraction of the people went to college and many of them were looking toward the philosophical type of arts education, I think the awakening began to come, at least where I began to see it, was in the years of the technocrats. Remember?

MOSS: Yes.

HEATH: You may not remember, but you read about it.

MOSS: Yeah, sure.

HEATH: I think it occurred. . . . You began to see a shift in the attitude. So we were going through an evolution. And then with the Depression coming along, this had a major impact on higher education.

MOSS: Growing emphasis too on vocational education.

HEATH: For a while.

MOSS: Things like industrial arts.

HEATH: As a matter of fact you saw the bills going through like the George-Dean Act<sup>4</sup> of 1936, which expanded the secondary level vocational education program that the Office of Education administered.

MOSS: Did you get involved at all in the legislative preparation, the lobbying kind of thing on the part of the Association?

HEATH: I didn't in the lobbying. I sat in on various meetings, such as some early ones when Senator Robert Taft was being converted to federal aid for education, which was quite something.

MOSS: Oh, well tell me about that.

HEATH: Oh, the details have slipped me. But there'd been a good many bills on the Hill for federal aid for education and the NEA had been out supporting them. And if you look over the history, you will find the committees were pretty well stacked against getting federal aid for education, as far as the Hill was concerned. And Taft had opposed, but he kept coming up--he was up at the NEA often--to look over the proposals and to almost argue on some of these proposals. And finally he decided this made some sense, and he swung around in favor. So I can't quite tell you the details, but he would sit with our staff, the heads of the department (organizations) and divisions. And I wasn't in many of them because it was primarily the legislative people and Willard Givens and educational policies people. But in certain of the meetings, all of us who headed up a department or a division would be there.<sup>5</sup>

MOSS: Who else were your champions in those days? Who were the people that you could rely on for support?

HEATH: Besides Willard Givens?

MOSS: Yeah. And people in the Congress too. Who were the people who were sympathetic?

HEATH: Oh, my, I've been through so many different Congresses that we were concerned with. Interestingly enough, I think Lister Hill was there then. I may have skipped a gap of where he came in, but I think he was there in those days. Yes, the bill in the Seventy-eighth Congress was sponsored in the Senate by Elbert D. Thomas of Utah for himself and Senator Hill. Senators Pat Harrison, Hugo Black, and Brooks Fletcher, as well as Senator Thomas, were among sponsors of earlier bills.

MOSS: This can easily be checked out on the record.

HEATH: And he was interested, of course, in health, but he was also interested in all the social areas. He was a Democrat. And one of his friends was a Republican congressman from Michigan, who was defeated in the Roosevelt landslide, but who stayed around Washington. Golly, I've forgotten his name (W. Frank James). See, I didn't have the responsibility for legislative matters so I didn't pay too much attention to those names although I once did for a paper at the university. I took the subject of federal aid to education and checked into all those congressional committees and the way they were stacked, and they really were stacked against getting anything through. No question about it.

MOSS: Okay. In 1943, you go to the Smaller War Plants Corporation. How did that come about?

HEATH: I went there because I couldn't do anything in the Deans Association when the war came on. We couldn't have national conventions the way you'd had before. Our publications had to be cut back. All the things that I was actively interested and involved in were folding up, and it was obvious they needed a holding operation with the Deans Association. I didn't think I could stand it. So I knew [Elizabeth] Cosgrove of the Civil Service Commission through various and sundry meetings because she was interested in counseling in the federal government, and she was the one who said, "Why don't you put your papers in the federal government?" So I did. And that's how it happened.

MOSS: Just sort of put them into the Commission, Civil Service Commission, and they came up with a job.

HEATH: Uh-huh.

MOSS: And what did your duties there entail?

HEATH: Well, I didn't start with the Smaller War Plants Corporation. I was very briefly with the Office for Emergency Management. That's where my papers turned up, and they threw that organization out of an existence. I had known Arthur Flemming. He'd been my

debate coach in college, and he was then over at the Civil Service Commission. And he had asked Earl DeLong, who's now the head of the Government and Public Affairs School of American University--Earl DeLong to head up a team and go over to the Smaller War Plants Corporation to see if the team could straighten up the personnel chaos that had occurred over there. The Smaller War Plants Corporation was divorced administratively from the War Production Board, and I've forgotten the figure, but it was something like seven million of their appropriation had somehow disappeared. Well, nobody stole it. It just got used for other things that seemed more important in that day and age.

And so when I got there they had a team of three. There was some fellow from the War Manpower Commission, I believe, who was brought over into placement. I was brought over to help with that. Earl DeLong was to head up this personnel team and see if we could figure out what had happened to this organization. We had employees from seven different organizations, and they were scattered all over this town. A lot of them hadn't been paid, and businessmen had come down on dollar a year, and they had promised people things when they didn't know anything about the machinery of government, and so there were a goodly number of mad people. We started out going to the Raleigh Hotel where there was a batch of them. Well, we just went all over this town, kept finding people that belonged to us.

MOSS: Yeah, this was something that. . . . My father came up to Washington during the war with OSS and with OPA and I remember that he spoke of offices in the darndest places, an old house here, a hotel there, that kind of thing, just simply scattered all over town.

HEATH: Our people were in seven locations with seven different aspects of this job. And what we did was to try to pull them all together, get the people on the rolls who were supposed to be, get the officials to learn that they couldn't just work high, wide and handsome or their people weren't going to get paid. And at that time I learned a few lessons too.

MOSS: What sort of lessons?



HEATH: I saw that we had about three kinds of people in the war days, some magnificent men who were dedicated to serving this country and they gave up their big salaries and came to do what needed to be done. Another group who came to learn all they could to go back and make a killing. And then there were the ones that I can only call the outright bastards. And we had one of those who was going to have a meal with the President when we were called by the Federal Bureau of Investigation to have him off our rolls before a certain hour. They were going to close in on him, and they did. So we really ran the gamut in that outfit, and it was quite an experience to deal with those people.

MOSS: I can imagine.

HEATH: But I learned something. I learned to be a little less gullible I think. A man came in to my office one day and put ten \$100 bills on my desk as an attempted bribe to get a personnel action through. Our personnel officer was threatened, and oh, we had a lot of . . .

MOSS: How threatened? By an employee or . . .

HEATH: It was done by. . . Remember the old--what was the paper called? The Times Herald, wasn't it?

MOSS: Yes.

HEATH: There was a columnist in the paper who singled out our personnel office to--at first by saying he was avoiding the draft although he was beyond draft age for one thing. And it was Earl DeLong, the same one who is at The American University. And this was sort of a running campaign in the papers. I've forgotten the details, but it made us good friends because Earl DeLong is quite a fine, responsible human being. He eventually did go into the Marines.

MOSS: Did you find any difference in the attitude towards women during the war in Washington in war work and so on?

HEATH: Oh, of course. You had the same sort of thing that happened in the First World War when they needed us they looked more favorably. And as soon as the war was over, women were supposed to go back to their homes, and women who had run magazines and so on were to step down. All of a sudden these magazines. . . . Well, Betty Friedan is quite correct when she talks about the attitude toward women as soon as the hostilities were over, quite correct.

MOSS: Did you find this a time of excitement because of the acceptance?

HEATH: The war period?

MOSS: Yeah.

HEATH: Well, it was an exciting period to me because I had very interesting work. When I went to. . . . I went up to the Norden Company in Elmira. Somebody who had been in the Office for Emergency Management who knew me and had liked me called me up one day and said they really had a labor relations problem up there and he'd like to have me come up and work with him.

MOSS: Excuse me. Let me cut this off for a moment.

BEGIN SIDE II, TAPE I

MOSS: We were talking about your move to the Norden Company in Elmira, New York, and you had just said that an official of the Office for Emergency Management had, what, recommended you, no, invited you to go up.

HEATH: Invited me to come up. No, he invited me to join the staff.

MOSS: He was part of the company, was he?

HEATH: He was the labor relations man up there then at the Carl L. Norden Company. You know who he was. He invented the bombsight.

MOSS: Bombsight, right.

HEATH: And this company in Elmira, New York was a Remington Rand plant and they had been sub-contractors to the Norden Company--the prime contractor to the Navy. And it was when Mr. Roosevelt was over in Cairo, as I recall. He ordered the Shore Patrol in to take over this plant because it hadn't been producing enough.

MOSS: Simply hadn't been meeting its quotas?

HEATH: No. It just didn't really get off the ground. And so the Norden Company was made managing agent for the Navy. And when that happened, all the employees lost their collective bargaining rights for rates of pay. And this meant a real labor relations problem. And it was much more complicated than just the employees who were upset about a change in management. It was also the set up between the federal government and New York State. For example, the Labor Relations Board wanted the union represented on pay discussions, and the government said it doesn't work that way when the Navy is the employer.

MOSS: This was the New York State Labor Relations Board?

HEATH: Well, both New York and Washington. The government just wasn't agreeing with itself, you see. And so a lot of trouble had broken out. And I was asked to come up and be in charge of what they called employee services--that was the overall umbrella. So I did have somebody who worked on insurance and all this kind of stuff, and home visitation. But I worked with the plant stewards much of the time and was a curiosity because they weren't used to having any women in such front office positions. Some of the plant bosses said to me, "Oh, that stuff you do doesn't mean anything. I'll send you one of my worst pests and see what you can do with her."

MOSS: With her?

HEATH: It was a gal who worked on the line, and she was a general nuisance. It turned out she wanted to be a "set up man." She wanted to set up the

machines, and she was bright and she could too. So he sent her in to talk to me, and I will never forget her. She was vocal. She was articulate, and she could swear like a trooper, and she said, "I make gudgeons. One gudgeon every fifteen minutes, four an hour, times eight hours a day, thirty-two goddamned gudgeons a day." And she said, "I'm fed up with it. I can't keep my mind on gudgeons." I asked her what she wanted to do. And she said she wanted to be a set up man. I said what did she know about it. And she said she knew a lot about machinery and she couldn't make the mistakes that other people made, and that was one of her problems. She was always getting off the line from her gudgeons to help somebody else, you see. And so I did talk to the guy and said, "Why don't you at least give her a chance?" She ended up one of the best "set up men" we had.

MOSS: What was his initial reaction to your proposal?

HEATH: Oh, he pooh-poohed the whole thing, but he finally agreed he'd do it. He'd try it. Sort of "I'll show you it doesn't work." That was really his attitude. But there was one man in manufacturing. We had a manufacturing--an assembly, and the whole gamut, through final testing. And there was one man there in manufacturing who was sympathetic to all these benefits for employees. He helped me. And he used to send in people who had gotten all fouled up with the loan sharks. So I had some fun taking on the loan sharks. And what they did--we were close to the border, so you'd have border hopping. Oh, some of those people were so far over their heads. They'd borrow three hundred dollars and now owed seven hundred, you know, and were paying on the original debt regularly. So I worked with the banks which were delighted to have reliable employees referred for loan refinancing. One man in manufacturing who was helped this way brought all the foremen in manufacturing around to accepting my office. Oh, there were all kinds of interesting things that got done. There was a man by the name of [Nathaniel Gardner] Symonds who'd been with the War Production Board who was manager of that place up there, a remarkably fine fellow. And I went to him one day and said, "Why don't we clean up the gambling

racket by having a loan system in the plant?" And we did. And gambling had become an awful problem starting, I learned, when groups of men had been sent to New York City for training. They played cards at night and money changed hands fast. Then there was the unsettled state--people being frightened about their jobs and the change of management. After all, Elmira was the kind of a city that had suffered in the Depression.

MOSS: You mentioned the referral of a woman to you off ' the line. Did you get men also, or was the . . .

HEATH: Oh, yes.

MOSS: What I'm after is did they try you on women first?

HEATH: Yes. I hadn't been there more than about three months before they were accepting me. That's partly because I spent so much time out in that plant so that they just saw me all the time and got used to me. The guards liked me from the start because I was successful in getting some drunk employees out to a staff car to be taken home. The guards could not go near them without a fight. Foremen used to like to show me what remarkable things they could do, like boring a hole that was so small you could hardly see it, and then putting a depth gauge in and measuring it. It's rather interesting to see how much we've advanced because that bombsight was a quite remarkable gadget. And its tolerances were two tenths of a thousandth of an inch, and that isn't anything today.

MOSS: No, I know.

HEATH: But it was something then. When I was first taken through the plant and shown the bombsight and listened to all their explanations, I entirely centered on one piece of that bombsight. What was this about? Everybody hedged. And when it was over I was asked to come into the office of the plant head, Mr. Symonds. And he said, "I'm going to tell you something. And if you ever hear this word again while you're here, let me know. You just concentrated on a piece of that bombsight that happens to

be what we call radar." And of course, this was highly secret. And so nobody would answer my questions on the radar part. That's how I learned about radar.

MOSS: You were there only for a brief time.

HEATH: Yes, the plant closed. They had expected to lose about a thousand bombsights in the 1940--let's see, it was '44 wasn't it?

MOSS: Uh-huh.

HEATH: In the 1944 invasion. Wasn't that when the invasion came?

MOSS: Uh-huh. Normandy.

HEATH: Yeah. And instead, they lost two. So their need for bombsights dropped way down. And Elmira was probably the biggest problem as a plant to them of any they had. They had one out in the island, Long Island, and there was another one out in Indiana. So I came back to Washington.

MOSS: So they had sufficient inventory for the rest of the war and no more need for production.

HEATH: So they closed the one plant.

MOSS: And then you went with the Army?

HEATH: Uh-huh.

MOSS: How did that come about?

HEATH: Well, I had a lot of friends who were in these jobs in the employee relations field, and so someone set up an appointment for me over at the War Department in what they called the Army Service Forces in those days. And I went over to see a very interesting man. And he said to me, "If you could have your druthers, what position would you like in Washington?" So I described it.

And he said, "It's open." And he sent me to the Office of The Quartermaster General, and they liked me.

I think the thing that really cinched it wasn't me so much as they told me this would be a very difficult job--employee relations--because of a housing situation. It would be particularly bad for me not to have decent housing. I said, "Oh, you don't have to worry about that. I have an apartment in Washington." And they practically fell through the floor. I hadn't given up my apartment because I knew going up to Elmira was a short term thing, but I didn't know it was going to be quite as short as it was. So I just had some friends who'd taken over my apartment while I was gone. I had a perfectly good place to go back to. And I think that so impressed them that maybe that had something to do with my getting that job. It was very interesting.

MOSS: That was in employee relations. Now what sort of things were you doing?

HEATH: Well, we were concerned with production, absenteeism, all the problems that the women employees had, child care problems, all these things.

MOSS: You were involved with appeals and . . .

HEATH: Grievances, yes, yes. And we had a meeting one time in Quartermaster to see how we all wanted to approach our different aspects of the personnel problems.

MOSS: This was for civilian employees.

HEATH: Yes, for civilian in the Army Service depots that had quartermaster supplies in them and the entirely quartermaster installations. And I remember the head of personnel going around the table to the classification person, the training person, the placement person, and so forth, and they wanted two-day conferences and so on. I'd made all my plans and I wanted a twelve-day conference. He just gasped when I said this. I really had in mind, "I'll ask for twelve. I could get along with ten. I'd

really like eleven." You know the way you do these things. And I can still see that colonel saying, "I'll see you later!" And he did.

I outlined what I wanted. I said, "I didn't think much of these two day shots. They just didn't do much good, that I'd like to put these people through the equivalent of a university course in this field, and I'd like to get them away from dabbling in people's business and counseling which was the way of many people, and into concentrating on getting the policy straightened out in the organization because then your counseling function folds up--at least an awful lot of it does. You just have a residual function that needs to be done."

So I laid out to this colonel what my plan was, and he kind of liked it. He said, "I think I'll let you try it. How about ten days?" And I settled quickly for ten days. And then we had the right to choose a depot that we wanted to put this on in, and most everybody picked that great big quartermaster depot in Philadelphia or the sizable one in Chicago, and I looked over the collection and decided I'd pick Richmond. It was a little depot. Besides it had prisoners of war down there, who could do certain things.

MOSS: Was this out at Fort Lee or was it in Richmond itself?

HEATH: No, it was in the outskirts of Richmond, Virginia. And so I got the right letter sent through to the commanding general in Richmond. He was so amazed that anybody wanted to use his depot for such a thing that he just went all out. He was absolutely magnificent. And I had asked to be privileged to let my group experiment on real problems down there, not just have a theory conference, but to take their worst absenteeism place, their worst turnover place, and their worst something else, and see what we could do. I promised him--I went down to see him--and I promised him that we wouldn't do any dabbling until they had really had some theory. And he was wonderful. He sent me their colonels who were their biggest problems in dealing with people, and we interviewed them. And we also were given this opportunity to go into the installation. I think they were pleased with the results when we finished and we were, although I think I was more successful at a similar conference held in Kansas City for the Midwest and Western group.



In Kansas City I asked for the same privilege. They had the personal effects bureau which was in Saint Joseph, Missouri, as I recall, personal effects from the men who were killed in the service or missing in action. This was a terrible place for turnover, and yet, it was a place where the people were dedicated. They had husbands or sons or brothers or cousins in the war. They'd come to work there because they felt so strongly, and yet they couldn't keep the staff. So we. . . . I tried everything I could think of from any book I'd ever known, and I was getting nowhere. And I was outraged that I couldn't get anywhere with this problem. So I finally asked the commanding general if he would be willing to have the medical officer go through the medical records and see if there was anything peculiar about the people who worked there from a medical point of view. I don't know where this got dreamed up in my mind. I think I was simply trying everything I could try and hitting a stone wall. And he agreed. Then I made my second visit to the personal effects bureau.

Oh, that's what gave me the real idea. I hadn't seen it in the ultimate light. I had been through the personal effects bureau one time. It had been a fascinating experience. When I went back, a whole load of graves bags had come in. And the stench in that place was something. These had all been treated with formaldehyde and so forth, but this was the smell of death, really. And so that's when I asked the medical officer to check these records. I asked if he would find out how many of these people could smell real well and how many of them couldn't. You know they did this, and when they put this test on they had no more trouble with turnover? They went from something like ninety-five percent turnover--it was just ghastly--down to almost nothing. And it was just the fact that I made a second visit to that place. Oh, I think that was in Kansas City. The rationing assembly office was in Saint Joseph. I've mislocated them. I think the personal effects bureau was right there in Kansas City. That's something that could be checked. But anyway that was kind of exciting when we got through that, because the commanding general was very enthusiastic. He sort of had to take us, but he was awful pleased in what happened to the turnover in the personal effects bureau.

MOSS: Let me ask you again about the question of a woman doing this, not only a woman, but a relatively young woman. How did the Army accept you?

HEATH: I think quite well. I had certain bad experiences. The worst ones came in Europe rather than here. There had been a general, not a commanding general, but a general who flounced into my place one day and blasted my head off for something I had nothing whatever to do with. And I was so shocked, and he did it in front of everybody. He was mad. I guess he had ulcers in his stomach, or something. And I reacted to this. I even surprised myself with the way I reacted. I said to him, "Sir, I try to act like a lady, and when you wish to treat me like a lady, I'll try to answer you." And I walked out. And he wasn't used to being treated like that because he was in the military. And I was just livid. But that afternoon he came back and he was the nicest human being you ever saw, and he apologized, and I apologized for the way I'd acted because I'd reacted rudely too. And he then took an interest and had me go out to certain of the depots to do some special assignments. And as long as the general said, "I want you to go," why, they sort of took me. So I didn't have trouble there.

MOSS: How did the European assignment work out?

HEATH: I did have an experience in the California quartermaster depot. I went out there, and they used to speak, in the headquarters, of "the twenty or twenty-one depots and Cal. QM" because it always operated differently. That was in the San Francisco Bay area. And that depot did wonderful things, and the commanding general had corralled the bankers and the businessmen to load the ships with the space-available stuff for the boys, the beer and the chewing gum types of things, you know. And they really did fine things. But the morale in the place was terrible and certain other production was way down. When I was scheduled to go there, the fellows came in and all laid bets that I wouldn't get a single recommendation through that whole crowd. And I said, "Well, I can only tell you that since you have done that, that guarantees me success that I would not have otherwise." And I certainly knew when I got there.

I always insisted on seeing the top man when I came in if he was in town on the theory that I shouldn't be romping around his establishment without having made my appearance. A lot of the fellows from Headquarters didn't bother. And so I wanted to see that commanding general, and he didn't want to see me. I kept asking, and he kept referring me to the personnel man and so on. I finally said I didn't want to go back to Washington and have to report to The Quartermaster General I couldn't even see him for a few minutes. So I was invited in. And I can still see him. He had his desk absolutely clear except for a little flag sitting here. And when I walked in, he opened a desk drawer and he pulled out a paper and he put it in front of him and started reading it. I was with a major who was in personnel. That guy was a wreck. He didn't like the idea that I was going to see the commanding general. And so I sat down. The major didn't dare do that. So there were certain advantages to being a woman as well as disadvantages. None of the men would've sat down, for example, but I could do it. Finally the general looked up and he said, "Well, you asked for the conference. What do you want to talk about?"

MOSS: All very deliberate and calculated.

HEATH: Uh-huh. And I said, "Well, since you put it that way, General, I have a whole lot of things to talk about." And I began ticking them off. And he asked me what I wanted to do. I finally asked him if he'd call his people in from the Bay area and we could have a session, that if I wasn't successful in convincing any of them of anything, I'd fold my tent and go home. And he thought that was a good sporting proposition with odds in his favor. So he called them in. And he came to. And we had a wonderful session. I didn't think we were going to because I spent about a half hour with absolute rigidity on the part of everybody. Finally one of them broke down and it sort of opened up the meeting and they agreed they would do certain things I was interested in seeing them do. And the result was the general finally stood up and said, "You win. Come back in my office." It was as simple as that.

That man turned out to be the Quartermaster General in Europe when I got there. I was over in the mess hall one time and I saw this whole bevvvy of generals coming down, and it was the first time I'd realized he was there. He left the whole group and said, "Kate Heath, what are you doing over here?" We were friends by this time. Turned out to be quite a guy. Helped me get a person buried one time who died contrary to regulations.

MOSS: How would that happen? What's the story there?

HEATH: Well, in Europe right after the hostilities were over, it was necessary to have a special permit to be in the occupied territory. This man who had worked in the Frankfurt post had taken a job on non-appropriated funds. He finished work like on a Saturday at noon and he was to be picked up in Munich on Monday on non-appropriated funds, but he had not gotten down to Munich yet. He died on Sunday and he was in between jobs.

MOSS: So he was not technically employed.

HEATH: And no regulations covered him.

MOSS: Technically, he was not employed by the government in any capacity at that time.

HEATH: Technically, he was illegally in the command, and nobody could pick him up on anything. And so I finally said to the head of the personnel office, "Well, let's get in touch with the G-1, I mean the G-4 supply general. He must have something he can do." And so he said, "Well, do you want me to get in touch with him?" I said, "I know him. I'm willing to call him." So I did. And he said, "You give me a little time. We'll get him taken care of." But to even get him shipped back home, this is really tragic--the things that can happen to people. They'd even sent. . . . We had fussed with that Frankfurt post because they were so far behind on their personnel actions and they'd gotten all caught up. That man went off the rolls on Saturday afternoon and they mailed his papers back to Missouri, his file. Normally

it would've been sitting around there for two months. So we didn't even have a record on the man. See what things can happen to people.

We also had a woman who--Walter Bedell Smith was the Ambassador in Moscow, and he called up General [Lucius DuB.] Clay, who was the head of military government, and said they had a woman in the embassy who had appendicitis and could--even though it was not his responsibility--could General Clay pick this girl up to get her in a hospital because the Soviet Union was unwilling to have her treated in one of their hospitals. They didn't want her to die on them I suppose. And so Clay said, "I will see what can be done about it." So he called [Clarence R.] Huebner, who was head of the Army business and it came down through Huebner to the chief of staff to the G-1 to the personnel director to me. And they told me I could do what I needed to do to get her moved out. So I started by calling Wiesbaden where Curtis LeMay was in charge of the Air Force. And I got him and told him what the problem was, and he said, "I think we can do something about it." He was a humanitarian. He may've been a right winger, but he was a real humanitarian.

He told me to get on the red line to the Bovington Airport in London where he had a couple of planes, one that was scheduled to go out to Krakow, and he would see if that couldn't be diverted to Moscow because the Russians had said they would be willing to put their pilot aboard to take it into Moscow if we'd get the plane in there. And so LeMay asked me to get ahold of Bovington, talk to the commanding officer there and hold that plane up to an hour--which was all, for some reason or another, that he could hold it--while he would try to work out the rest of the details in getting the plane picked up from the other end. And so I got ahold of Bovington. They held the plane. We got it diverted, and it went to Moscow and picked up that gal and she was brought into the station hospital and taken care of. But these were kind of interesting things. It also made a lot of people realize how much Uncle Sam really cares about a human being--if Uncle Sam knows, if a problem comes to the right spot where somebody can do something about it. I think most of the troubles come because people don't get to the person who can act.

MOSS: Well, this is interesting because so often you have a person in the bureaucracy with a problem and he can't go straight up through his own channels. He's blocked there because of a regulation, because somebody can't find a regulation to cover the situation, and usually if you can get around to the top man, you can do something.

HEATH: And partly because he may not have enough imagination to do it. But there are a great many people who operate on the theory how you can't do it, rather than how you can do it. Once we had twenty odd convicted civilians incarcerated in Bremerhaven awaiting shipment to the U.S.A. according to regulations on a space-available basis. An existing backlog of several thousand soldiers and civilians awaiting shipment meant there was not going to be any space available for quite a spell. I finally started papers through to send the convicted civilians home under the Commander in Chief's emergency powers dealing with live ammunition--on the grounds that they were live and they were judicially explosive to the Command. That really jolted the military. Finally, it took a telecon to Washington. When Washington would neither approve nor object, we did it!

But you asked me sometime before about problems being a woman. Before I left for Europe, I was called in for a telecon from Washington to Frankfurt. The issue was what punishment should be meted out to unmarried women civilian employees who became pregnant. Should they be dismissed for cause and have to pay their own way home? I can see those colonels yet when I said, "Give them the same punishment you give the men who were involved. If you cannot find the men, then see that the women get the medical attention the married women get." This was a stunner and it produced a lot of discussion--mostly sputtering on morals grounds. Anyway, the men finally sent my answer. It certainly pre-settled this problem during my whole tour of duty. It was evident that the men who sent my answer wondered what USFET [United States Forces European Theater] had bought in me! There were two other things that happened which show the advantage of being one. Then I'll tell you one of the big disadvantages of being one.

I was working in the employee relations field and we had a great deal of trouble because the forces didn't allow certain foods to come into the country--into Germany--not because we weren't willing to have them come in, but because they would have ruined the economic base--it was a currency and pricing situation. And this created a great deal of animosity when Germans were living on twelve and thirteen hundred calories a day, except in the mining regions. I had just been travelling all over the place, and I was called and asked--from wherever I was at the moment--to go down to Munich to the Mercedes Benz place where a strike had broken out--for there was all kinds of trouble. I got myself a good interpreter. I knew a little German then, but I needed somebody who knew the nuances and so on. This was to be a labor relations meeting and I was to go down and work with those people. I can tell you when I walked in that room I thought all those Germans would drop dead. They never had dealt with a woman before, and it completely transformed the meeting. It wasn't what I said or did. They were just stunned. That's one example. Another one . . .

MOSS: Because of this you were successful.

HEATH: Yeah. It changed the atmosphere, the whole climate changed, you see. And another one happened--you may recall there were all kinds of four-power conferences, Moscow, Paris, London, and so forth at ministerial level. And we were greatly influenced by these. The four power generals were meeting in Berlin and they had a terrible time getting agreement, so that the real story of what went on and what you find in the gazettes--the law--are quite different things. You really have to go back to the slip proposals that were in between to find out what was going on. Well, the military governor didn't know how successful the ministers were going to be. He knew that there was going to be some major redeployment, but he didn't really know which way it was going to swing, I got called in one day and asked if I would take an assignment, that I didn't have to take if I didn't want to take it, to go around to the commands to try to sell to the top men a new set up. Instead of having one thousand, they were going to get ten thousand or five thousand. Instead of having

five thousand, another was going to go down to nothing. But I wasn't going to be permitted to say any of the why of it, and so as I was told, I could appear like an idiot. And headquarters would take me off the hook at a certain period of time. Meanwhile, they would give me a safe full of redeployment stuff to study.

→ And I thought this was a sporting proposition and it would be fun to do. And so I poured over all this stuff, and then I started out. And there were some of them who thought I was an idiot. There's no doubt about it. And there were others who listened and did some of the preparation that was necessary to do. That's when we were going to move our headquarters from Frankfurt to Heidelberg and Wiesbaden--the place where the Leica camera comes from--Wetzlar, was going to change in size enormously. Well, there were all these changes involved. And I got around to a certain number of the commands before the--I didn't get around to all of them because things moved too fast. But then when they had a commanding general's conference, I was invited in and the general took me off the hook for all these things. And of course, it made friends out of all these people when they understood. That was a good experience.

MOSS: They realized . . .

HEATH: They did this solely because it was easier to send a woman to do that. Now one of the bad things.

We had a training officer who was sent back to the United States for alleged disaffection to the United States. And we couldn't find a new one--civilian training officer. And they tried to recruit, and one of the problems in recruiting from stateside was that people came over with stateside ideas. They didn't have much imagination about adjusting to an entirely different kind of set up. And so they looked all over the place and finally the head of personnel said, "We'd like you to take over both assignments, employee relations and training." And I kind of gasped and said I had considerable hesitation about that because I didn't think I would be very well received in the training role by the men in personnel who were my peers. And he said, "Well, let me take care of that." And I finally said, "All right."



I had well judged that I would not be well received. A lieutenant colonel in personnel had gone in and complained up the line "What did they mean having a woman run this job? This would guarantee it to fail." I wouldn't be able to deal with the commanding officer. I'd already been doing it, of course. And there was objection by certain people who'd wanted the job and hadn't gotten it. So I went to see Colonel [Henry B.] Margeson who was in charge then. No, Colonel [Charles G.] Meehan who was Margeson's predecessor and said, "I guessed I'd better not tackle the job because you can't have all the strikes against you." And so he questioned me about the opposition, and I told him. And he said, "I will call them all in." And so he called them all in with me there too. And I really heard what the men thought. They didn't mince words. And Colonel Meehan said, "We have tried to get a qualified man. She's here. I don't want to hear another word out of any of the rest of you. She's going to do it." And so I did it. But that's a very unhappy way to take a job.

MOSS: Yes, it is.

HEATH: I think that was probably my most unpleasant thing in the European command.

MOSS: I didn't ask you earlier how you came to go to Europe. What were the circumstances of your transfer to Europe?

HEATH: I was in the Office of the Quartermaster General and running an atypical program because I didn't focus on counseling. I focused on getting decent policies at the command level so that you eliminated a lot of the problems that would otherwise come up. It stood out in the city of Washington as the one that worked this way and it was the one that lasted, because this makes some sense. And so when they were looking for somebody in the European command, they went to see someone in the Office of the Chief of Finance of the Army, a man I don't even know. But he had heard about me and so he said, "Why don't you check about this one?" And then, of course, he went to the Office of the Secretary of War, and they knew me, and

somebody in that office suggested me. I didn't. . . . I wasn't involved in any of this. One day I got a call that a colonel was coming over from Europe, that he wanted to talk to me about employee relations.

Well, I thought it was just the usual stuff and that he wants to come and see you about the kinds of things you're doing. We had a very long talk about the kinds of problems they had over in Europe and what suggestions I had to make and so forth. The next thing I knew he had telegraphed Europe that this was the person they should ask for. This is what he was there for and not because he really wanted all this information but because he was coming for an interview, and I didn't even know it.

And so a request came in for me, and I finally decided that it would be fun to try that, so I went. And I perhaps made a mistake. I could have gone over there with reemployment rights--at Quartermaster--and other people did that, particularly the men, I might add--I've always operated on the theory that you don't really turn back. I couldn't conceive of myself going to Europe with this kind of an assignment, and then coming back to Quartermaster. I would have to come to something else. So I tossed away my reemployment rights. And it really hit me when I came back. I stayed for two years. I had two employment agreements, and then I thought the time had come when I shouldn't be an exile from my country. I watched what happened to people who stayed away too long, and I decided I would like to come back. If I was ever going to finish my doctorate, I had to do it then or I'd be too old. So I came back. I just resigned. No, I didn't resign. I finished my agreement--completed the agreement. And then when I wanted to get a position, oh, ho, ho, ho, nobody wanted me. I mean nobody.

MOSS: What sort of things did you look for?

HEATH: I looked in all the fields I had any competence in, and nobody wanted me. I wanted to do my doctorate, but I expected to take some, you know, have some job that wasn't too difficult while I was finishing this up.

MOSS: When did you begin work on your doctorate? When did you get the idea that this was what you wanted to do?

HEATH: Oh, I began as soon as I finished my master's degree. I applied to take it at night, so it was in 1936, the fall of '36.

MOSS: And were you taking course work during the time you were in Washington?

HEATH: Yeah, un-huh.

MOSS: At American? Un-huh.

HEATH: And by 1946 I'd finished my course work. I didn't have any of the tool requirements and I didn't have my dissertation. When I came back so much time had elapsed you know they began telling me all these things I ought to take because the programs had changed. And I said, "I'm an old gal now, and I know where I'm going. And if I can't pass your blooming examinations, we'll call it quits. But I'm not going to go to school all over again just because the time had changed." So I didn't.

I don't know. This was not the easiest time to get work when I came back, but the attitude was so negative. The general feeling was, "Well, you were probably overpriced in Europe," you know. So what I eventually did was to come into work with--just because it was a place where I was interested--at a very low grade--in HEW [Health, Education, and Welfare] in the Office of the Administrator--Federal Security Agency then--the Office of the Administrator and it was a whole Democratic outfit. And it was a Democrat who recommended me. Nobody knew at the office what my politics were because I had never discussed them in my government jobs. And later on when the administration changed, the woman who recommended me who was Florence Kerr who used to head up the federal--was a deputy in the Federal Works Agency, was it called? She said to my boss, "I love Kay Heath, but I hate her politics." And that was the first time anybody knew what my political views were. And all of a sudden, of course, it became an asset for the office to have a Republican in it.

MOSS: Your dissertation was on U.S. Army Civilian Personnel Policy and Problems in the U.S. Zone of Germany. Did you have any problem in doing this, clearing the dissertation with the Army or anything of this sort, or did you just do it?

HEATH: No, I didn't. I didn't have any trouble of that sort at all. In fact, they were glad to have it done. The problems were the complexities of the command situation, because we had over three hundred thousand employees at that time who were civilians attached to the Forces. They were United States, Allied, neutral, indigenous, refugee, displaced--we had the lot. And we had all kinds of commitments, agreements, with Ireland and England and Switzerland and so forth, for our employees who were allied or neutral. There were international agreements for the refugees and the displaced. And of course, we had the U.S. law to cope with. And so it was a melding of this and also a recognition that you couldn't do things abroad the way you did them in this country.

I was the one who proposed that we ought to have a consolidated policy for indigenous personnel, put it all in one package instead of having a lot of separate pieces which then got out of line with each other so quickly. And I argued for a very long time with the classification people who wanted--this was one place where I was right and they were all wrong. Sometimes it turned around the other way. But I'll tell you about the bunch where I'm right. And in this case I could not see putting into Europe a classification system for indigenous personnel which was like the U.S. system, which isn't exactly a prize anyway. You know what our job descriptions are and so forth. And over there you pay people according to the size of their family and a lot of other things. And I fought and fought on this, and I went down to ignoble defeat. And then when the whole package was ready, we took it to Berlin to get approval of the military governor. And it fell on the classification part. He would have none of it. Clay said we couldn't do that. So my idea went into that finally. Of course, I went down to defeat on various things. I like to forget about those.

MOSS: Let me break this here.

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>My interest in geology stems from an insatiable curiosity about the God-made wonders of the world. It comes to the fore when I see a fascinating place or look at a rock and think what a story it could tell me if I knew how to listen. To me, at least, it is inevitable that a derivative interest is in the religions of mankind--another field I would like to study under an inspired teacher.

<sup>2</sup>These studies on the human effect of work and working conditions had a profound effect on counseling. Fritz J. Roethlisber wrote about them in Management and the Worker.

<sup>3</sup>In higher education, there are two amended Acts popularly named after Senator Justin W. Morrill:

July 2, 1862--First Morrill Act, 12 Stat. 503  
(7 U.S.C. 301-308).

August 30, 1890--Second Morrill Act, 26 Stat. 417  
(7 U.S.C. 321-28).

<sup>4</sup>Public Law 74-673, June 8, 1936 (49 Stat. 1488). The George-Dean Act relates to vocational education at secondary education level--not higher education level. The Office of Education administered it--not the Deans Association or the NEA. This Act is repealed now.

<sup>5</sup>Before getting back to my office on 6/29/71, I realized I had given a wrong impression on Senator Taft and his conversion to Federal aid for education. I realized I should have said something like the following:

I sat in on some NEA meetings which contributed to the "water-on-the-rock" erosion of Senator Taft's opposition to Federal aid for elementary and secondary education. He still was voting "No" in 1944 but his conversion became pretty definite by then. In the Spring of 1948 when I was stationed abroad, an English-language radio broadcast--probably over the Armed Forces Network--brought the news that Senator Taft had publicly announced reversal of his position.

I have just checked the Congressional Record. Taft spoke on March 23, 1948. To my delight I find he publicly said that date that he had voted against the Federal aid bill four years earlier but his study of the debate on the bill at that time made him realize there was no way of going forward "to any substantial degree without providing some Federal financial assistance."