

Interviewee: Pamela Pahl

Interviewer: Elizabeth Fitting

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The following interview was conducted as part of the Nova Scotia LGBT Seniors' Archive's Lesbian Oral Histories Project.

EF: I just want to start off by saying thank you. We usually begin by asking, you know, participants to tell us a little bit about themselves, so, when you were born, and what your sexual orientation or gender identity is, and where you've lived, how long you've been in Nova Scotia – that kind of thing.

PP: Okay, sure. I was born in 1965 in a little town in Manitoba. I grew up there and then I went to university nearby in Brandon, and in the meantime went to – I joined the military reserves and eventually I joined the regular force. So I ended up – after my first two degrees I moved, I was posted to, oh I moved around, it's hard to remember now, but I worked at the recruiting centre in Winnipeg in 1993, oh, probably 1993 to 1996, and I had my daughter in 1994, and then I followed a partner to Halifax and then Edmonton and then we split up and I joined the regular force in 2000, and I went to St John and I went to Ottawa. I mean, I have all the dates, but I don't know if it's that important, because I did end up eventually, well then, I went to Shilo and that was in 2005 to 2009, and then after that I went to Greenwood. They asked me where I wanted to be posted and that was an available posting so I went to Greenwood. I was there from 2009 to 2015, and then I was at CFB Halifax from 2015 to 2018 and then I was medically released, and I've been here ever since. Oh, and then I finished some more education that I had started while I was working and then, I finished that off after I was medically released.

EF: And do you identify as a lesbian and . . .

PP: Yes, I do. Yes.

EF: And can you tell me a little bit about when you came out? Do you have a coming out story – if you don't mind sharing it.

PP: I do, yeah, it's a funny one. I was with a boyfriend, a fiancé for a number of years. Couldn't quite figure out what was wrong with me [*laughing*]. I knew there was something a little different, and he was very open minded, and he was talking about the LGBT population back then, and that was back in the '80s, and I jumped up on the kitchen counter and I said I don't see women the same way as men and that was kind of

my sudden coming out, kind of, myself. It was at that second I kind of realized, aha, this is what's going on. And ah, yeah, eventually we split up because I had met a woman – my first love. And yeah, that's pretty much it. So, it's a kind of funny coming out story because I didn't quite know what to do with the information and then all the stars aligned, and I fell head over heels with somebody [totally wrong for me] out in some military training out in Saskatchewan.

EF: And when was that?

PP: Oh, that was probably 1988, maybe 1989. It would have been the late 80s and I was very closeted because of the military actually, and my parents were very, very homophobic, and then when I told my mother it was in a car. I was taking her to Nova Scotia. She was very upset, and blamed herself, screamed and cried, and then that turned to kind of hatred, and wow, it was just an awful, awful experience. I never did tell my father. He's 91. She came around over many, many years. [Redacted] So here is an 85-year-old elderly lady. She's quite accepting, and she likes my ex-partner so much that I've never told her that we've split up [laughing].

EF: [Laughing] That was funny!

PP: I'm good friends with my ex and she went out with me when we were still together to Manitoba to see where I grew up and meet my family and, ahh my mother, both parents just loved her.

EF: How did you, can you tell me more about, you know, finding your first love at this training camp and you know, how you felt about you know being out or in the closet, or you know how you navigated that?

PP: Hmm. Oh, she was a terrible person [laughing] [redacted].

EF: Oh no. But I mean, how did you find each other, you know, if, if the, you know if you had to be closeted?

PP: Well, at that point I think you [would still] get booted for being gay in the military. I know when they did come out with the message saying that – and it wasn't Don't Ask Don't Tell [the American military policy]. It was certainly much more progressive than that. I think Canada really built on, we've often built on what the Americans have, and then the Americans kind of come to a screeching halt and Canada progresses. Someone put the message on my desk actually, which indicated that you could freely

serve in the forces as gay or lesbian, and I thought that was awfully nice of whoever did it.

EF: So someone printed off this statement about you could serve in the force and put it on your desk at work?

PP: Yeah.

EF: Anonymously?

PP: Yup. [*EF: Wow*] It was a message. And there were very few people who knew about me, although I think some suspected. And I had male friends and it was very strange because at one point when I was in Shilo, I was hanging out with a good friend of mine who was in the artillery, and he was married and people started to gossip about us. And I said, well this is terrible because you're married. I thought otherwise it would be awfully good for me [to offset the gossip regarding my sexuality], but the fact that he was married, it just really bothered me that there would be this silly gossip. So, I wouldn't walk with him to lunch anymore, and he was so upset! It turned out at that time that friend was interested, and one day he said I'm leaving my wife, and I said, oh my gosh. And I had met his wife [*redacted*]. She was kind of, she was all over the place and very, very controlling and I think she was feeling very insecure and maybe she suspected that he wasn't happy. And I said "why?" He said, "Well, because I wanna be with you". And I said, "Oh, I'm a lesbian!" [*laughing*]. And he sat down on my bed and he said "Oh, that would explain a few things".

And ah, he was such a good, good man. Such a great guy. Well, he still is. We're still very good friends, but he did eventually leave his wife and he remarried, He married someone from overseas and started a new family and everything is just amazing. In his 40s he had two more children and it was ... so very, very happy for him. That was kind of a moment that stands out in my mind as well. This other, the first woman I was with, [*redacted*] I left my fiancé and told him that I had met someone else. I think he, yeah, I did eventually him too that I was gay, and she moved in with me in Brandon, and ran around with a friend of mine, which of course broke my heart. It's interesting that years later she did the same thing to that woman, but it was always to gain some things, like tangible things. She took her cottage. The woman put her through for her Master's [degree] and all this. You find out these things years later and you think gosh that's interesting. And yeah, I had always felt like that "friend" did me a huge favour, but of course at the time I was absolutely devastated.

EF: So, did you feel like you needed to keep it a secret? Or you were open about it at work or, after you got that message on your desk?

PP: Oh, I was always secretive, always, always. People saw you differently and it could affect your career [redacted]. Yeah, I don't know why that was important to me at the time. Years later, when I was very out of the closet because I was sick and tired of the discrimination, I told my career manager that I would be, [on my] next postings, that I would be going out guns – gay guns blazing. I don't know why that [phrase] came to mind, but – he put his hand on me and said, “Just so you know dear, it doesn't matter one bit to me” which was pretty much the only time out of many, many years in the forces that I had heard any type of support for gays and lesbians. And yeah, it was a really wonderful moment for me.

EF: When was that?

PP: That was, I think in 2009 – 2010.

EF: And, can you say anything more about, you know, feeling like you needed to keep it a secret for your career? You know, I mean, where do you think you were getting those messages? Was it that there wasn't support, or was it that you were hearing homophobic jokes? And, you know 'cause you also came out in the late '80s, early '90s and that was the height of the AIDS crisis in Canada, and, I don't know if that had anything to do with it?

PP: I guess, you know, you hear many things in the forces, and you certainly did in air [forces]. I mean this was at a time when we were drinking in the field, you know. It was almost a given that if you didn't you were ostracized, so it was a very wild kind of, reckless time for people to say and do things. Not that there wasn't military law, but it was just the talk, right, the way that people saw gays and lesbians. The prairies also seem a little further behind in acceptance, and I noticed that even a few years ago when I went back home to visit for a lengthy period of time, to finish up my education and help my aging parents out. It just is, not quite as progressive I would say as maybe Nova Scotia and maybe some other areas of Canada. Or maybe it's just that I live in a city. I don't know, but I did have one very homophobic boss in Ottawa, and I couldn't figure out why she seemed to just really make my life difficult – dislike me intensely. She kind of had her favourites, but I really felt that there was an animosity, and, you know, again a few years later someone mentioned how religious she was, and how much she disliked gays, and she'd said something – I don't even know even know why they were telling me, unless they knew about me at that point, but they were kind of venting about how much they didn't like this one particular boss. Anyway, I think now that she may

have [been homophobic]. I was pretty insecure in that posting and I didn't feel very wanted in the office.

I'd also had a lot of problems with a communications unit, a reserve unit in Halifax, and I was told that even before I got to the unit, the chief clerk saw that my partner was a female on a certain form, and they were gossiping about me and how much they were going to make my life miserable before I even got there. And I remember one night, or one day, I just happened to have my little girl with me to pick up some papers or something, and one of the sergeants there [passed me in the stairway and] threw himself against the side of the stairwell and acted like I had leprosy or something, and it was such a disgusting moment to me in the Forces. So, I would say probably that was one of the worst moments of my life, because here's this little blonde, little girl that, you know – almost everybody loves children and apparently, he, you know, had a huge thing about me being gay, so that really disgusts me still, otherwise a lot of it was covert. Most people aren't going to go up to you and say, "I really hate your guts because you're gay and I'm going to try and make your life as miserable as I possibly can." I had nothing but problems with that guy. He was a lower rank, you know I was a superior rank but it didn't matter. He had all the support in the unit from the old boys' club, and ah, yeah, I finally gave up and switched units. Never had another problem, I don't think in the reserves.

And in the air force I didn't have many problems either. I was very out when it came to having a partner, and I always had my partners on that one particular form. I did have a boss in Greenwood, and it was a terrible, terrible experience. He was a real ladies' man and I think a big part of his problem too was the fact I was gay. I had my partner – who is now my ex – with me to a Christmas function, and he saw us and turned his back to us in line, so I made a point of saying, you know, "Hi sir, you remember my partner?" and I said her name, and then he acted all friendly. It was very strange, because I found the air force to be pretty good. No one really cared, but if you get a very macho, ladies' man kind of higher-ranking guy, or even lower ranking, who think they're all that and everything, and women [trying to get their approval] tend to go "Oh sir," – they don't take it very well when they find out you're gay or if you bring your partner to an event. I also took her to a [unit] function, just a luncheon, and there were ~~was~~ a lot – like people were just talking, and the minute we walked in, people stopped talking and stared.

EF: When was this, more or less so I can keep track, like...

PP: 2009 to 2015! I would say that was probably around 2013, so really not that long ago.

EF: Wow. I'm kind of struck that you wrote your partners name down on a form, like, when did you first do that? And do you remember thinking about it, considering whether or not to do it, you know.

PP: Yeah, you don't actually write the person's name down. You have [an electronic] form that you fill out for declaring common-law, or marriage. I was never married. So, I had one partner who was common-law and – no two. First one I was partner to a military member. [I requested many times to have the forms and was repeatedly refused, however my coursemates with opposite-sex partners encountered no issues]. [Redacted] The reason for doing it is because then their move is paid for, and there's a number of more, like, benefits to that member financially if you're posted. I had a friend who took her partner to the States for a posting, said she was their housekeeper, and each time they drove in, her partner would have to duck down so that none of the neighbours saw because it was in the States, and then they would close the garage door and go into the house. At some point, I would say it was in Greenwood, probably around 2011, I just didn't have any fight left in me anymore, and I just didn't care anymore [laughing]. It really all depended on the boss of the unit, and your own boss as to how other people kind of gauged acceptance and jokes and things as well, so it really does – their leadership is really reflected. When I was in Halifax actually, the last few years that I was in the military, that was my last posting, I served as a Positive Space champion. You didn't have to be gay to serve on that committee, but you put a card on your desk that indicated that you'd had the training and that you were Positive Space champion, and I also served on a defense, visible minority defense group. Now I'm not a visible minority. I was the only one who wasn't at the time, but, yeah, that was an eye opener. There is so much, there is much discrimination in the forces. Racial discrimination, discrimination against gays and lesbians, I mean you name it, if you're different it was all there.

EF: How was your, when was your, and how was the experience, when was your first interaction with like a gay community, or lesbian or queer community, and did you feel like there was any community in the military? Those are 2 questions, so we can start with the first one. Like when did you first, you know, feel like Ok, like I'm part of a bigger community here or, maybe you didn't feel that way. I don't know.

PP: I would say that was probably when I was in Winnipeg, you know, in the early '90s because there was a gay bar, and I can't even remember how I made some friends who were gay. I think at Brandon University maybe, and I got to know some people that way, and I can't even remember how I got to know some people in Winnipeg, but we would go to a bar, I can't remember the name of it, and dance away, oh, it was great fun, and I would say that was probably when I realized, when I was very young that I was gay, but

I thought there was something really wrong with me. There were absolutely no role models in a small prairie town, and you've heard other people say, "I thought I was the only one in the whole world" [*laughing*] I just thought there was something wrong with me. So it was pretty reaffirming to go to a specific gay bar and be able to dance with female friends and really good times, boy we used to dance a lot. Now that bar closed [*redacted*].

EF: Did you feel that there was a community in the military?

PP: Hmm, well there was the odd person that you came across, but otherwise, absolutely not [*laughing*]. Certainly wasn't a community. I never was at a gathering for just gay military members or anything. I did have the odd friend here and there – not too many though.

EF: And other than your...oh sorry, sorry. Go ahead.

PP: Oh, I mean the ratio of women to men is quite a bit smaller in the Military, and having a child as well, a lot of people assumed I was straight because I had a child. Sorry, what were you going to say?

EF: I was going to say, other than those, I can't remember what the groups were called, you know, the Visible Minority group and the other Safe Space group for the military, have you been involved in any kind of LGBTQ community groups in any way? Or was your feeling of community mostly at these, you know these bars and dancing and...

PP: Oh, I did go to gay pride, raised twice with the Halifax, CFB Halifax. That was pretty exciting.

EF: With whom Halifax? Sorry I missed that. With whom in Halifax?

PP: CF – with the base in Halifax

EF: Oh nice.

PP: Ah, that was, you know a pivotal moment for the forces really and so much progress compared to the army [*redacted*]. I now belong to an older, wiser lesbians group called OWLS. We go to brunches, and I feel quite at home there. They're very well organized. There [*are*] a lot of retired and still serving professionals in that group [*redacted*]. Oh, and the odd Facebook group as well. But I don't tend to reach out too much or go to many gatherings or anything, and I don't know why that is. Might be a bit,

you know I never really considered myself shy, but I'm starting – well I think I'm a little bit of a solitary person. Maybe that's why.

EF: Do you remember the first gay pride you ever went to?

PP: Oh, the first one. Yes, it was in Winnipeg. My daughter was in a stroller, and I remember they were chanting – one group was chanting “Up with communism down with democracy”. And I thought it was just so silly [*laughing*]. I'll never forget that. I thought this is so ridiculous [*laughing*]. And this friend overheard me talking to myself and she started to tell me all the great things about communism [*laughing*].

EF: [Laughing] And you thought “I'm in the wrong part of this march, I have to go to a different area”.

PP: I mean, it was just so silly. I took my daughter to many, many gay pride marches, and she's a staunch supporter of LGBTQ rights, and she's in her late 20s now but she still often goes to gay pride parades and is very openly supportive of me, and of just the population in general. The LGBTQ population. I remember she outed me to a babysitter once. [*Laughing*] A woman was babysitting, an older lady who had volunteered actually, and, and I got home and she said, “Your daughter, [*redacted*] told me that you said that you're a lesbian!” And I said “yeah” [*laughing*] and I thought why is this a topic? My daughter was so open and naïve, and it was wonderful but this poor woman, I don't think she recovered. I don't think she ever talked to me after that actually, and you know, you did lose some friends along the way. My preference, I always felt that I preferred that people got to know me first, and then got to know about my sexual orientation, because I found that it just made for more acceptance. Now I'm too tired to care, but that's kind of the way I saw it back then.

So, I think that was one of the reasons too I was so bothered by being outed to people just from reading that one form that was supposed to be confidential. I have fought for years about that form. I told a full colonel, who is now a general. I wrote him an email about that form, and I did a study on the harassment and discrimination in the forces and told [former Supreme Court Justice Marie Deschamps] – she did the investigations [for the study] – and I had told her as well that form causes a lot of problems. If there's going to be discrimination, it's a great way to nail somebody with discrimination before they even get boots on the ground. But my daughter just signed her own form. She joined the military as well a little while ago and she told me that it said the gender of her common-law spouse and she said even though, you know, she has a male common-law spouse, she said it's so inappropriate. She said, “What does it matter what gender my spouse is? Why is that even on this form?” And I said, “Oh my gosh, I've been fighting

that for years". I said, "If you can, make that fight wherever you go, and maybe over time, you know, you can get some support and make some change with that ridiculous form."

EF: So, I'm thinking about, so you're a relatively recent arrival to Nova Scotia?

PP: Yeah, I've been here since 2015.

EF: And did you reach out or interact with the lesbian and gay LGBTQ community here when you got here?

EF: No, no. I was really too busy with work. I had a friend who came out to me in Greenwood and I think she knew, or she suspected. And I said, oh I'm gay too. And we have been friends since. We used to do lunch together in Halifax when she was posted to the same area, and oh my gosh we would laugh and laugh for the whole hour while we were eating. And then we had a transgender member join us, and you know, that was interesting too. It's a very open base, but we were all just having a good time. But here we are at these busy jobs, and we had a fair amount of responsibility, but for an entire hour we would laugh so hard we were crying. And after she left, because she was posted to another area in Halifax, I missed those get-togethers. I was sitting there one day eating lunch and one of the civilian DND workers came by and she said, "Just to let you know, I sure miss you gals sitting here at lunch having such a good time."

EF: Nice, nice. Well, and I just wanted to ask if there's anything else you feel like we should talk about? Or if you, you know, if you were talking to a young LGBTQ person about what it was like coming up when you did, is there something that you would want to say to them?

PP: Yes. After all of these years, I would say, if I could, you know, if I'd had this advice, I would have tried to have taken it. Being yourself and being openly accepting of yourself and acting like it shouldn't make one bit of difference at all, is a much better way, I think, to approach being different in any way. The world is very different now. Nobody cares mostly if you're gay or lesbian, That's the way it should be. Now the research reflects that what gays and lesbians went through before, now in the military transgender people now are kind of facing the same types of barriers. Canada is very progressive, but even, being in a small town didn't help I don't think, and just being really more accepting of yourself, I think is really the best way for others to accept you as well. I was never overly gregarious or outgoing, I just don't think I'm that type of person and I don't think that made it easier for me. I think it's much better if you're outgoing. I don't know how you develop that personality but, I just saw other people having maybe a little bit of an

easier time, and [some are] certainly more accepted because they just didn't care what other people thought. I wish that I had been more like that.

EF: Uh huh. Great.

PP: That and maybe while you're still physically able and mentally able to volunteer as much as possible because it's through the volunteers that the progress happened, and they even have the giant parades with military. I never ever would have dreamt that I would have seen that in my career.

EF: Thank you. And I just, before I forget I wanted to ask if you've donated any materials ever to, well, to the Nova Scotia or any queer archives? Are there any materials that you've donated?

PP: No, I don't think I even have any.

EF: Ok, I just wanted – it's on my list of questions to ask, so I wanted to make sure that I asked it.

PP: Oh, I did have a whole bunch of books a couple of times in my life that I donated to centres. One in Winnipeg and one in, I think Halifax? It's hard to remember now. And I did lend out my giant gay pride flag that my daughter gave me as a gift to the MFRC, the Military Family Resource Centre in Halifax for one of the gay pride parades. Other than that, no. And the only time I volunteered besides the Positive Space Champion was when I handed out dental dams and things at a dance once, somewhere. I can't even remember where, and I ended up working the bar, which I'd never done in my life.

EF: I always wonder, like there was this moment when dental dams were, you know, it's like, with the AIDS crisis, and so many lesbians were involved in supporting their HIV positive friends, you know, with ACT UP, and awareness, there was this moment in time where like you found dental dams. Dental dams were present at all of these lesbian bars and events, and I feel like that's probably not the case anymore right. Like they had their moment and ...

PP: That's funny, yeah that would explain why that was such a thing at that particular time. And I remember being asked to do it and I said "sure." I had drank a little too much, which is funny now that I think about it, because I remember kind of stumbling around, you know, handing these out, but yeah, that was a big thing.

EF: So that was probably the early '90s, or late '80s?

PP: I think it was in Ottawa maybe, oh gosh, so hard to remember now [*Editor's note: The event occurred in Kingston in the mid-1990s*]. There was also a function I went to, a music festival, a woman's music festival, in, near Ottawa, I think it may have been near Gatineau, and the big thing there, at that point, was, it was called a Pee Mate and it was a type of cardboard apparatus that you could use to pee standing up. And I thought that was just the greatest thing ever, and a, the company was really promoting these Pee Mates, and that became a real thing in the military for women later on, and I thought, oh this is wonderful. And I'd always wished I'd purchased some of them because I think they were disposable, but very, very useful if you were out in the field in the military, or overseas. I also went to a women's music festival in Michigan.

EF: *So did I. What year were you there?*

PP: Oh, I'd say that was probably around 1996. Where you there around that time?

EF: *I was there a bit earlier. I think it was like '93 or 4.*

PP: Oh, and what did you think of it?

EF: *I ... well I loved it. You know I just, and I'm not sure, but I think at the time there was some issue with the transgender policing. Like I remember thinking that a "no penis" policy would make sense, like if you were post, because there were all these, I remember that there were all of these survivors of like sexual violence who, you know, would, anyway, who didn't want to be around men, or people who identified as men, um, but also you know wanting to be transgender allies, and like how do you navigate that. So that was interesting. There, you know it was kind of a place where people could walk around naked, or dress up in crazy costumes, or you know be very creative, so I ... it was definitely an experience. I only went once. I remember having to cross the border. Oh no, maybe that was – I went to a demonstration, and we were worried about being sent back at the US border, so we sat boy, girl, boy, girl in our van. Yeah, because I had friends who were sent back, who had, who were rejected. I had a really good friend who a border agent on the US side went through her diary and said we don't want, you know, weirdos like you in the US. You can't come in.*

PP: Oh my gosh.

EF: *Yeah, so that was in the early '90s. And I think again, you know, because of the AIDS crisis there was this kind of extra edge to the homophobia. But yeah, the music was wonderful. There were also things that I remember making fun of, like it was just*

too over the top [laughing]. At the festival, you know, but like one of the things I loved was that there was a tent for women of colour. It was like a safe space for women of colour. And they put a sign on the front that said, "This is a space, a safe space for women of colour in this lifetime only", and I just thought that was so hilarious, because you could imagine some white woman showing up and saying "I was an indigenous princess in a past life" or something, and they'd have to say I'm sorry [laughing]. How did you find it?

PP: [Redacted] I remember the lineup was so long to get in. I mean, it took a whole day to get through. And I, I wanted to wear my clothes, which were pretty scant at the time, like a little tank top with no bra and shorts, but I just didn't want to wander around naked. I had my daughter with me in a wagon, which made it really easy. A woman there though, just took it as a personal affront that I wasn't taking my clothes off and at the end of the week I was one of the few people with my clothes on, and it really bothered her and she made a point of try to sort of bully me into taking my clothes off, and I said, "No. I'm wearing what I want to wear." [laughing] But I remember some pretty crazy things that people were wearing, and we did a little workshop on interviewing women and filming them, and they showed that at the end of the, you know, up on the big screen, at the end of the week. And that was pretty great. And yeah, the music was phenomenal. And I always remember those giant vans. Some of these women had huge camper vans that had murals painted on them and they must have been so expensive, and I'll never forget that because some of these were just absolutely huge camper vans, which of course, are the norm now, but I had never really seen those back then. So yeah, you just saw pretty much everything there. There was just so many people. I was always afraid of getting lost too. Oh, and the food. The food was good.

EF: So, I was going to say, you've been to some lesbian only or like lesbian focused spaces and events in addition to the gay bar. You've been to a couple of women's music festivals and...

PP: Yeah, a few dances. Other than that, Positive Space Initiative was great in theory, but it was mainly "Look at me, look at how great I am" which is typical for many in the military [laughing]. I found that sometimes people volunteer in the military for the wrong reasons whereas, and sometimes they do in the civilian sector as well, I've heard. But I naively thought that people did it out of interest and wanting to make a difference. Military it's often driven by wanting to look like they're doing more and trying to get promoted out of that and that sort of thing, so I didn't find it overly affective. The Defence Visible Minority group was a real shocker because there was so much anger, and it was so race related and I thought it was going to be an umbrella for, you know, anybody different, but it was very race-focused, and I didn't realize there was so much

racism in the military, because of course, why would I. I had never experienced it, nor probably will I ever, but it was an interesting experience walking into the first couple of meetings because people really stare at you if you're the only white person wandering in. And then they got used to me [*laughing*]. You know it takes a while to gain acceptance from a group and people gauge your reactions and decide whether they trust you. That's a big thing. So, I learned a lot in that group and they held events that were very well attended and very well received and very well done and I think they accomplished a lot. Whereas the other group, I just, I thought the training was good, but I didn't really see it making a difference, except even putting a little card on your desk that has a gay pride insignia on it that says Positive Space Ambassador or Champion or whatever the wording was that they used, that certainly is a welcoming sign for people who are gay or lesbian or transgender or questioning or whoever, and my wish would be that every office would post that and it just wouldn't be one person in an office. It's like you see the little gay pride stickers on some doors and things of businesses and to me that just means All are welcoming environment and to me how thoughtful that someone thought to put that up. They may have a gay staff member, the owners may be gay, maybe they just want to be gay friendly – whatever it is, I, wouldn't it be wonderful if were at all offices in the military or at all businesses. So that the more that you see that, and the stripes painted across the crosswalks – all of that sets a tone. Now it does cost a bit of money and some people dispute that, but I really think that it does certainly set a tone.

EF: Great. Well thank you so much for talking with me today. I really appreciate it. This is wonderful.