

# *Paula Stuart-Warren* by Julie M. Luker

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**Narrator**

**Cole Steinberg**  
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**Interviewer**

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**Transcriber**

**June 7th, 2023**  
**Minnesota**

**CS: Cole Steinberg**

**PSW: Paula Stuart-Warren**

**CS:** This is an interview conducted as part of a larger faculty and student research project initiated by Dr. Julie Luker of Concordia University, Saint Paul. Today is June 7th, 2023. I am here with Paula Stuart-Warren. My name is Cole Steinberg, and I am an undergraduate student at Concordia University, Saint Paul. Today, I will be talking to Paula about what life was like growing up in the Twin Cities. During this interview, I am going to ask you to reflect on your childhood life experiences as they relate to a variety of social topics from that time period. For the purposes of this interview, we have defined childhood as birth through 17 years of age. To begin, please date and spell your full name, including a maiden name if applicable.

**PSW:** Hi. I'm Paula Stuart-Warren. Paula, P-A-U-L-A. Stuart, S-T-U-A-R-T. Hyphen. Warren, W-A-R-R-E-N. And Stuart is my maiden name.

**CS:** Please identify your race and gender.

**PSW:** I am female, and I am white.

**CS:** Please state your date of birth.

**PSW:** I was born July 8th, 1948.

**CS:** Finally, share where you grew up, such as the name of the neighborhood or a nearby street intersection. Include any major moves you made during this time.

**PSW:** I grew up from the age of two until I got married in the south end of Highland Park area of Minnesota. I lived on 1080 Bowdoin Street at the intersection of Magoffin, just off Cleveland Avenue.

**CS:** Okay. Thank you. I would like to learn more about your family life. Let's begin with the memories you have for immediate and extended family. Please share some memories that you have about these relationships.

**PSW:** I grew up in a post-World War Two house just south of the Ford Plant. So, we had a three-bedroom house. As I grew older, I got the bedroom that didn't have a closet or anything. It was

more like a den. But I grew up with a mom and a dad and two sisters. We had a baby brother who died shortly after birth, which affected my parents their whole life, I have learned. But we had a, you know, pretty relatively stable household. My mom did not work at first. She ended up going to work later. My dad worked hard. He was in the automotive industry. He worked at a lot of different car dealerships over the years. And my sisters and I, we, you know, we were siblings. We liked each other. We fought. The thing about our family was, we were pretty normal. And sometimes I wished I had had brothers. Sometimes I wished we'd had, you know, more people in the family. But we also spent a lot of time with our relatives. One of the things that I remember is my mom used to go pick up her mom or her dad. Her dad would come. Grandpa Mike would come and work in our garden, in our big backyard. Sometimes mom would pick up her mother and then her mother's mother. So, I would have Grandma Gert and Nana with us in the backyard. It was really kind of neat. And they lived on the corner of Randolph and Hamline in Saint Paul. They were just kind of Highland Park, Macalester-Groveland area. My paternal grandparents at that time were living on in Princeton and Cleveland Avenues, 2019, Princeton, and they had a house. I love their house. I love visiting them. I loved it when they visited us. The interesting thing was my grandma and Grandpa Stewart always came to our house in separate cars, and I never knew why. And I still, I do not know why to this day—and they stayed married till death. My maternal grandparents lived in an apartment above a drugstore, and that is where my mom had been raised. And that, I am telling you that part of the story, because it does affect my childhood. Our house was in perfect shape, and you know, just a basic post-World War Two in a three-bedroom rambler, one story unfinished basement. But our house and yard were always perfect. And I never quite understood that with my mom. And one of the things I learned later, because as a family historian, was that she grew up with an alcoholic father. As much as he loved his kids and grandkids, he never could hold a job. So, she was growing up, she moved constantly. Now, we didn't do that. I was born at 770 when I lived at 770 Jenks on the east side of Saint Paul. And then when I was two was when we moved into that southern Highland Park area. And I always felt like we were in a neighborhood that things, you know, worked together that people, we liked each other. And our family, you know, we sat down and ate dinner together. As you may know, as many nights as my dad was home, we did. We played games together. We watched TV together. So, you know, I felt neat that way. In fact, I still do a lot with my two sisters today. The interesting thing about our home was that when I was very young, we had an extra room in our house and I never understood why, because my mom's sister came and lived with us. So, the three of us girls were in one bedroom and there is one big bedroom. But my aunt had lost her husband, he was a prisoner of war in the Korean War. And then So, in 1952, he lost his life in a prisoner of war camp. And as I mentioned, my baby brother had died shortly after birth—well my aunt and had that same issue just before her husband went to Korea. So, my aunt lived with us for many years, and I have always been close to her. You know, when she died, it was just kind of it was tough. So, we always had these inter family relationships. And so, I was always close to her. One of the things I liked about our household was that we were the ones that hosted a lot of holidays. And I like that kind of part because, you know, all the cousins got to come and I had lots of boy cousins, So, that made a difference. Those were all on me at that time and was all on my dad's side of the family, his two sisters. So, that was there. And we had friends in the neighborhood. It was just it was just kind of cool.

**CS:** Okay. Did you have any family pets? If so, please describe them.

**PSW:** We had pets a few times over the years. My mom was not a huge dog lover, so. And we had a funny story about a pet. One of my babysitters named Sally gave me a kitten when she used to babysit me and, of course, my sisters. But she gave me a kitten. And later, you know, as an adult, my mom told me why we did not have many pets. She was downstairs doing the laundry and the kitten, or maybe by then an older cat I was too young to remember, was crawling along the red beam in the basement and jumped on my mother's back! That scared her So, much that there was it for that cat, apparently. We had dogs a few times over the years. We had beagles a few times. But

when I started out life at our house at 1080 Bowdoin in Saint Paul, we had a Saint Bernard, and the Saint Bernard was named Barney and I love that dog. And then I had a little puppy named Tuffy. I do not remember either of them dying. I do not remember any of those parts, but I have the coolest pictures and I can vaguely remember the Saint Bernard—I think just because he was So, big. And then a few, you know, we went a lot of years without pets and then So, we had some over the, you know, over time. But it was not consistent and probably wisely, as I found out in later life, was a lot of allergies in our family. That may have been part of it.

**CS:** Okay. How were household chores divided between members of your family?

**PSW:** That's kind of interesting. My mom and dad were both neat freaks and my mom especially, I think, because of her growing up, and my dad inherited that from his dad. So, our house was neat. But as the oldest, I was kind of delegated to do a lot of things. You know, my mom, she cleaned a lot. She did the laundry, she did that. My dad did the typical male chores, the cutting of the grass, you know, the painting and that kind of thing. But as we girls got older, we did some of each of those things. I remember having to iron every Saturday and even ironing my father's handkerchiefs—pillowcases. I don't do that anymore. So, it was kind of it was even in a way. But as the oldest, my next younger sister was four, and then the next one was six years younger than me. So, I became, once my mom had to go back to work when I was later in grade school, I had to become like the babysitter and start dinner or setting the table. We all wash dishes. So, it was kind of was, you know, it was pretty even. But I got out of drawing or washing dishes after a while because I had developed eczema on my arms from the silver with the silver rim around the sink. Has not helped me in adult life. But I think that, you know, when we all learned to do different things, and I think not having a son in the family, my dad, you know, we worked with my dad. We learned things.

**CS:** Okay. Thank you. Next, please describe the ways in which your family's economic status influenced your childhood.

**PSW:** Oh, that was important. We got our first house at Bowdoin because of my dad's service in World War Two. And So, we had that house. It was sparsely furnished. What I can remember in my younger years, and that changed after a while. But my father had owned a business for a while down on Grand Avenue. It was, I don't remember the exact name of it, like Crocus Hill Motors. It was a gas station and a foreign car dealership. He had M.G.'s. And I remember going in there as a child, and it's where there is a hardware store there now. And I can remember that we had some years where, you know, we were thrilled to get, you know, bread and gravy as a meal. We thought that was cool. We could do that. But and other things that we had to eat that my mom would just say, "That's what we have." You leave it. And we didn't understand that my dad's business had gone bankrupt, apparently. Apparently, his business partner had run off with money and stuff—I don't know the full story, I don't know the true story either. I always have to say that. So, that did affect us. As time went on and my mom ended up going to work, she went to Hart Ski Manufacturing Company here in Saint Paul, and things improved a little bit. You know, we had a little more freedom, we had a little more money, but we never were like given, "Okay, go out and buy yourself a new wardrobe," nothing like that. So, then when I got old enough, I babysat a lot to earn money to buy myself things. And in high school I had a couple of jobs. So, that affected us a lot, I think. But we didn't understand why. I think one of the things was my mom was such a proud person that I think she didn't explain, "Well, we've got some money problems right now. You know, we'll get, you know, some treats next paycheck," or that. That kind of affected how I dealt with my own children. I wanted to explain things more to them when things were not flush with money. But we lived in a neighborhood where people were pretty much the same, So, I didn't really feel cheated.

**CS:** Okay. In what way has your family's financial circumstances shaped your spending habits today?

**PSW:** Oh, I think it shaped a lot. I'm pretty careful. I did learn that, you know, I don't have to be as proud as my mother was. And, you know, but I understand why she was the way she was. And I've always been very careful. I was always very careful. And my children were growing up. You know, we did garage sales, we did rummage sales. You know, kids grow out of clothes So, fast anyway. So, that that helped a lot. And, you know, our kids would understand why they couldn't have such and such for dinner. But you know when the next paycheck comes, we'll do that. I was a stay-at-home housewife, raised my kids, and then, you know, at one point I decided I wanted to do some other things. I did a daycare business to help, you know, even out the family income. So, I think I learned about hard work. I think that was important. So, not to be too proud to accept help or explain why we didn't have something.

**CS:** Okay. Now, I'd like to know about your experiences with religion, such as Catholicism, Lutheranism, etc.. Describe what you can recall about your family's religious practices when you were growing up.

**PSW:** Oh, I was raised, baptized and raised a Catholic. I was baptized at St Patrick's Church on the east side when we moved into our house on Bowdoin. We joined St. Teresa's Parish, which was on the very southern edge of Saint Paul, right across from Fort Snelling. And my mom was raised Catholic. My dad was raised Methodist. And they were married. It was an interfaith marriage. My dad did not go to church, but he made sure that we were raised Catholic, as my mom was. We went to Catholic grade school. I went to Our Lady of Peace High School. So, it was kind of interesting. My dad went to some of our events. For some reason on my parents, it was not a marriage that involved religion other than schooling us, you know, And we went to church. But, you know, I joined the church choir, that kind of thing. But I don't think it was a real big influence on our family life.

**CS:** Okay. How important or relevant is religion to you now as an adult?

**PSW:** I'm more spiritual than religious in my feelings, and I have a lot of friends because of what I do. A lot of my friends are across the country, and we talk about this quite a bit. And of this this group of friends, about seven or eight of us, many of us were raised Catholic and we've all kind of moved away from Catholicism. But we firmly believe in a lot of our beliefs. We talk about this, but how the spirituality of enjoying like today looking out, it's a gorgeous day here in Saint Paul. The other thing we do is we talk about our families, our relationships, and how that is So, much more important to us than the actual physical presence in a church building. But none of us have. It's not that we've turned our backs on religion, it's just that that does not overshadow our lives like it does for some people. And I think—I think back on some of that and part of the way we were all raised, we were all raised in, you know, middle the lower middle-class families, and I looked at my father-in-law who was raised as a Southern Methodist, very staunch. And he tells some of the stories. And I think, “oh, my goodness,” the way I was raised, I was So, glad that my parents, you know, I did have the Catholic upbringing. I did the same for my children. I think they got some good tenants for life and I think they got some good education in their Catholic schools. And I don't regret any of that one bit.

**CS:** Okay. Now I'd like to learn more about the neighborhood in which you grew up. If you move during childhood, you may wish to reflect on more than one neighborhood. This is fine to do, but please indicate as you do it. Please describe what comes to mind when thinking about the neighborhood in which you grew up.

**PSW:** I grew up in that South Highland neighborhood of Saint Paul around the intersection of Cleveland and Magoffin, and I don't remember where I lived from the first two years of my life on

the east side of Saint Paul, So, I can't talk about that. But the neighborhood I grew up in, I thought was a cool neighborhood. None of us lived very close to our schools. We were all a mile away from both the public and the Catholic schools. And religion did not affect our neighborhood one bit. You know, we all melded together. We all played together. We had a lot of Jewish families, Catholic families, Protestant families. And we were just kids. We played a lot. The parents, a lot of the parents got together. I can name most of the families who lived in which house, you know, on the street. But when we first were as a neighborhood, we didn't have the houses that were that were later built across Magoffin from us—which were smaller type ramblers. Excuse me. But So, we played a lot together. I think that neighborhood influence was So, good because I had wanted that later on for my kids, too. But the neighbors, you know, the neighbors watched out for each other's kids. We played together. We were lucky, we lived on a corner lot. We had a huge backyard where we always had like a skating rink in the winter. We had volleyball net and other things in the summer, and that's where a lot of the neighborhood kids gathered. And I think that was important. The three families that the kids played together the most were the Stewarts, us, the Lindbergh's who had six kids, and the [Baers?] who ended up with four kids. And it just and the families did things together. It was kind of neat. And there are a lot of other families, you know, some of the families, you know, grew larger and moved out of that area and then others moved in. So, there were a lot of kids. We played tag. We played hide-and-seek. I think the fact that we all stayed together as a neighbors, and we even saw some of the neighbors, you know, once they moved away, we would still have contact with them now—not the kids So, much, but the parents did. When I was ten, I think I was ten, the Lindbergh's built an in the ground swimming pool in their backyard. And So, we would get invited over to swim sometimes and that just became the highlight of my life. And my best friend was Darlene, who was the oldest Lindbergh girl. She's a year older than I am. And we did So, much together. We played, you know, the old paper dolls. One of the things we had is, in the corner of the Bowdoin and Magoffin intersection in our lot, we had this huge old cottonwood tree. It's just it's—it was a fantastic tree. It's now gone. So, we sat there and read. We played paper dolls. We played dolls out there. I used to hang a clothesline and hang doll clothes. And we kind of, our neighborhood, were kind groupings of the same age group, you know? Like my sisters had kids around their age, and it was kind of fun. The Lindbergh's had a couple of older boys, So, but I can remember sitting in their living room and watching Bandstand and thinking, “Oh, this is cool. And I'm with the older guys,” you know? But I miss my neighborhood. Because I thought that was kind of cool and it was just it was a time period, you know, in the 1950s, early sixties, where neighbors knew each other, got together, did things. Then, I mean, we had some of that when my kids were growing up in the Marine park area. So, I think to me, that was just an important part of my life. And I do remember one thing, my dad, my dad loved tools. For the garden, the house, you know, the yard, all that. And I remember a couple of the neighbors would borrow things from him and my dad would go to do a project and he'd go, “Oh, doggone it, I remember Babe.” Or “I remember Ernie borrowing that and not returning it.” That was kind of fun. And one of the things with our neighborhood was, because we lived So, far away from a playground and our schools, is we had to walk all that way most days. You know, we got rides, one [unintelligible], we even walked in the winter and it was cold. But, you know, it's not the story of, we walk five miles uphill, like some people say. There was flat ground, but we still had to walk about a mile each way. But, you know, when we were supposed to watch out for the younger kids. So, I just it was a cool neighborhood.

**CS:** Okay. Next, I would like to learn about the values shared by your family and your neighbors. Values are principles or standards that help guide behavior. What memories come to mind that demonstrate what these values were for your family and your neighbors?

**PSW:** Oh, I think, I think we all learned in our neighborhood at an early age that, you know, our parents made the rules. We were to abide by them. That others would watch out for us and that we respected each other and each other's families. There was not a lot of in-fighting, not a lot of problems. You know, I know all these kids. As far as I know, everybody grew up to be good adults.

I think our parents raised us well. We were kind of fortunate in the fact that, you know, I know there were always some troubles, but I know that, you know, our family stayed together. Our parents stayed together. And that doesn't always happen in all neighborhoods. And I think that was kind of an important thing that, you know, the guiding principles for our neighborhood. I'm just trying to think. The fact that we cared about families and we shared birthdays, we shared anniversaries, we didn't so much share like Christmas and Easter and Thanksgiving, because those we went with our, you know, our own extended families. But I think, you know, other holidays, 4th of July was a big time in our family because we would all gather in our backyard because there used to be higher fireworks coming from near the golf course in Highland Park, the park itself and that big old water tower there, and we could see them clearly from our backyard. So, that's where the neighbors would gather with their lawn chairs and watch that. And we did it as families. So, I think there was that family principle was there, and it was important. The fact that we all got to know each other's families, and some of the relatives of the families, I think just that it was a great group of people. And I think that that is one of the reasons why I raised my kids the way I did, because I wanted them to know the other people, that other people would look out for them, who they could go to for help. And, you know, I mourned when those other parents died over the years, even when, you know, I was older and not living in that neighborhood. So, obviously, there was a good feeling to all of it. And all the moms were at home for many years. You know, it was that typical 1950s type thing. But later, the moms did go to work. So, we had some of that. But we also knew that once the moms were gone, we couldn't get by with anything because there's always somebody else watching us, which I think was kind of neat.

**CS:** Okay. Today, how closely do you feel your values reflect those of the residents currently living in your childhood neighborhood?

**PSW:** Now, that's kind of interesting because I drive through there quite a lot, just reminiscing. I like to do that. The homes seem well cared for. Some of them have had additions built on them, I've seen that. But you know what? I've never seen kids outside playing. When you just asked that question of me, that struck me. There were always kids outside, you know, whether we're on roller skates or our bikes, you know, playing tag in the yards. I don't see any of that anymore. So, I don't and I don't know those people anymore. So, I don't know if you know how many children do live in that neighborhood. I don't know what the situation is as far as the adults are. You know, if it's single parent households or if there's married couples or if it's just, you know, a single person buying their first home. So, it's kind of interesting. But I see that it's still an area well, well cared for, you know, not not luxurious, but nicely cared for. And I'm happy when I drive through there and I see that things are the same. That way. But. But. Yep. No kids, no people outside. I hadn't even thought about that before.

**CS:** Now I'm going to ask you all about leisure time. Describe some of the ways in which you, your family and your neighbors engage in leisure time when you're growing up.

**PSW:** Oh, I've given you a little bit of that already. But we kids, we played outside so much, you know, playing tag, playing hide and go seek, skating in the winter. We would build huge snow horses in our front yard and my dad would ice them down with the hose, so, you know, they wouldn't melt right away. And he was the one in charge of the skating rink that everybody could skate on. We did things, you know, that once the neighbors had the pool and we couldn't just go from there, our family had to wait for an invitation. You know, that was my mom's rule. You wait until you have an invitation because, you know, they didn't want everybody's kids over there all the time. And I think we were luckier than most, that we got to swim with them more. But we still did outside things. Well, we, you know, put up a volleyball net. We would do that. We had birthday parties together outside. I was just looking at pictures recently here of those years and how many birthday parties we had in our backyard, you know, involving all the neighbor kids. And I'm like, "Oh, there's so-

and-so, there's so-and-so!" And the neighbors that I can remember going to the [Baers'?] house because they had a porch on the screened in porch on the back of their house, which I thought was really cool. So, do we go over there and play sometimes. And a few of the ones that lived over in Colby, we'd go and look at their houses, but I think it was more just we...just got together outside, you know, you got up, you ate breakfast and you went outside and there were enough people. So, you played tag, or you played hide and go seek, or you got, you know, as we got older, we'd, you know, do more things, more like skating and things. And it wasn't a "okay, let's tomorrow at 3:00 do this." We just did it. And our parents, you know, we'd have barbecues outside. It was just it was just kind of neat to be able to do that. Two of the dads usually did the cooking, my dad and Ernie Lindbergh. My dad, Bill, you know, was a great cook. My mom was a great cook. So, and everybody knew that. So, you know, we would get together and everybody would bring something. It was just, it was a neat feeling that way. When I think to today's kids, you know, like I said, they're not outside, but they're not doing these kinds of things. And I think that's what, being together like that, I think, it kept us all out of trouble. And we were kind of an isolated neighborhood because we had the train tracks from the Ford plant on one edge, we had the Mississippi River and another, and then the train tracks went down by return court on the other end, just for another, a little bit of housing development. So, we didn't have any place to go and do trouble. You know. One of my favorite leisure activities was, once I got old enough to ride my bike to the Highland Park Library, which was, I'm guessing, just a little less than a mile away. I should measure it someday. But that's, you know, my friend Eileen and I would ride there. I would ride there sometimes alone, and we would read just about every doggone book. Being the two oldest girls in the neighborhood, though, sometimes we did things together and we didn't want, you know, those little kids around us. We were kind of that way. A leisure activity that we started to do as we were old enough to ride the bus, and, you know, our moms are working. So, we'd have the younger siblings with us. We used to go downtown Saint Paul a lot on the bus. And that was kind of fun. You know, explore some buildings. We do things like that. And it just, it just was, you know, all of this was kind of natural. It wasn't really planned out. It wasn't thought out. It just happened.

**CS:** Okay. Can you recall if your family ever took vacations and if so, to where?

**PSW:** We did take some vacations. We were not going out of state. We didn't take like lot. We didn't go to Yellowstone or California, Florida, or any of that. But we would go to a lake cabin not every year. But when, you know, I imagine it was one of my family could afford it. We would rent a cabin. And I don't remember staying like for a week or two. I remember a few days here and there when we would do that. I know we went to the Alexandria area a few times. I can remember that especially. We took a few trips up to Duluth. I go up there all the time now because my daughter lives up there. So, and I just remember having been there and we almost moved to Duluth once when I was a child. So, we did that. But it wasn't any long, extended vacations. We did do a vacation once. I must have been probably around 12-13, and we played golf. My dad loved golf. That's what he did. That's what kept him going to 87. He died at 89, but at 87 he was still playing golf. And I remember playing golf and, as a family, and he asked me to leave the golf course. I was such a bad golfer. But we went swimming, we went boating, We didn't go fishing that I remember. I had an uncle by marriage who would take me fishing as a child. But it was that. But our vacations, for the most part, were just doing summer things out in the yard and with the neighbors.

**CS:** Okay. What television shows did you watch growing up?

**PSW:** Oh, my gosh. Some of my favorite times were Sunday evenings. Disney was on TV. My mother would make us sandwiches, or whatever to eat, and she would make us chocolate malts because she had worked in the drugstore making malts and serving sodas to people. The drugstore was at Randolph and Hamline, below the apartment where she lived with her parents. So, she made killer malts. She did such a good job. So, we all five of us would watch that together at night. I



would watch sports on Sunday afternoons with my dad and we would play cribbage. That's something I remember So, well. But I'd watch Perry Mason. I'm trying to think of somebody that if we watch the game shows, but my mom had shows she would watch, which she would not allow us to watch. I can remember this. I don't remember what year it was. I should look up one year. But Peyton Place that was on TV, you know, we couldn't watch that with her. My dad, you know, had to work, you know, at a dealership or car dealership. He had to work. Some nights her mother would watch her show sitting on the couch with a cigarette in her cocktail, you know, but my bedroom was right off the living room and my door was right across from the TV. So, I would crack my door open and watch Peyton Place with her. Maybe she knew. I don't know if she really did or not. But so, you know, we did watch. We had a TV early on. It's one of my was one of my dad's favorite things. We actually had a color TV very early on. Can I add something to one of the previous questions?

**CS:** Yeah, sure.

**PSW:** I totally forgot that our neighbor, Mr. Baer, Bob Baer, worked for a toy distributor. We had one of the first hula hoops, we had early Barbie dolls, you know. But we did know how cool we were that we had those kinds of things in the fifties before a lot of other people. So, that was you know, that was, you know, a lot of it. We were not allowed to sit and watch TV all day. You know, of course, that time there weren't a lot of TV shows on to begin with. But I can remember staying up late and watching the end of TV shows where, you know, you'd get the sing The Star-Spangled Banner, you'd hear the music, the TV would go off with the color pattern at the end. Oh, I'm old!

**CS:** What bands or music genres were your favorite?

**PSW:** Well, once I became old enough, of course, rock and roll and watching Bandstand down at the neighbor's house, that really became important to me. So, I listened to a lot of the old fifties and sixties music, but I grew up with parents who loved music and had tons of albums they would play. So, today I love, I still love the forties and early fifties music. That was their kind of music, and I can sing along to some of those things. So, music was always a part of our household too. None of us played instruments. I'm trying to think, neighbors, couple of them did, but it wasn't—music was not a huge thing, but my parents always had that music going and my dad would sing. I think my dad thought he was Tony Bennett singing I Left My Heart in San Francisco. So, we just kind of grew up kind of doing that and just knowing music was a part of our lives. So, I didn't do enough of that to my kids. Now that I'm thinking about that, I wish I had.

**CS:** Okay. As an adult, have you kept in touch with any friends from your childhood?

**PSW:** I moved away, when I first got married, to California for a year. And, you know, we kept—that was before email, you know. I know you don't remember an age like that, but So, I would write letters to my friends and I would, you know, my friends from school and the playground in the neighborhood. So, we kept in contact that way. And then we kept in contact a lot when our kids were younger. And then we kind of drifted apart. You know, the kids get older and everything, but the actual neighborhood kids, it's, you know, funerals, that type of thing now. It's kind of sad seeing some of them die. One of my best friends, her daughter, died as a young adult. So, that's been kind of tough, but not, I haven't really kept as much in contact with the direct neighborhood kids. I still see and keep in contact with several women that I went to kindergarten with, went through grade school and high school together. And we kind of had more togetherness when some of our kids were little and then the time apart. And then as adults and with spouses, we would still get together. So, it's kind of a mixed connection there.

**CS:** Okay, Next, let's discuss your experience with schooling. Please describe what it was like going to school as a child.

**PSW:** I love school. I think sometimes I thought school was a way to get away from chores at home. I know that is how some people go, "I'd rather stay home," but I loved school. I loved learning. I had, other than one teacher, I had some fantastic schooling. I had a few bad memories from first grade and they carried me through my life until getting back together with some of my friends that I had gone to grade school with. And one of them told me something about this one nun, and I went, "You just made me feel So, better." I have carried this stuff with me for years. But other than that, I had both lay and nuns as teachers and everyone. The rest were fantastic. I have no complaints about that for grade school, and that was through eighth grade. We went through eighth grade. The teacher was also the principal and was kind of a demanding person. One of my funny things is when I got to high school, we were telling stories one time in our lunchroom and a bunch of us girls were sitting around. It was an all-girls high school I went to. And, you know, some of us were telling the story about our eighth-grade teacher and principal of the school and everything. And one of the other women, women, girls at the time raised their hand. She said, "She was my aunt." Oh, were we embarrassed? Oh, I will never forget that. But we were close. We were close. It wasn't a huge school. My eighth grade graduating class had only 45 people. But we pretty much stayed together. Some of us still see each other, as I mentioned earlier. But we had a good education. I really, really do. I'm happy that I got that, that I feel that I have a good basis for life and that. High school was kind of interesting because my mother made me take Latin for four years. I hated it. As a later adult, I found out that the Latin teacher was my mother's best friend from eighth grade. See? And my mother also made me take typing even though I was in the advanced placement classes. Why? Today, I thank my mother because Latin is the basis for reading a lot of old records that I do in my profession. I'm So, glad I learned how to type the proper way. I can type very fast on my computer. I had some good classes. I can remember, though, sitting in class. I was in the second row from the window towards the back on the day that John F. Kennedy was killed. I can still remember those announcements coming over the intercom. That's one of the things that struck out. I hated gym classes, I hated phy-ed, I hated the square dancing we had to do in grade school and high school. I haven't done anything with that the rest of my life. But I was, for the most part, a pretty, pretty good student. But physics—that one did me in. But I'm very pleased with the education I got.

**CS:** Okay. The school lunch hour has changed over the years. Can you recall how your school handled the lunch hour when you were a student?

**PSW:** Yes. Our school was across the street from the church. Being a Catholic school, at lunchtime, we'd have to, you know, parade over to the lunchroom that was in the bottom was the church hall on the bottom level of the church. And I can remember us going there and, we didn't have a cafeteria, So, we had to bring our lunches. And I still remember the food, some of the foods that we ate, and I think we didn't have them refrigerated. How did we live? You know? A lot of baloney sandwiches, a lot of liver sausage sandwiches. Oh, tuna fish. But one of the things that I remember, you know, we'd sit there as a, you know, in groups of people. And since we weren't a huge school, you know, we didn't have different times for lunches. So, we were all there basically at the same time. And there was a kitchen in that hall. I thought that kind of thing could have made us lunch. But I remember the smell of our school lunchroom because of the rancid milk, you know, the milk that would drip in the bottom of the refrigerator from those little cartons we had to open. When I got older, I got to be one of the people who distributed milk to the other kids. So, that was kind of interesting. When I got to high school, it was not, and again, we did not have a cafeteria, So, we had to bring our lunches. And the lunchroom was called a tearoom. You know, Catholic girls high school. We still laugh about that today. And again, in lunch, we sat around and chatted. You know it was gossip time, that type of thing, but not a big deal.

**CS:** Okay. Which teacher stands out to you most in your memory and why?

**PSW:** Mrs. Tyson, second grade because she taught me how to do cursive writing, and I won awards for my cursive writing. I can remember that. She was just a nice woman, So, nice. I loved her dearly. And I'm So, glad today I can read cursive because I can read old records. I loved Ms. Gallagher that I had for both fourth and fifth grade. Fourth was as a half, fourth, half, fifth grade. And then in fifth grade, she was just an art teacher alone. And she was so, nice, and she was so, great. And then partway through the year, I found out that she was a friend of my aunt's from high school. So, that was kind of interesting. And a lot of us still saw her many years after graduation, but she was a neat teacher. Other than beginning of fifth grade when she made me. Tim Hogan and Tim Rumsey stand up on the first day of school and point out that all three of us had gotten glasses over the summer. You know, having to wear glasses and then having them pointed out to everybody. But she was a fun teacher. I'm going to forget her name, but our seventh-grade teacher was another one that really interacted with the students and she—oh! Sister Thomas Martin. And one of the big things I remember is doing Ukrainian Easter eggs. She had us do them. You had to blow the innards out and everything, and then paint them. And just about at the end, mine broke. But I think, you know, I would say that 80% of my grade school teachers were just wonderful, were helpful, taught us well. In high school, you know, I did like my Latin teacher, even though later I found out she was my mom's friend. I have to tell a story about my typing teacher because I met her as an adult. Sister Jeanne Joseph, I met her at my son's high school. And I looked at her and I said, "Did you used to teach typing at Our Lady of Peace High School?" She said, "Yep." And I said, "Oh my gosh, I was one of your students." But she was a good person too. You know what's funny is that actually, though, none of my high school teachers just stand out as much. I wonder if grade school just influenced me more. That's an interesting question. But I must have paid attention since I got pretty good grades.

**CS:** Okay. For our final topic, I'm going to ask you to reflect on local and global issues such as war, poverty, discrimination, social unrest, etc. In your opinion, what were some of the largest local or global issues affecting the people in your neighborhood when you were growing up?

**PSW:** It's very interesting because I think overall there wasn't much. You know, like the Korean War and my aunt losing her husband. I was too young to really have that affect me. I just knew that she loved Robson. She was a fun aunt and as you know, as a much later adult, too. And when she remarried and had kids, I loved her dearly, my Aunt Jeannie. But at that point, none of our family were involved in the military. We didn't seem to have any economic downturns other than my father losing his business. But it wasn't like a global caper type of thing. I don't remember any prejudice in our neighborhood. It was very much a white neighborhood, but very mixed religiously. But I don't remember, you know, it was the only thing would be different is, you know, the older kids will go, "We don't want to stay around with the younger kids all the time." So, I don't think it affected us that much. We were kind of our little own enclave down there. And in high school, some of the things that went on, like as I said with John F Kennedy death, I think that was something that that hit us and we knew things were happening around the world. You know, the Cuban Missile Crisis and things like that. But I don't think it played a big part in my life.

**CS:** Okay.

**PSW:** I was lucky.

**CS:** Did your family or your neighborhood have a bomb or fallout shelter in case of nuclear war? If yes, where was it and what was in it?

**PSW:** None that I know of. But that's a funny question because when the Lindbergh's were building their pool, they didn't tell us they were building a pool. They told us they were building a bomb shelter. Isn't that interesting? But none that I know of. And I don't remember, you know, like in school having to do any of the, you know, hide under your desks doesn't mean we didn't do it. But it's not one I remember. So, that, you know, maybe somebody did, but I didn't know.

**CS:** In your opinion, what are some of the biggest local or global issues affecting the people in your childhood neighborhood today?

**PSW:** I think the ups and downs of the economy have really made a difference. It's, you know, like I said, I don't see kids outside in the old neighborhood, but I can see a difference in the houses are pretty well kept up. You know, they're not luxurious in that part of Highland. But I see old cars. I know that we have changed in that neighborhood. There's a lot of Section eight housing. There have been some apartments built nearby. It's you know, people are looking for lower, lower rent places. And I can boy, I can understand that I've had some, you know, financial changes as an adult because of a divorce. But I think that it looks like that area is is relatively stable. I know that there's been some uptick in crime, but I don't think it's affected it horribly at this point. But since none of us that I know are, you know, still connected to that part of the neighborhood, I don't really know of direct changes.

**CS:** Okay. This is the end of our interview. Your responses are invaluable. I really appreciate that you took the time to do this today. Thank you So, much for participating.

**PSW:** Thank you very much.