

Janice Bisch, by Julie M. Luker

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Minnesota

CS: Cole Steinberg

JB: Janice Bisch

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 August 21st, 2023. I am here with Janice Bisch. My name is Cole Steinberg, and I'm an undergraduate student at Concordia University, Saint Paul. Today, I'll be talking to Janice about what life was like growing up in the Twin Cities. During this interview, I'm 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 state and spell your full name, including a maiden name if applicable.

JB: My name is Janice Marie Bish. Janie J-A-N-I-C-E, Marie M-A-R-I-E, Bisch B-I-S-C-H.

CS: Please identify your race and gender.

JB: I'm white. I identify as female.

CS: Please state your date of birth.

JB: June 25, 1965.

CS: Finally, please 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 period.

JB: I grew up in Frogtown. The cross streets were Van Buren and Farrington. We lived there through my whole childhood.

CS: Okay. Thank you. I would like to learn 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.

JB: In my family, in my immediate family, there was my mom, my dad, and my siblings, which were—I have two sisters and one brother. And we all, my parents were married, and we all lived in the same house in Frogtown. Also in the neighborhood, my grandmother and grandfather lived also in Frogtown as well as my great grandmother lived in Frogtown. So, we visited with them a lot.

And so, my family has been in Frogtown for many generations, and we just this...oh, what was it, April of 2023. Finally, we sold our family house in Frogtown. So, no more Bisch's in Frogtown.

CS: Which family members did you engage with the most growing up?

JB: Well, certainly my immediate family, but also, you know, my grandma and grandpa quite a bit—and actually my great-grandmother, too. So, when I was about eight or nine, my great-grandmother started needing help. She lived in Frogtown near what was then the Jackson School. And so, she was maybe a quarter mile away. So, she needed help. I would walk over there once a week and be her helper, like wash her dishes, go run to the grocery store for her, and just spend time visiting with her. So that is a really nice memory. I became very close with her in helping her. And of course, like I said, my grandma and my grandpa, we also, you know, a lot of extended family within the cities. My mom is from—right, so those folks are my mom's family, my mom's my mom and dad, my mom's grandma. So, we also had an extended family of hers in that area that we visited with quite often. You know? Back then, people visited. So, you go to their house and hang out, and then the kids would play together or whatever. And, you know, the grown-ups would talk. So those were my mom's aunts and uncles and their kids. So, just because of age thing. So yeah, those are the other relatives that we would visit with. With my dad's family they were more from southern Minnesota, so that would be more of a—we also visited with them, but that would be more of a trek out to Mankato or other areas like that. So, I think I don't know if we saw them quite as much, but also those were also very memorable times to enjoy with, you know, extended family, my cousins and uncles and aunts. So, yeah.

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

JB: Sure. My mom—we always wanted a dog, but my mom wouldn't let us have one. So, we had the little pets, which were, you know, hamsters or fish. And I was just thinking about this last night that I bet my brother was the instigator of that because he was kind of the, you know, because he was the only boy, he kind of got more of the stuff. So, he was the one who wanted the fish, So we got fish, you know, that kind of thing. And gerbils! Yeah, gerbils and hamsters, just the little things because my mom was like, "If we get a pet, I know who's going to have to take care of the pet. If we get a dog, I know who's going to take care of the dog." Which is probably true, you know? So yeah, so that's pretty much...I think—I don't know when, but at some point, when I was older, we did have a dog that my brother had gotten. Unfortunately, the neighbors were abusing their dog, and so my brother just went over there one day and took the dog. He's just like, "I'm taking your dog." And he, well, he didn't say anything. He just took it. It lived in our backyard, and it could never go in the house. And we had that dog for many, many years. But we always thought of it as my brother's dog. Yeah.

CS: Will you share a memory to help describe what mealtime was like in your family?

JB: Yeah. So. Describe a memory. Well, in general, my mom cooked every meal. She was a traditional, you know, the traditional mom that cooked every meal. And if, you know, my dad was very easygoing, man. But if dinner, we called it supper, if the supper wasn't on the table by 5:15, after he came home from work, he'd come into the kitchen and be like, "So how's that supper going? Where's supper?" You know? So, there was that little pressure there. But so, we had all our mealtimes together. And as we got older, the girls would help, you know, again, traditional girls, the girls would help get the dinners together. And my mom went back to work when I was in the seventh grade. So, then I was the person who made the meals when she was at work. She worked like three days a week at our family church, which was a block away, St Vincent's. And so I made the meals then. So, yeah, I mean. Mealtime was, I don't know, it was always the same. Right? We sit and then, you know, my mom and dad would talk. Mostly my mom would tell stories or talk

because she hadn't had much interaction all day, which is with us kids all day. So, she wanted to talk to my dad. And my dad was kind of quiet. And then yeah, and us kids would talk about things. And then after supper, then us kids, including my brother, had to wash and dry the dishes. So that was, you know, the routine was the kids wash and dried the dishes. So, yeah, it was good. And my mom was a good cook, and yeah. It was a meat and potatoes family, you know. So, yeah.

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

JB: Well, we always had enough, but there was always a concern about how money would be spent. My parents were very—so my dad was a mechanic, and he worked for the city of Saint Paul. I don't know that—he didn't make that much money from what I saw, you know, I looked at his paycheck. As I got older, I found out how many he got. I thought, "Oh my gosh, that's not that much." You know? But my parents had always been very good at budgeting money. And we're like, you know, every month they balance their checkbook, and they'd talk about how money was going to be spent, especially if it's major money, like buying a new car, etc. And so, yeah, so that was always a, like, it was just keeping track of money and yeah. Money really did influence everything, right? Which I'm sure is true of all families. Like, so my mom was very much about saving money, particularly on food, you know, having to feed all of us. So, we would...we were always picking. So, we'd go out to those pick-your-own farms and pick strawberries, raspberries, and apples. Then cook, clean everything, and then freeze everything. And she was really—because my dad had to have desserts every day, which is great, so she was always baking stuff. But then it was just like, "Okay, you pull that bag of strawberries out of the freezer, and we'll make something with that," you know. But also, cutting the coupons and going to [UNINTELLIGIBLE], which was like a scratch and dent of food store. That kind of thing, you know. And so, we also went on—we go on family vacations, but it wasn't anything lavish. But, I mean, I feel very grateful that we were able to go, and we go for like once—once a year. We had this weird little camper tent thing, and we went camping, you know. And so, yeah. And so, money was always something to be watched. And also, like I remember, one time my mom thought we should have a new car. My dad—again, my dad was always very easygoing, but, you know, if my dad said no, it meant no. And he said, she's like, "Well, we need a new car." And my dad was like, "No." And that—end of story, you know. And my dad was always, "Well, we can fix that up. We can fix it." That was the other thing. Everything was jerry-rigged. Everything. Especially as a mechanic, he'd fix those cars and run until they were run into the ground, I remember. So, one time, there was a, in the car that we had, I happened to get into the car in the backseat. And there's little rugs that you have on the floor. And it moved. And there you could see the rust; you could see it down to the ground. And I saw that, and I said something to my dad, and he goes, "Don't tell your mom," you know, because he didn't want to buy a new car. So, yeah, that's how money, you know, influenced our family. But again, we always had enough, which I'm grateful for. And, and then my mom, so then my mom went back to work—so my mom did not work again. Traditional, that was sort of the traditional thing until the seventh grade. I was in the seventh grade because they decided that we were going to go to St Agnes, which was one of the local Catholic schools, but it offered high school. My brother wanted to go there. It was his time to choose where he was going to go to high school. He chose that high school. Well, that cost extra money. You know, it wasn't public, so we had to pay for that. So, my mom decided to go back to work. And she worked at the...like I said, she worked as a secretary at our church three days a week, you know. So that changed a lot of what was going on in the house because then we were like three middle schoolers, and then the youngest, Jennifer, was the baby—seven years younger than us. And so, yeah, so then we had to do a lot more of the chores and, and by we, I think I mostly me and my sister Julie. Like I said, I had to cook the meals three days a week and then we had to do laundry and etc., etc. So yeah, that was another influence as far as money was concerned. Yeah.

CS: Great. 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.

JB: Sure, my family was Catholic. I was raised Catholic, and we belonged to St Vincent's Church, well, St Vincent's DePaul Church, which was one block away from our house. So, we always say we were there like all the time. That was really the center of my parents' spiritual and social life. They were extremely involved in the church, so they were always on some committee, planning some event, you know, baking something for the bake sale—whatnot. And so, we were there all the time, you know, doing just a lot of things. And I would—we would just go over there too as part of, you know, helping out with events and things like that. And so, we, my parents Catholicism was about following rules, so not so much about, I don't know. I don't know how to explain it. But it was a different brand than the St Agnes brand of Catholicism. So, it was really about following the rules. Like you had to go to church every Sunday. You could not miss church. So, we always went to church on Sundays. And that also was about taking my great-grandmother to church. When she was older, my dad and I would go get a great-grandma and take her to church at a different time than the rest of the family. Because of certain things. I don't know why. But anyway, so yeah, we were always at church on Sunday. We always, you know, there were certain prayers that you always had to say before you went to bed, every time you had a meal, that kind of thing. And then when Lent rolled around, which is the time of abstinence before it's like a month or so, it's 40 days, I think, of, penance and abstinence. And so, you had to give something up for Lent. And then every Friday you ate, you could not eat meat. And then every Friday, we also went to church extra and did what was what they called the Stations of the Cross, you know. So, there was extra things happening then and you collected money for the poor, etc. So, it was yeah, it was a really religious upbringing, and yeah, just follow the rules, you know.

CS: As a child, how important or relevant did you find religion to be for you?

JB: As a child? Well, very important. I, I just thought, well, again, I just tried my best to follow all the rules. And I had sometimes I had some, um, influential teachers who would—nuns who helped me to, uh. How do I explain it? So, I remember a couple of memories. Like when I was in the first grade. So, here's the thing, when we went to grade school before the seventh grade, we went to what was called Project Discovery. Project Discovery was a group of churches where their attendance in their schools, most churches had an attached school, and the attendance had gone down. So, these churches banded together and formed what was called Project Discovery. And so, these were—so they had children who came from all these different churches—church? Well, what we call parishes. But then other kids, too. And so, and it was kind of a hippie-dippy experiment. And so, a lot of it was all about sort of more Christian, sort of peace love kind of thing. And so, in first grade, I had Sister Rosemary, and she encouraged us so much to be loving and to think about our neighbor and just strive to be loving towards each other. And I love Sister Rosemary, so I was going to do all of that. You know, I was really into, you know, sacrificing for the other students in class and doing good work, you know? And that meant like she'd say, "Now, remember, first is last, and last is first." That's somewhere in the Bible. So, in the line, I would strive to be the last person in the line, you know? And that was her trick to get people out of fighting over who would be the first in line. Right? So, I was always striving to be the last person in the line, that kind of thing. And I think that really influenced my life, you know? And I saw her as a second mother. I mean, I just—I just loved her to bits. And yeah, I think that, again, that view of love and service towards others has been formed, I would say, by her. So, and then there was a few others like that as well.

CS: Okay. Now I'd like to learn more about the neighborhood in which you grew up. If you moved 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.

JB: Well, when I was young, it was a lot of older people living in their homes and owning their homes. And then a lot of like young families, such as my family, and mostly Catholics—or I would say a lot of Catholics. So, there were bigger families. Certainly, compared to today, like the minimum was four, you know? And so, it was awesome. I always think of it as we were a roving band of children, which was really awesome because we would go out, especially in the summer. You go out after breakfast, and if you had any chores, you know, whatever you go out, you'd hang out with your friends. And then, at noon, the church bell would ring. So you go home for lunch, and then you go back out again. And somehow, we knew to go back home at like five for dinner, or we'd hear our moms yell out our names out the back door, you know? So, you knew to go home for dinner, go back out, streetlights come on, you go back home, you know. So, it was fantastic. We had a lot of friends and we would just play a lot of different games, you know, like hopscotch or jacks or, what other games did we play? You know, and then we did sports. So, a block away from our house was this, what we called, Horseshoe Park. And there was horseshoe people could play horseshoes there, but there is also an area there, a triangle where we played softball all the time in the summers. And so, we would run down there, and we'd also play other games, you know, touch football, or kick the can or Red Rover—just all the games that kids played. So, we were outdoors all the time, even in winter. I mean, summer, winter, spring, fall, we were always outside playing, playing with our friends. And I really appreciated that. That was just so much fun. I'll never, you know, that was just really the best time. And so, as we got older, the neighborhood changed, and it became a little bit more...not as stable. There was a lot of—a lot of old people would sell their houses and become rentals. So, some of those people were great, but some were not as stable. So, for example, next door to our house are the people. So, the old, it was an old couple, wonderful, wonderful old man. Just the wife was not so much. She would yell at us a lot. But the old man was really nice to us, but then they sold, and it became a rental. And so there was a lot of people in and out. And some of the people were involved in criminal activity. Like the first people moved in were selling drugs out of their house. And so that felt uncomfortable with a lot of cars coming through. Another time there was a woman who was involved in prostitution. So again, there was a lot of cars coming through, and it just was not really comfortable. I would say. Also, as I got older, one of the things that was really challenging for me, and I think a lot of young women in the neighborhood, was that the neighborhood, particularly there was a street, I believe it was Charles, a little further away from us that became known for prostitution. And so, a lot of young women, well, you know, most young women were being propositioned for prostitution. So, you'd just be walking along, and somebody would pull over and try to pick you up or say something completely inappropriate to you. And so that was really, really hard for me to handle, you know, because I ended up having shame. Shame, like somehow it was my fault that this was happening, and it wasn't. And the people who were doing this weren't from our neighborhood. I mean, the people who were soliciting what you call johns, they aren't from our area. They were from somewhere else. That was not our people, you know. So that was really hard. So, things like that made it a lot harder to feel comfortable in in the neighborhood. Yeah.

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?

JB: So again, I think when I was, I'll talk about when I was younger, was, of course, religion, Catholicism. Almost all my friends were Catholic. So, the Catholicism really affected how we were. Everybody was operating those values. Like, of course, everybody goes to church on Sunday, you know, that kind of thing. And so that that was definitely there. I think hard work also was, you know, any time as you got older, everybody went and got a job. That was just the thing. And what

other values? That children needed to follow a certain standard according to the adults. I think there was a like an unspoken—maybe not unspoken—you know, definitely respect of adults. Somehow, I remember one time we must have said something to our friend's mom that was not okay. She called my mom. My sister and I had to go over there and apologize. I remember walking over there in total shame because my mom chewed me out, you know, she chewed us out for whatever it was we did. And we were walking over there crying and we had to apologize. And then that mom chewed us out. So, yeah, it was definitely about respecting adults and older people. Yeah. So, I would say that was definitely part of that. And, um...hmm, yeah. I can't think of anything else in particular that's coming off the top of my head, but. Yeah, I think that's what I'll state.

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.

JB: Oh, well, I kind of already talked about playing outside all the time, you know. So, there was playing outside all the time. And then with our family, we would you know, we would—okay. As I mentioned, we would go camping. A lot of our friends had cabins—family cabins that they would go to in the summer. We didn't have that. But yeah, camping. Leisure time activities. We would go on picnics, go to the area lakes to go swimming, and have a cookout. Also, my parents were...again because we didn't have a lot of money, it was always about doing free things, and my dad was really into history etc. So, we would always go to—we would go to museums a lot. There was also what was known as, the Sunday drive. Which we really ended up quitting because my mom went crazy because the kids were in the back of the car fighting all the time. But, you know, you're supposed to drive into the country and just have a look around, which my dad loved because he was from the country. But, after a while, that got the kibosh because we were not that into it. But maybe occasionally we would go to a movie again that would cost money. So that wasn't too much. We would maybe go to a Drive-In, you know, and all the kids in the neighborhood love driving. So, when your family took you to the drive-in, it was a big deal. Oh, and I remember also, so in the summer of sixth grade, we went swimming every day. My friends and I would walk. I mean, people walked everywhere back then or took the bus or bike, you know, because maybe your family didn't have a second car, or if you're like my mom, she didn't drive. So, we walked about a mile every day to what was called the Vo-Tech. It's now St Paul College, and they had a pool there. So, we would swim every day, and then we would walk back home. Yeah, every day in the summer, every single day, you know. And then as kids, we all, we also loved listening to records. So, we were—that was the summer of the Beach Boys Endless Summer album. Yeah. So, we would sit on our friend's steps, and somebody would bring out, somehow, hook up the record player, and we would listen to that album and sing along to the songs every single day. Yeah. So, there you go. Free time. Oh, biking too. I love my bike. Bike equals freedom because you could get way more, you know, you could go a lot more places. And again, back then, people had big families. So, you weren't...it was different. You know, now people are taking their kids to soccer practice and, you know, baseball practice and whatever, all these classes. But with all those big—all those kids, you didn't really, couldn't really afford to take all the classes. So, you didn't really do that. And if you played a sport, it was just down at the local Sheffer playground, which was about four blocks away. So, you just, you know, the kids just walk there for practice. Or you just, like, I take the bike to the library, or we take the bikes to Como Park and go to the pool there, or, you know, you take the bike everywhere. Yeah.

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

JB: Oh, we already talked about that. So, kindergarten and preschool, I went to Sheffer Playground with [Matt?] Thompson. I don't know if anybody else in Frogtown mentioned her, but she was a big, big influence on everybody. So [Matt?] Thompson was the person who ran the Schaeffer

playground, and she had a preschool, so went to preschool there. A lot of the local kids did. Then I went to kindergarten at Jackson, which was a public school, and then I went to this Project Discovery until I finished it in the sixth grade. And then my parents switched us over to St Agnes, and I went to high school—seventh, eighth grade and high school in St Agnes. And that was very challenging for me. That was a different brand of Catholicism like I mentioned. It's also very different from my hippie-dippy school. This was very conservative and in the nuns were way—one of the nuns would hit people on the head with a yardstick. And yeah, you had a—it was very strict. And yeah, that was a really hard transition from this school where there was a lot of freedom and a lot of creativity to, you know, memorization and, you know, sitting in your seat quiet. And yeah, that was a, that was a little that was harder. Yeah, for me it was a hard transition. But I will say I learned how to study there. You know, and I think that that helped me get into college and do well in college because I just really learned how to. There is a high expectation to, you know, do a lot of homework and be at school every day and get it done. And I think that helped me in college.

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

JB: Lunch hour. Okay. Well, in grade school, we you know, there was—we had a cafeteria. And we had a school lunch program. So, if you wanted to, you could get lunch. And people—there was also free and reduced lunch for some kids. But my family did not qualify for that. So, we could have lunch at school, but only on special...once in a while, my mom would give us the money to do that. Otherwise, we packed our lunches every day. You know my well, my mom did. My mom would make us lunch every day in a, you know, paper bag, just a sandwich and an apple and a couple cookies. And then when I went to St Agnes, they did not have a lunch program. So again, it was just packed. Packed. Mom packed our lunches every day. And I don't really, I know in grade school I was able to, you know, you'd have lunch and then you'd go outside and play on the playground. Once I got to St Agnes in the seventh grade, they didn't have, oh, wait, in seventh and eighth grade, we didn't even have a lunchroom. From what I recall, you just ate lunch at your desk and then you had free time in the classroom. And then in high school there was a cafeteria. Yeah, but again, there was no lunch program. There was some vending machines if you wanted to get a soda or a candy bar or something.

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 biggest local or global issues affecting the people in your neighborhood when you were growing up?

JB: Affecting people in my neighborhood growing up, well, when we were young, it certainly was the Vietnam War was around. I don't—I know, I'm assuming every but like we had a cousin who went off and we were, you know, were the family worried about him. And I'm sure that's true of their families, too. But nobody had any. We were mostly again, it was young families, so there wasn't any, not that I know of, any older boys that we were concerned about. But I suppose as they got to be teenagers, I suppose some of the teenagers I'm sure parents worried about. But yeah, so I think that was but you know, it was kind of a cloud over everybody's head. I think that and then money wise, again, I think everybody was, you know, everybody in the neighborhood, it was a working class, what they call blue collar neighborhoods. So, I think everybody was concerned about money and having, you know, enough and making sure you had enough so that. And then in terms of other issues... I. I can't. I don't know. My parents were definitely—my mom was definitely interested in making sure we got a good education. That was her uh, she was keeping us out of trouble. I'm sure other families were like that, too. That it was really important to keep us out of trouble because...I think it was...maybe easy, because I especially—I don't know how to say that, but, you know, their concern was that you would, as a young woman, you would get pregnant or that you would get involved in alcohol or drugs, that kind of thing. And so my mom always kept us

busy. We always had to have an activity, always have an activity. And then as you got older, you had to go to work. Right. And that was also a family value. You had to go to work. I mean, I started babysitting when I was 12 and I had my first real job when I was 14. My sister and I did catering. And then, you know, I think when I was 15, I got a real job at a bakery and then at a fast-food restaurant. And I think that was most kids in the neighborhood. You had to go to work when you were 15 or 16. My mom would always say, "Oh, you want something for yourself? Well, you're going to go to work then. You gotta go to work then," you know? And also, we, all of us kids, worked after school. We cleaned the classrooms after school. Once I was in high school to help pay for our tuition. So, part of this was we were not members of the St Agnes Parish, so we had to pay more money for school. My parents didn't want to switch churches. They were really into their church, so we had to pay more money for the school. And so, in order to do that, then us kids would clean classrooms and then we would get a reduction on our tuition. So that's one of the things that that we did to, you know, help pay, help, pay for school. So, yeah, I think I don't know where we were going with that, but other issues. I think like, it's our neighborhood. Was... I...yeah, I don't know. I mean, as a white person, we didn't really have to deal with discrimination. So that was not, you know, out there. As a woman, a young woman, I suppose I did, but I didn't. You know, I don't know that I thought about it that much. I think we had our roles and you know what I mean? As a woman, you had your role. But I didn't. Well, maybe because I remember we got to be in St Agnes. I got to be on the first women's track team or young girls track team in high school. Right. Because we didn't have that. So that felt like. And then there was a rumor that they were going to make it so hard for us that everybody would want to quit. And then they wouldn't have track anymore. Right. So, of course, that didn't happen. But so that felt good. Like, okay, we got what we wanted. And then like my sister many years after me, Jennifer, she—so she's seven years younger, younger than me. She went to St Agnes, too. So, when she was in high school, they only had a boys soccer team. They didn't have a girls soccer team. So, she joined the boys soccer team, which I'm surprised they allowed. But they did, which I, I always just admire her, her gutsiness to, you know, go for that And she's also experienced discrimination in that in that she or other teams would then, she said the boys on other teams would gang up on her because she was a girl. And it was like but you know, but she said that the boys on her team would defend her, which is great, you know? But it's like, oh, wow, she had it, you know? Well, good for her for going out and doing that, you know, So, yeah, I think that, you know, if there was discrimination for myself and my family and some of my white neighbors, that would be it. It would be more about, you know, gender and gender roles.

CS: Okay. I kind of wanted to circle back to something. You mentioned you were discussing the neighborhood. How did your parents navigate some of the illicit activities that were happening in the neighborhood, like prostitution and drug trafficking? How did they navigate that with you and your siblings?

JB: Very interesting, to me, right. Is it really? And I wouldn't say with my siblings and me. But. But. Yeah. Yes. And there's two parts to that. I found it very interesting that you didn't do anything about that. Like, they didn't call the police ever, or confront the people or anything. You just stayed in your lane. You know what I mean? You stayed in your home. You didn't say anything. So, for example, another thing that happened was one of the neighbors was abusing their child. And, well, what we thought. I don't remember if I was home at that time, but they were, you could hear the child screaming, the mom yelling and that. And my brother finally went over there and said something to her. My parents would never do that. That just wasn't—was not done. You know, and I don't know that anybody else in the neighborhood would do anything like that either. It's related to that illicit behavior that was going on. It was just, you know, the culture was you just mind your own business, you know? So, they talked about it. So, then they talked about it with us in in casual conversation about what was going on over there. But in a negative way like that was not a good thing. And why was that? But yeah, just that, that, that was a negative thing. But also like I think about my parents also there wasn't a lot of talk about...maybe hard things because I also feel like

they didn't talk to me about like—I did not tell them that much about, I think I mentioned it a little bit about how I was being solicited for prostitution as I was a teenager, and they didn't really give me any skills to deal with that. I don't think they would know how to deal with that, but they just kind of were like, “Well, that's just what's going on.” And, you know. So, they didn't really give me a lot of skills to deal with that or even really say, like, maybe I'm going to get a job. Because what it was, was I, I worked at Wendy's where it was on University and Dale. So, I walked back and forth to work or maybe took a bike. So, I would get solicited. Or if you waited on the bus for the bus on University Avenue, you'd get solicited. And then they didn't really say anything like, maybe you need to get a job in a safer area or, you know, it was just kind of this is how it is. This is how it is. And there you go. You know, and I didn't even think about getting a job in a different area because that's just well, that's just how it is. You know, there wasn't really a lot of proactive problem solving maybe around it was just like, this is how it is and you just power through. Just stiff upper lip, right?

CS: Yeah. How safe are unsafe did you feel in light of these issues?

JB: Very okay. As I get older, very unsafe, you know, and I moved out of there. When I moved out, I was like, I am never going back to Frogtown. Never. I will never live there again, you know, because some people are like, “Well, you should go back there.” Like, no, no, no, no, no. You know? And again, like, my dad lived there until he died last year. You know, there are some wonderful people in that neighborhood and there are some very stable families in that neighborhood, but there's still some folks who are not, you know. So, no, I would not ever move back there again. I am very happy too. You know, and safety is very I think because of what happened, safety is very important to me. I mean, to feel very safe and it has to be safe. I cannot be in those situations again where I feel unsafe. That's like, really important to me.

CS: Do you remember any other global issues that you want to mention before we wrap the interview up?

JB: Global issues. I mean, there were certainly we had, there were certain events that would occur, you know, globally that we would think about and talk about. My parents, my siblings and I were really, especially my brother and I, were really interested in history and global events and current events and stuff. But, you know, I mean, those were markers in in our lives, like the Cold War was, you know, always a thing or Watergate. And, you know, things like that that came around, you know. But, uh, but yeah, no.

CS: Did events like that, like you mentioned Watergate or the Cold War, did events like that make you worry or have anxiety?

JB: Um, the Cold War did. I mean, we were talked to, you know, this idea of nuclear war. But almost when I was older, I think I would say more of an adult or older is when I thought about that maybe more than when I was in childhood, because, again, I was dealing with so like...in my teens. I was really when maybe you would think about that more maybe? I don't know. I certainly didn't think about it in childhood. It's not like, you know, that much. I would say what would be would. But in my teen years, I was really, you know, the stressors of feeling unsafe in my neighborhood were a part. You know that that's what you're thinking about really, your immediate safety. But also, you know, whatever is going on in high school, that kind of thing with maybe more up front for me.

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