

**Interviewee: Faye C. Bates**

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**Location: Tacoma, Washington**

**Interviewer: Cecelia La Pointe-Gorman**

*I found out that my kids quit learning when they started going to school.*

As far as my decision to work with [various] organizations to make things better for Indian children, really came [as a result] from my kids [from problems] [had while enrolled in public schools. At the time were not as integrated as they are now. I think what happened is, I found out that my kids quit learning when they started school. They would initially be real fast learners, real fast in learning how to talk. And real early they knew what they were interested in, and then when they went to school, it was almost like they quit thinking, and quit dreaming about what they wanted.

So, I always said that Indian kids are really smart, and that they were really brilliant, because it only took the teachers about two weeks to teach these Indian children that they were slow learners. Children really [started to] believe that that they couldn't do any better. So at home, I really tried to make them believe that they were better and they were smarter. But the school systems weren't [teaching] that, and I think there's still a lot that happening. I find with my grandchildren, they are having a hard time in school. [Faye takes a telephone call from the granddaughter- interruption].

**3:19 have higher expectations for the kids**

Anyway, so it was really hard for me to figure out what I could do, to get the teachers to understand that they had to have a higher expectation for my kids, and Indian kids in general. Because it's true that people tend to live up to other people's expectation, so if the teacher's expectations are very low for them, then that is where the children would be. So, I wanted them to have higher expectations for the kids. And really

challenge them in school. Some of them did, and some of them didn't, but over all I felt that we had to educate our own people, because I think our own people felt the same way, that they weren't good enough, that they weren't smart enough to do anything. So, I got involved with the Tacoma public schools, That was in the beginning of the "Indian Education Program", that is still in existence now. I can't remember what it was called, but I was chairperson for that committee for several years. Basically, what we did was talk about... how do we get public school teachers to really understand that Indian children are smart, are brilliant, and that [teachers] should have more, and higher expectations for them. So, that was probably one of the first things I got involved with. And I was always involved with PTAs, and Girl Scouts, and Brownies and things like that.

As far as kids learning, an example I'll give is Ben, my oldest boy. When he went through Roosevelt (elementary school) he did real well, and he went through Gault (middle school), seventh, eighth and, ninth grades and he did really well, in math, and algebra. And I think he really had high grades. He started wrestling then, and also played baseball, and a few other things, so he had to keep his grades up. Then he went on to Lincoln High School I didn't hear much [from him] about Lincoln until one day he told me that all the kids in his class were either Indian or Mexican.

**6:00 *I have never ever been accused of being is quiet!***

I went up to the school and I found out that they had put him in remedial classes. This after he had [done] so well at Gault. And it was true; he was in [a remedial] class with Indian kids, Mexican kids, and Black kids. There wasn't that higher expectation for them [in that class]. I went to see the vice-principle. I can't remember what his name was. I brought Ben with me. [Ben] was at the time about fifteen or sixteen years old, and had

already been riding motorcycle (dirt bike-motor cross) for a couple of years. He [then] had long hair, and a yellow Yamaha jacket on, and he [coming into] the room [he] slouched down into a chair. And then I went in, and the vice-principle shook my hand and had me sit down. Then started out by saying. "Now, Ms. La Pointe, I understand, and I read a lot about Indians, and have a lot of experience with Indian people, and I do understand that sometimes it is hard to express what you are feeling, but I want you to relax, so we could have a good conversation to see what we could do for Ben." to something to that affect. <sup>i</sup>

At first I was really pleasant, and as he started talking, I [began] getting madder and madder. I finally told him, you know my dad is one of the best public speakers in the state of Washington, maybe in the whole country, and he is bi-lingual. I said, the rest of my family is pretty much the same way, and are prone to stand up and give speeches at a drop of a hat. One thing I have never ever been accused of being is quiet!

**8:05 ....if they hadn't believed he could pass the test, [or] could do the work, he may not have done it.**

[Laughs] And so I was really angry with him. I told him that Ben had done really well at Gault, and then when he got to Lincoln, and he was put in remedial classes. And I thought that was pretty racist of the school system to allow that to happen, not just to him, but also to all those other kids that were in the same classes with him. And he (the vice-principle) wanted me to stay, but I wouldn't do it, I just grabbed Ben and we left.

We went from Lincoln to Bellarmine (Catholic High School). I told, ...it might have been Pat Carroll, Father Pat Carroll, what had happen over at Lincoln. At first he was very hesitant, but he said, "We can give him a test, and see if he passes, if he does, we can admit him. They gave him a test and he passed it, of course, because he was

smart, and he was always smart, even when he was in remedial classes. So he went into Bellarmine. I think it was his junior year and senior years. He didn't have enough credits to graduate from Bellarmine. He lacked two credits, but he went back to the Tacoma Public Schools, went to night school, and got a public school diploma. [This was] the same time he was going to Bates Vocational School, and he already had a job working with motorcycles. So, I felt that if I [hadn't had] the high expectations of him, [enrolled] and put him in Bellarmine, and if they hadn't believed he could pass the test, [or] could do the work, he may not have done it.

**9:55 ...that in order to stifle the Indian, they had to kill the man-spirit.**

[Having] learned that hard lesson with Ben, I really leaned on all the other kids to do well in school, and I was always up at the schools for one reason or the other. Especially in the public school and for anything. It was harder for the boys I think. Because they (white man's system) really believed through the years... that in order to stifle the Indian, they had to kill the men spiritually. If they're able to kill a man spiritually: the woman [would comply as well]. Or at least that's what they thought.

**10:34 And Washington D.C. wrote back and, "well, kill all the Indians then."**

I heard story a about how Indian men were defeated, there was an exerted effort to defeat Indian men completely, to kill their spirit. One of the stories I heard was, after the U.S. generals had finished all the wars out here [in the greater northwest]. The generals wrote to Washington D.C. and said, "you know we've won, we defeated the Indians and the powers that be." And Washington D.C. wrote back and, "well, kill all the Indians then." The [military men by that time had been here long enough that they had intermarried, they were living out here, and this was their home. 'Out here', I am talking about the West, like Montana, [Idaho, Oregon, Washington Territories]

**11:43 ...we can't do that, these are human beings.**

So they (generals) wrote back and said, "we can't do that, these are human beings." So, then the next order came back saying, "kill them, kill [or] their spirit, and get them under control." So, they did that, there are stories about, around Yakima where the soldiers would come and ride in, and tie the Indian men to great big, huge trees. They wouldn't tie their hands; then men would tie them around their waist. And they would burn down their houses and rape their mothers and wives, and children in front of them. [Some were unable to bear the scene, and tore out their eyes out.] I just couldn't imagine how devastating it was for the men, because they didn't kill them, they left them, they let them watch, let them see what they were doing. When [military] came back the next time the Indian men did whatever told to do. So the soldiers wouldn't hurt their women and children, and burn up their houses.

**13:15 ...a need to control the men of color.**

So, they had the men under control then, and I do think there was, and there is probably still today, not just with Indian men, but men of color, a need to control the men of color. I could see that in the school systems too. The girls had it a little easier time getting through school. But all my boys had trouble, all of them; I was told right away that they had bad attitudes. That's all they could say, is that they had bad attitudes. And, so I would go up to the school, every time I was called. And John is a perfect example, because, I get called from Gault, and I'd go up there, and somebody had set the fire alarm off, and they said that John was there, well, John was there, but he didn't set off the fire alarm off and so, anyway, I really stuck up for him, and I said, look you're not going to punish him if he didn't do it, and I am not going to make him tell who did it either, that is

your job. Another time, he had supposedly had thrown a basketball through a window, and I can't remember if he did or not. But, they were going to suspend him from school for that, and I said, no your not, you can bill us for the window, or do whatever you want, but you are not going to suspend him from school, he can't afford that. So they got where they [the teachers and policy staff] didn't want to see me coming. [Laughs]

**15:00 *getting physical with the boys was not unusual at all at the time.***

[Joe's experience] was even worse. He was chewing tobacco [at this time]. And one of the teachers had made the mistake of grabbing him and throwing him up against the wall. Joe spit the tobacco in the guy's face. Getting physical with the boys was not unusual at all at the time. Grabbing them and pushing them, I don't think that happened to the girls as much, it happened with the boys. So, it made me afraid for the boys. I wasn't so much afraid for Ben, because, he obviously was going into a working profession. He was going to be a mechanic, and he was just always going be a mechanic, that's all there was to it.

But, John is the one that bothered me. He always asked questions, like why, "why can't I do that, how come somebody else can do that and I can't do that? Mom why can't Indian people do this and that?" And even with the church, "Mom why can't we eat meat on Friday, how come it's wrong?" So he questioned everything. I expected him to grow up and be a politician and get in trouble, and ask the wrong questions, at the wrong places.

[Interruption]

So I was afraid he would become an Indian Activist and really get in trouble. All the men I had known that did anything, except for my Dad, ended up in prison, or dead, one of the two. Because, the [Indian opposition] would kill [or hurt] them, or put them in

prison, and so I was always afraid for John, because he asked so many questions. He did get into his share of trouble. He still does ask the same questions, but he has figured out a different way to ask them. And he has a little more power behind him, because, he got the education, and the right friends so that he could be heard a little better.

The other part of the story too, is that if they kill the spirit, the Indian man's spirit, the woman can be controlled. That's a falsity, because I have never heard of any Indian woman that can be controlled. [Laughs] And we're always getting in trouble for being out of control, which we aren't, we just do our thing.

**18:18 *"The Indian will not be proud again, until he conquers the white man's culture."***

But, it was kind of good, because we were able to get funding. Indian women were able to get funding for education. We were able to get the designation Indian positions, jobs, you know, in government, and wherever. And before they would hire the [Indian] men, they would hire the [Indian] women. So, at least we were able to get ourselves in positions where we could be heard, and we could have a little more authority than we had before. And I learned early on, that was the way to go. In fact my grandmother always said, "The Indian will not be proud again, until he conquers the white man's culture," and she always figured that the education was the culture. Once you conquered the education, you would be able to hold your head up in pride, because she figured that's all they had. They didn't have, you know, like wisdom, or spirituality or anything. All the white man had at the time, she thought was education. So, she figured that, we could do that.

**19:30 *But now when I say it, people believe me.***

So, my brother went on to become an electrical engineer. He graduated from the University of Washington and I graduated first from Evergreen State College, and then went on to get a Masters Degree from the University of Washington. It is really true, that people will listen to you if you have those degrees. I don't say many things different than what I said before I had a Masters degree, but now when I say it, people believe me. [Laughs] and it just tickles me when I think about it.

**20:13 *promoting the passing of the 'Indian Child Welfare Act'.***

I always thought I'd go on and get a PhD. But then, the only reason you get a PhD. is so you can go out and lecture, I think. And I got enough people to lecture to. But, I intentionally got an education, and I intentionally got into positions where I would be able to make changes, positive changes for Indian children. I worked for several tribes. I worked for Puyallup tribe, and I worked for the Muckleshoot tribe. I worked for the Pierce County Community Action Agency. I really got involved with the Indian Child Welfare because at the time the tribes around the country were promoting the "Indian Child Welfare Act." They [the tribes] wanted it to become a law. What that Indian Children Welfare Act... gives the tribes something to say about what happens to the Indian children, because at that time over 30% of the Indian children around the country were living in white homes, and under a white agency. Because they didn't believe that the Indians could take care of their own kids. "The Indian Child Welfare Act" gave the tribes something to say about where their kids went and what they did. I was with the Puyallup Tribe in lobbying that program and I went Washington D.C. several times to give testimonies in front of the Congressional Committees, to promote the passing of the "Indian Child Welfare Act" so, when it finally came into being, then we [really] had something. My elders used to tell me when I was probably in my early thirties at the time,



I could always work with the white agencies and I could work with the State. I had gone to white schools and I could communicate with white people pretty well. I couldn't understand why couldn't we just work with the state? And my elders used to tell me, "you can not, they will not do what you want them to do, they have to have the law, it has to be a law they have to follow." I didn't understand it at the time, but I believed them, and I went ahead and promoted the law. And it did come true, even [some of] the nicest social workers that I have ever met, would not, couldn't see the logic in placing Indian children in Indian homes. [Laughs]

They just couldn't wrap their heads around that whole idea, so they had to have the law. You had to shove the law down their throats. We ended up having to train the Attorney Generals, because they didn't like the law either. And a lot of times do [more] protests and sit-ins and whatever, because it was the only law that was passed without money behind it. There was no money, they just made the law, and the tribes were supposed to come up with enough money to promote the whole thing.

**23:58** *I knew that we had to work with the young kids.*

So then we had to go lobby for money to put behind it, and we did get some for Indian Child Welfare, [but not as much as hoped for] I think I worked for half my career, at least, for hardly anything. I didn't make any thing, maybe a little over minimum wage, because the money just wasn't there. But, that's where my heart was, that's where my passion was, working with Indian Child Welfare, and Indian families in general.

I finally got some ideas on how I thought things ought to be in what we were doing. I knew that we had to work with the young kids. I knew we had to start with pre-kindergarten and kindergarten, and first, second, and third grades. Because what we were trying to do (at this time) was work with the ones that were broken, the teenagers, the

ones that were drinking, and the ones that had flunked out, or thrown out of school. And that was really hard. It is like trying to put pieces back together, because their families were usually pretty screwed up too. So, for most of my life I worked with the younger kids, to get them to thinking more positive about themselves. And it was later in life that I started again to work with the teenagers. And I really enjoyed working with the teenagers, I don't why, but it was probably God's spirit working in me, because no one in their right mind would work with the teenagers.

***26:04 we were still losing our teenagers...***

But, I could see that we were still losing our teenagers, because there was no place. There was nothing for them after they had hit bottom, and that there was no safety net to catch them. So, I started working in group-homes with teenagers, and I had the opportunity to start a group home. I actually worked with Puyallup, to help get the license for a group home for the Puyallup tribe, and a few things. I then I went on to Seattle to work in Seattle, and then when I was going to school for my Master degree, I now lived in Seattle.

And Bernie White Bear with the "United Indians" came to me, and asked "Faye when you get out of school would you be willing to run a group home for us for teenagers, when you get your Masters degree?" I figured there was no way on God's green earth they going get the money to run a group home for teenagers. So, I said, sure. So anyway, I graduated, and I went out, and I was doing independent work, and was contracting workshops, and seminars and what not. I was doing pretty good, when the United Indians called me up and said, "Guess what, we got the money." So, I had to think again, did I want to do it, and really there wasn't anything else about it, because I always wanted to do that, I always wanted to do it my way. I just really believed I really knew

how to do it. And I went to work for the United Indians for about half of what I was making from contracting and doing seminars, but it was again, for something I really wanted to do.

**28:13 *because this was their last chance...***

So what I found is, is that I got a bunch of people together that believed, really believed that the kids could make it, that they [the co-workers] were really full of love, and could really help these kids. I hired these people [Laughs]. We'd get the worst of the worse. The ones [kids] that had failed the other group homes, and had dropped out of foster homes. These [kids] were anywhere between fourteen and seventeen years old. They were absolutely ill, coming off of drugs, or still on drugs.

I thought it real fascinating to work with them because this was their last chance and they knew it was their last chance. Because they hit bottom real early, and some of them would go to treatment. [Afterwards] they would then come back and try to put their lives together. And we did pretty well actually. When we had trouble with one kid. We would...

[Interruption]

We'd find a kid that was real trouble, [that no one] could do anything with, and we would have our meeting in the morning, and we would just all decide to feed him positive information all day, all of us, the whole staff. So, when we would see him, we say, you really look good, or, you really did a good job on that, or gosh, you look good today. Nobody was ever to say anything bad to him all that day, and by the end of the day, he was a different kid, [laughs] a totally different kid.

The staff was just excited about learning that [the compliments] too, in that [positive affirmations] would work. And it is true, if you just treat people like human

beings, and have respect for them, and do that all day long with a person, anybody, the little ones, the older ones, whatever, its going to work. So that is what we did. I would just get to a place where I knew that everything was working right; had the right people in the right places, [and found a working solution].

**31:00 ...both of them got scholarships.**

That year, there was [at the] Indian Heritage High School [Seattle, Washington] were two of our kids from the group home. One of them was Valedictorian and the other was the second one, the sal...[inaudible] the one after it. First place and second place. Both of them [the kids] got scholarships, and went off to college, and these were [the] kids that were absolutely...

...They weren't supposed to make it. So, there have just been a lot of miracles like that. It's just something I really just believed [in]. Its something that is not just from me, it is something that came from way back from my grandmother, my dad, my mom; it's just something that is really true. I really wish that we would get something together and spread the news and have somebody do [positive affirmations].

I still see that there is prejudice in schools. Even Ariel (granddaughter, of deceased daughter of Marianne.) She gets in to trouble once in awhile, and I think that its not so much her work, whatever, it's the fact that she's brown and she's tall and she's pretty [laughs]. So I think that it is still there (prejudices), but I think she is a lot stronger in spirit than my kids were because she's like what? Fifth generation, and she knows that the teacher is just crazy, and she knows that she's got to put up with it only for the year. Whereas for my kids, I had to teach them that, I had to convince them, 'that's its not you, it's them.

[Ariel granddaughter joins conversation about the topic].

**33:06 ...*And [now] she actually brags about Ariel***

Actually I went to go talk to Ariel's teacher, who had the same kind of problem at Visitation (catholic School, Tacoma Washington), but I did a different thing with [the teacher). I went and made pals with her. She had heard about me when I was working down at Saint Leo's, and helped start the food bank, and the soup kitchen, and the drop in center for handicapped, and stuff like that. So, she really wanted to be apart of that. So, I would just see her all the time and treat her really well.

And [now] she actually brags about Ariel. She (Ariel) is up and gone from that school now for a couple of years, but, (her prior teacher) still brags about her. She says Ariel's very intelligent. [Directs question to Ariel] Remember when I asked you about Bellarmine (Catholic High School)? She (Ariel prior teacher) said, "She (Ariel) could do it, and she won't be behind, and she's too smart, and she could make it there."

[Conversation continues]

**35:00 [Faye speaks about the food bank] ...*these people with no skills on how to live.***

The food bank...that was another little part of my life; I went to work for Martin Luther King Center. I can't remember why I went to work there. I was going to Saint Leo's (Catholic Church, located in Tacoma Washington) at the time, and they wanted somebody to run "New House", a drop in center for the handicap, because it was at this time... the state was emptying out their state facilities, Western State and the...[psyche wards].

These places had people that really didn't belong there, what [institutions] did was just dumped these [people] out in the hill top area, it was a cheap place, so they

would put them all up there. So... we would end up with.... these people with no skills on how to live. They (handicapped and people dumped from these programs) didn't know how to cook; they didn't know how to shop, because as adults they had spent their whole lives in the institutions. So, we opened this resource drop in center for the handicapped, and people would come...everyday.<sup>ii</sup>

**37:00 *We would take them (handicapped) out to do some shopping, and teach them how to apply for a job, and things like that.***

[We] had a woman [volunteer] and everyday she made soup and bread, she loved that. So, she would have people come in and help her. And after awhile, we would take people out and [teach them how to]...shop. [We] got a really neat staff at that way, because they were volunteers from Saint Leo's. I asked for volunteers to come in to work for two or three hours a day.

I wrote to all the people that I knew had money and asked for them to donate money to New House. I did a newsletter, and sent the newsletter out once a month to tell people what we did with [the contributions] [for] the handicapped.

So, here were all these wonderful educated people, come to volunteer, and we'd teach them (handicapped people coming to New House) all kinds of wonderful things. We [would] take them (handicapped) out to do some shopping, and teach them how to apply for a job, and things like that. [It] was great, because these workers were volunteers, and volunteers do better work because they want to be there, so that worked out real good.

**38:14 *"If it weren't for Black Robes (Catholic Jesuit priests), we would have all been killed."***

Prior to [the New House project] I helped David Rothrock start up [the] Nativity House, ... a resource drop in center for street people, the homeless people that lived on the street, which at the time there were a lot of them...an awful lot of them.

By the time [in the beginning] of New House, there were mostly men, and they were mostly Veterans, a lot of Vietnam War Veterans that really just dropped out of society. So, by the time I was up at New House, which was a couple years later, we were noticing there were whole families that were homeless.

So, we started a food bank. Father David Rothrock was the one with Nativity House; he was a priest, a Jesuit priest. Jesuits were really an influence in my life, and probably in all Indian lives around here. [Being] the first ones (missionaries) that came out here (Northwest) they used to be called the Black Robes that came out and baptized all the Indians. That's funny, my Dad used to say, "If it weren't for the Black Robes (Catholic Jesuit priests), we would have all been killed." I didn't understand that, so he finally told me that, when the Black Robes baptized all the Indians, that made us human beings. [Laughs] So, they couldn't slaughter us, because we were baptized, we were human beings, and that made a lot of sense to me.

**40:00 *It is called Nativity House [because it opened on] Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.***

So, Jesuits have always been a part of our lives somehow, and we always had Jesuits come and hang out [to associate with] and around. I was a spiritual advisor for a couple of Jesuit priests, novices at Bellarmine, and one from Chicago that was spending the summer here.

But, Father David Rothrock was a real good man, a holy man, I thought. He was a co-pastor at Saint Leo's, but he wasn't the kind that was a pastor-type, he was more

grassroots like, like Father Bichsel [another Jesuit priest]. [David Rothrock's] heart was for the homeless, the street people, so he wanted to start a drop in center. He called me one day, and we went to look [for a building to rent]. He told me that he had so much money donated [for rent] to do this. So, he (David Rothrock) showed me this place he had found downtown. And he was wondering about, whether we should do it or not.

I said to David, do you want to do it? and he said, "Yeah, I really want to do it." I said, and then let's just do it then. So, we just did, we got a few people involved, formed a committee, like a board of directors.

We got it cleaned up, and we [gathered] furniture and paid six months rent on it. It was just a storefront place. He opened it on Christmas Eve, and that's when he had Mass, and our whole family went down there for Mass, and my Dad and my Mom. And David Rothrock said Mass (Catholic Service). It is called Nativity House [because it opened on] Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. We brought turkey, and all kinds of stuff for people who would drop in, and there were a lot of [people].

I was still really involved up at Saint Leo's with Father Bichsel, Bill Bichsel, also a Jesuit (priest), also grassroots, even more grassroots than David Rothrock. He was working with the same kind of people, maybe even more of a deranged kind of people, the ones that came out of the Institutions, the really hardcore alcoholics, and addicts and things [legal offenders].

**43:10 ...it wasn't just the handicapped that were coming in...**

[Bill Bichsel] worked with and helped people in jails, he used the jail ministry a lot. He was a brilliant man, and he still is, and in politics a lot. He was involved early on at New House (St. Leo's Catholic Church drop in center for handicapped and the homeless).



A friend of mine, Mary Jo and I decided it was time that we really should have a soup kitchen. Because there was so many people coming to New House for the soup and the bread that we were making there. And we realized that these people were [the kind of] people that really needed it, it wasn't just the handicapped that were coming in, and these were people that were hungry. We had already started the food bank so we decided that we would do the soup kitchen too. It was a huge undertaking, yes huge. The Martin Luther King center helped sponsor that also. Then Saint Leo's took it over. Martin Luther King Center was kind of an offshoot of Saint Leo's anyway. It was the 501-C, a corporation, and a spin off from Saint Leo's. So, we were able to get money that way. As far as I know, the soup kitchen is still running. I haven't been down there. Its like when I left the place, I really left [for good].

**44:50 ...*there were many people who didn't have enough to buy, or didn't have enough money to rent someplace to live, or buy meals to eat.***

When I leave a place, I knew if I'd hang around, and try to come back, you couldn't go back, so every time I left a place, I really left it. I just left because I knew it was time to leave. I think what happens is that you know you've given everything you've got. You pray to God that you can do God's will everyday. And there is a point where you know you have nothing more to give, and its not a bad feeling. It is time for somebody else to take over and do more and grow.

If I stayed there, it would be just the same way as it was, it needed to go beyond me, and it needed to grow. With other people, six other people or whatever, and it did. I did move on from there, I do remember that there were, like, thousands of people fed through the soup kitchen, and many were families. You'd go in there and see families,

sometimes mom and dad and kids, but mostly just one parent with the kids. But they were literally homeless, living in their cars.

It seemed so strange to me that this could be, that [our society] could be like that when there were places like Weyerhaeuser, Boeings and Microsoft, making billions. And there were many people who didn't have enough to buy, or didn't have enough money to rent someplace to live, or buy meals to eat.

We never had anybody starving, but we always had hungry people. And I think we still do. I think that that insight was real good for me, it made me appreciative for the things that I do have, and since, I've never felt like I didn't have enough. In fact, sometimes I feel like I have too much.

***47:30 I said, well, Cacora, just pay me the same amount you paid the last white person you hired to do this job.***

But I have always found a way to share what I have. I think it really was that spirit that motivates me in everything that I did. Because every time something would come up, I would have to give it some real peripheral [objective] thought.

When I went to work for the state that was a real biggie, because I used to fight with the state of Washington. I went to work for the state of Washington on toward the [late] end of my career; I went to work in Olympia in a designated Indian position, but it wasn't in child welfare. I went to work there, it was statewide. It was pretty much monitoring all of the monies that were going out to the tribes for Indian child welfare, and visiting the tribes and provide whatever information and resource I could.

Then, the Seattle office called and wanted to know if I would be an 'Area Administrator' for three to six months. And that was a no-brainer, because I was living in Seattle commuting to Olympia. So taking the job in Seattle was easy. And it was with the

kids. Had I known it was such a mess, I probably wouldn't have gone, but I jumped at the chance, I remember when they asked me, when she, [Cacora] the Regional Administrator asked me. "We didn't talk about pay, what could we pay you?" I said, well [Cacora] just pay me the same amount you paid the last white person you hired to do this job. So, she said, "oh okay, I can do that." She was a black woman, so she just jumped right on that, it turned out that I was making some pretty good money, they started me out at something like fifty-five thousand, or something like that, fifty-seven thousand a year something?

**49:45 ...it was still interesting, and big enough keep me going...**

So it was a real mess, but that is really what I did. I work in organizational development. I started organizations, or cleaned up organizations that weren't working well, and that is what I did in Seattle. But in Seattle I found half the units were after-hour units. This is where... kids.... came in after hours and would need to be placed after hours. Interim care was a unit that had homes was used for a night, a weekend, until a placement was found for them.

And then there were group homes, and I had that unit too; we had seven or eight group homes in Seattle. Then I had the two Native American units, and there was another one...can't remember what it was. So, anyway I had like seven units, but they were all region-wide, they were all over King County.

All the other Area Administrators had like one area, like Bellevue, like North Seattle, like that. What I had was all of King County. So that was kind of fun, but it took three years to get that straightened out and there was like two years that I felt like everything was working well. After about five years, I felt it was really about time to leave, but then I thought no, it was still interesting, and big enough keep me going, and feeling like I was still doing something positive. So I stayed there...until I retired.

***51:44 Mother Cabrini...was one of the first ones in the United States to start up orphanages.***

But it was all about the kids, and that is interesting because my middle name is Cabrini. Mother Cabrini (Catholic Saint) was one of the first ones in the United States to start up orphanages. [Laughs] She wasn't canonized yet when I was born. My mom wanted to be named Faye Cabrini Sampson. But, Faye and Cabrini at the time weren't Christian names. So, at first she named me Francis Mary Cabrini Sampson, because Faye is short for Francis. So, on my Baptismal it says Francis Mary Cabrini Sampson.

[Laughs]

But, when [Cabrini] was canonized (declared a saint by the Catholic Church) I then could be Faye Cabrini Sampson. [Laughs] Mary was just thrown in there, because it was a baptismal name. But, [mom] wanted me to be Cabrini. If you read about mother Cabrini, that's what she did, just took care of kids. [Laughs] so who says that names don't influence our personality? Because, (kids) has always been my passion, and you know, justice, too. I still really dream about 'a just society'. Where people are treated with dignity, where the wealth is spread out, see, there shouldn't be any starving people in this world, and there really is enough.

God really provides enough for everybody, he always has, and he always will. It's just that we don't share it, if it were spread out, everybody could live comfortably, no matter how many people there are. Say there are too many people in India or Africa? There are not too many people. The wealth is just not being shared. And I totally believe that. You know, people say, "you know, we're going to run out of space on this earth, and here your having all these kids." We're not going to run out of space I would say, we only run out of space in our head, is what we're doing.

We really have to look at why we were put here, we are supposed to live in peace and harmony, so I still really have that dream of peace and justice in this world, and when I see it sometimes happening in this world, it just really thrills me. But what I hear about mostly, are the problems, and so sometimes I really have to draw back and look at the successes.

**55:03 ...am doing ministry, that's why I don't have the time...**

Because it is really hard to keep doing the things you know aren't real popular, and they really don't make you a lot of money. I can look back at age sixty-eight and really [know] had a good life, and did the things I wanted to do. I am not done yet, if it sounds like I'm done, I am not done yet. Right now I have the same passion, the same feeling about being here, and taking care of Julianne (granddaughter, daughter of deceased son Julian) and taking care of Bob (husband) now because he is handicapped. He is really hurting, he broke his finger, and that's really hard on him. He can't move around as much [without pain], but being diabetic he has to move around.

And I want to see the girls Ariel and Neva (granddaughters, and daughters of deceased daughter Marianne) grow into independence. Somehow, so they don't have to depend on anybody, and can maybe help some people out. So I got that same passion for that, like for all the jobs that I had. So, I just kind of shifted to this is where I'm supposed to be.

I had an interesting thing happen. Visitation (Catholic School/Church) has this thing, they call tithing, where you commit to donate so much money, but they want you to donate talent and skills too. They sent these notes home so you can write down what you're going to pledge what you're going to do for the Visitation School, or Community or whatever. And I was just devastated because I could not think of where I could find the

time, because they wanted you to do ministry. And I thought, am doing ministry, that's why I don't have the time, so I wrote it down, I pledge to continue to care for my fifteen-month-old granddaughter, until her future is secure. I commit to taking care of myself, and my handicapped husband for as long as I can. And I commit to raising my two granddaughters until they are independent, and then depending on time and energy I will do whatever else I can. [Laughs].

***57:56 ...if you are vigilant and really watch for what's missing, and if your willing to take those chances.***

What was interesting, it said to give it some prayerful thought, so after I gave it prayerful thought, I thought, I [realized] I am doing ministry. We could have gone on a boat cruise, but we have Julianne, she has a pattern in her life now, and if you break it, it breaks up a routine. So, we're going to stay here. I do really feel like I take care of Bob (husband-a stroke victim) because he's not the person that I married, he is totally different and I really feel alone when I am making decisions in what I have to do. Because, he has all he can do to keep himself going. So, the partnership is not there like it used to be. If he can just keep himself going, I can kind of do the rest. We're okay. Everything about my life, just kind of fell into place, and I think it will, if you are vigilant and really watch for what's missing, and if your willing to take those chances.

I remember back when we didn't have a car, yet, your dad always had a new motorcycle (ex-husband/deceased) but we didn't have a car. I can remember pushing Julian (youngest son/now deceased) along in a stroller down by the park (Portland Ave park, Tacoma) and watching all the new cars go by, and thinking I wonder if those people would know how to get along without a car? And I then followed those thoughts through

and, then see how fortunate we were to have a house, to have something to eat, and we're always a little better off than somebody else.

**1:00:05 ...*Vietnam, Women's Lib, Indian Rights, Indian Fishing Rights, Human Rights were all coming out...***

I think if people are vigilant to what opportunities there are, when to help other people, you really end up helping yourself in the end. It really ends up a gift to you [in return], and that's what I feel like, that my life has been really blessed. Because people suffered and were [present] for me...and if I am able to be a part of their lives to help, and do whatever I could, I think that's what God wants.

The 1970's, the fishing rights, the 1970s were fun because this was a time that you could really get tough. And other times you had to be real compassionate, and then there were times where you really had to be tough. And that was the time you had to stand up for what you believed in. And the 1970s there were a lot of [activity]. You know, like Vietnam, Women's Lib, Indian Rights, Indian Fishing Rights, Human Rights were all coming out, it was really exciting. It was like someone opened a box, and that we all knew what was in there, but it was finally opened, and we could say something about it. I think that the most shocking one for me was woman's rights, because I grew up, like I said, believing that we were second-class citizens and we had a certain role in life. I found out that I could do anything I wanted to do.

It was interesting. I wasn't a "bra burner", I was more a feminist, and I believed that we could give power to somebody, but we don't lose it, because it is infinite. What most people think, that if you give your power to somebody else, you've lost it. But, power is infinite and I think that is what the feminist thinking is, that you just spread that. And it empowers people to do what they can do.

So, going with that and being here on the Reservation, knowing more about the Puyallup's treaty rights than the Puyallups knew at the time, because the Puyallups were a beaten people. My Dad always knew that this was a Reservation, when we moved from the Swinomish Reservation to the Puyallup Reservation. I had always believed I lived on the Puyallup Reservation, and it was not until I was in school for awhile that I found out it was Tacoma where I lived.

When I worked for the Puyallup Tribe I was working as a Coordinator at the Indian Center, and pretty much picking up all the services for the urban Indians. The tribe picked up the services for the tribal Indians. The tribe was also fishing and getting arrested for fishing, and getting their boats taken away. I really had to read up on it, and I talked to my Dad, and he [thought I knew all this already]. So, he would just explain to me that they (American Indian Tribes<sup>iii</sup> that signed Medicine Creek Treaty of 1854, which includes the Puyallup Tribe) never gave up any of their rights. Puyallup never gave up any of their rights. He was supporting Ramona Bennett<sup>1</sup> (former chairwoman of the Puyallup tribe) and Robert (Bob) Satiacum (former Puyallup tribal leader and advocate of the Native American fishing rights).<sup>iv</sup>

It came time to stand up and be counted, which was really kind of interesting for me. I was really accepted in the non-Indian community, like in the churches, and in the schools. I was pretty well known there. But, not known so much for one standing up for Indian rights, so, you find out who your friends are when, and especially when standing up for Indian Rights. Because it was right, and rightly right for the Puyallup's to do that.

I just became a support person for Ramona Bennett. She was the one out front, doing the real business. It was really hard. I had a cousin Suzan, she's still around, she

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<sup>1</sup> Seattle Civil Rights and Labor History Project: <http://www.civilrights.washington.edu>.



was married to Robert Satiacum and I remember her, she's beautiful. They were taking pictures of her; her picture was in the paper for fishing. And them taking the fishing gear away from her. She was a real beautiful person. I talked to her one time and...oh I guess they arrested her because they said that she pushed their motors off the boat. And she said, "I didn't do that, I was sitting there in the boat, in their boat and their motor was going to fall off, I just didn't tell them." And the motor fell off of the police boat and went down to the bottom of the Puyallup River, and they had to row in. But, the story that came out in the paper was that she pushed the motor off of the boat. She said, "I didn't push that motor off the boat, I saw it going, I just didn't tell them!"

**1:07 ...*And the Puyallups are just pulling a few fish out of the river, and no ones getting rich off of it...***

So it was really kind of an interesting Scenario because your Dad and I belonged to a motorcycle club at the time (Tacoma Chiefs Motorcycle Club) and inevitably somebody would bring it up, "What about the fishing rights?" And I know your Dad wanted me to shut up about it, but they would always ask me and I would tell them, yeah, they have a right to fish. Puyallup's have a right to fish, and I go back to Swinomish and I could fish there too. (They would reply)"But their depleting the fish" and I'd say, no they're not, they're not going to deplete the fish. I said, there's commercial fisherman out there, and they're getting tons and tons of fish. And the Puyallup's are just pulling a few fish out of the river, and no ones getting rich off of it. So if you're going to start worrying about who's depleting the fish, go out there and get all those commercial fishermen first. Because the Indians have the right to fish forever, and ever in the usual and accustomed fishing grounds, and it is written and signed by your government, and it wasn't given to them, it was reserved. And they will always have that right and it was reserved.

**1:08:23 ...that about twenty of them [A.T.F. agents] came in with guns, and here was little Jeanne and the kids...**

It was a real education; I mean it was a real job educating people. Because just that little bit in what I just said, they were not given rights, these are rights that they reserved, and they reserved the right to fish. They reserved the land where they could live. These are in the treaties now, the law of the land. And it still is not really understood. Things are still happening, like Maiselle Bridges and Suzette Mills, yesterday (May 15, 2007)...Jeanne (granddaughter) was here and told me that the Firearms, Tobacco and something...A.T.F. raided their smoke-shops (Nisqually Indian Reservation). They took away all their cigarettes yesterday. See, they (Nisqually) never became a 480 tax tribe; they never signed that agreement saying that they'd only sell cigarettes that went through Washington State. Puyallup did, and they have to have the [tax] stamp on there from the state. <sup>v</sup>

Yeah, but they never did, they never signed saying that they would do that. They bring in cigarettes from Idaho, and wherever else. So the state come in and took it all away, all their stuff, money, everything yesterday. And Jeanne was there, taking care of the kids. And Jeanne said, that about twenty of them [A.T.F. agents] came in with guns, and here was little Jeanne and the kids there, and two older men. And they just pushed them away and packed up all the cigarettes, and took the money in, and Jeanne said, "I should see how much your taking?" and they wouldn't even let her see. Here's little Jeanne and so she took the kids and they just got out of the way. See, it is still happening, they have no right to do that; the state has no right to take that away because Nisqually never agreed to it.

**1:10:48... *If they want to do a demonstration of some kind, we will help them.***

But they do it and get away with it, because nobody ever says anything. Now this happened yesterday, and we never, its not in the news, nothing. So, Jeanne was here writing to Christine Gregoire (Washington State Governor). She wanted to know what she could say to Christine Gregoire. So I thought and told her, write: The honorable Christine Gregoire, my name is Jeanne La Pointe, I am so and so old, and I am a member of the Colville Nation. I have been working for so and so, and today I was babysitting, and then just tell it just like you said. Some guys come in with guns and take away everything and it's not fair.

But, here's Jeanne, she's so tiny and these kids and she's facing these guns. And they didn't have to bring guns out! They could have just gone in there and took the stuff. But, they come running in there with guns, just because they could do that. So, it is still happening today, and we don't hear anything about it, and I really think that if they want to do something about it at some point, we'll help them. If they want to do a demonstration of some kind, we will help them. But, I haven't heard from them, but I know if they want some help. Jeanne will tell us.

And if they do, I will take Ariel and Neva and I will go down and do whatever we have too. But, it's not right. Yesterday, on the May 15, 2007 [the United States government] is still doing [these kinds of things on] the Nisqually Reservation. There were two older men, and some women and children, and they had about twenty them come in with guns and take all the cigarettes and money from them. It belongs to them.

**1:13:06 ...*and they (Nisqually Indians) were pushed up into where it's just rocks.***

Allison, Maiselle, and Suzette are [owners] I think. When you think about Nisqually. The Nisquallys had it really bad. They had the reservation, but the military

took it over. And they (Nisqually Indians) were pushed up into where it's just rocks. And those Natural Estuaries down there in the valley, that used to be theirs to protect, and then most of the Fort Lewis military reservation was theirs too. And the United States government took it over. So, the Nisquallys had really been screwed, but they hadn't done a whole lot about it so far. I think if they ever move out of there they'd have to give Fort Lewis back to the Nisquallys. But, I doubt that we would every quit having wars. You don't hear a lot about them, in fact you don't hear a lot about other tribes.

The only reason you hear about the Puyallups is because of where they are. Right in the middle of a city, somebody built a city on the reservation. And that's why my Dad wanted to come here to live, and because that is where the fights going to be, its going to be in Puyallup, and nobody cares if they knock-off Yakima or Nisqually, or Spokane Tribe, or Swinomish, because nobody cares. But, right here in the middle of civilization, where Puyallup owns half the Port of Tacoma, or maybe most of the Port of Tacoma.

They had to get the Judge Boldt Decision<sup>vi2</sup> [on their side] and the land, and they had to come to an agreement with the state and with the county, and so that the Puyallup tribe operates as it does now. The [Puyallup tribe] made this big decision and all agreed to it, and we'll see how long that lasts. I knew that if we had won the Puyallup fight, that things would change for the Puyallups and I was never real sure if it was a good idea.

[Interruption]

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<sup>2</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boldt\\_Decision](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boldt_Decision)

So, I never knew what was going to happen, I never knew that they would be able to get these pre-capitas and it was too much to hope for. I wish there were different conditions. I think if I were doing it, I would do it a different way. But, the whole idea was to let the tribe to make decisions about what to do, and that is what they are doing.

As far as our reservation (Swinomish), we haven't lived there, and I wouldn't now, as long as I am raising kids because the reservation schools are still not as good, I mean you get a better education here. And that was one the reason we moved here (1942). But I guess Collin (grandson) is doing okay and John's kids did okay over there (on the Swinomish Reservation). Their doing really well, one of them got a basketball Scholarship, but he didn't take it, because he wanted to play football. Germane - (a grandson).

[Conversation with granddaughter-Ariel]

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<sup>i</sup> "Federal employees used stereotypes of Indian "deficiencies" to "explain" student stoicism and justify the reshaping of Indian emotional life. In a newspaper interview published in 1900, Superintendent of Indian Schools Estelle Reel "explained" the Indian children: [The Indian child's] face is without that complete development of nerve and muscle which gives character to expressive features; his face seems stolid because it is without free expression, and at the same time his mind remains measurable stolid because of the very absence of mechanism for its own expression." K. Tsianina Lomawaim and Teresa A. McCarty To Remain An Indian (Teachers College Press, New York, NY, 2006) pg. 18.

<sup>ii</sup> "The 70's began with a Vatican II renovation of the church and the founding of the Martin Luther King Ecumenical Center. In 1970 the Oregon Province Jesuits decided to nurture St. Leo as an urban faith community working for social justice. The pastoral team of Fathers Pat Hurley, Bill Hausman, Bill Bischel and Gerry Morin began their work together. The Jesuit Volunteer Corps began to serve the community as outreach workers, parish ministers and teachers. New social outreach programs began, including New House, Neighborhood Shop and Neighborhoods First. Fathers David Rothrock and Peter Byrne, S.J. founded our first L'Arche Community." Website cited: <http://www.stleoparish.org/about/history.htm>

<sup>iii</sup> The tribes that signed the Medicine Creek Treaty are: Nisqually, the Puyallups, Steilacoom, Squawskin, S'Homamish, Stehchass, Tpeekson, Squi-aitl, and Sa-hel-wamish tribes and band of Indians occupying the lands of the Puget Sound and inlet areas of Washington State.

<sup>iv</sup> Robert (Bob) Satiacum (1929-1991) was a Puyallup leader and advocate for treaty rights especially in regards to fishing in rights issues as stipulated in the Medicine Creek Treaty between some of the Northwest coastal tribes of Washington state. In 1954 Robert was arrested and convicted for illegally fishing in the Puyallup River, which was later overturned by the Washington Supreme Court. Following

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were many demonstrations referred to as “fish-ins”. Fish-ins is when American Indians and demonstrators in support of fishing rights refuse to stop fishing in a fashion that was deemed illegal by the law.

<sup>v</sup> According to Works In Progress (a free volunteer-operated progressive community Newspaper) “May 15, 2007 the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms worked in cooperation with Washington State Liquor Control Board Tobacco Tax Unit and the US Attorneys Office of Seattle. Climbing through bushes with guns raided, they approached the home of the Gottfriedsons: Hank, Alison, and their two granddaughters, 10 and 11 years old...One of the girls heard the noises outside and opened the door as officers prepared to plow it down with a battering ram. The girls were taken outside at gunpoint, in their pajamas and patted down....”They scared the heck out of my grandkids,” said Alison Gottfriedson.... “They took both the computers and they trashed the whole house.”... The smoke shop was also raided and the entire stock of cigarettes was confiscated.”” Website cited: [http://www. Olywip.org/wipnode/592](http://www.Olywip.org/wipnode/592).

<sup>vi</sup> “The **Boldt Decision**, was a controversial 1974 court case which affirmed the right of most of the tribes in Washington State to continue harvest salmon. Many opponents of this case couch it as a “grant” of rights to the tribes. More accurately, the decision was simply affirming that when the Tribes released their interest in the millions of acres of land in Washington State through a series of treaties signed in 1854 and 1855, they reserved the right to continue fishing. For example, the Treaty of Medicine Creek (1854) includes the following language: “The right of taking fish, at all usual and accustomed grounds and stations, is further secured to said Indians in common with all citizens of the Territory.”website cited: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boldt\\_Decision](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boldt_Decision)