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Oral Interview of Susan Bradford by Marli Werner and Mazie Hough for the Feminist Oral History Project (Part #1)

Marli Werner

Mazie Hough

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Oral interviews for the Feminist Oral History Project.

Interviewer: Marli Werner (MW), Mazie Hough (MH)

Interviewee: Susan Bradford (SB)

Date: 7/21/93

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Length of recording: 43:31

[Transcript begins]

MH: This is Mazie Hough, I'm with Marli Werner and we're interviewing Susan Bradford. It's Wednesday, July 21st, were in her Spruce Run office on at 157 Park Street. This is my tape Mazie Hough, 93 one. Susan we'd like to know how you first got involved at Spruce Run or with Spruce Run.

SB: Oh, how did I first get involved? My first knowledge at Spruce Run came from Lue Chamberlain when I was working for the Federation of co-ops and all of those offices, Spruce Run's office in the Bangor Tenants Union in the Federation of co-ops and all of those places were all sort of together and had the same phone number in the same office on Central Street. And so, I heard about the work of Spruce Run there, but I was working for the Federation of co-ops so I continued to do that for a while. And when I was done doing that I went and had a, I had my son and spent a couple years home with him and then decided that I wanted to do something else, besides which I needed grocery money, so I looked around, and Spruce Run happened to be running their hotline course. So, I decided well that would be fun. I could go do that for a while, so I went and took the hotline course. Which was in fact much the same as it is now. Although there were 23 people in that group, and we don't usually have more than 10 now. And I started being an office volunteer and then they had an opening, they had a couple different openings. They had a full-time advocates opening, and they had a part time bookkeeping opening and I decided that I wanted to work part time because my son was still young. So, I applied to bookkeeping, and they hired me, silly people. And I did that for a few years. And I've done just about everything there is to do, and sort of move through many of the job descriptions. That's how I got attached.

MH: What was there about the issue of domestic violence that made you attracted to Spruce Run?

SB: I've always, I think I was born a feminist. My mother was a feminist, I mean in the 50s. She was doing research on child support payments 'cause it was germane to our situation. And so that was one aspect of it and the other aspect of it was that how I like to do my feminism is extremely hands on. I have kind of a hard time with sitting around and theorizing and stuff like that. I really need to do hands on and it just seems so basic and so hands on, I've had friends I've had relatives that have been battered, and I myself have not been battered. And it just it's one of the basic ways that we get kept in line this violence. Whether that's the culture allowance or individual violence and to me, it was a dream come true to be able to take what I believed in and get paid for working on it.

MH: I'm curious about the training that you had can you describe what it was like?

SB: It was it was a wonderful group; it was an experiment as I later found out Spruce Run was doing at that time, there, because there were 3 as I as I recollect there were 3 women from the Dover Foxcroft area who formed a little subgroup because they wanted to start what has become woman care, you know in that group. And there were also I think a couple of people from the Machias, although they may have come later, not exactly sure. And there was also a man in that group who wanted to work with the kids, children who are victims of domestic violence too. And so, there was this one guy and these 3 people who weren't really in it for Spruce Run. Plus, they were a gazillion, whatever that is 4 from 23, I guess makes it sound like a gazillion. Other people who were doing the training and it really was a good deal, like it is now which is it's about 40 hours worth of training. A lot of it is role playing you get a few examples from the trainers. They're always Co trainers and there are always people who cycle in to do particular pieces of presentations. There are people who listen to your role plays and give you feedback on it, it's a basic crisis intervention course. The 5 step crisis intervention model as was adapted from that actually from dial Help and from an awful lot of the other suicide hotlines that were existing at that time.

MH: Was this Spruce Run's first training session?

SB: No, not at all. No, they've had a few before that, and I don't know how many. I don't know which group it is, but I know Peggy has the training manual and has a listing in it. You may have that material, but it has a listing of the in it of the number of groups and the names of the people who are in those groups. No in fact, people call me a Dinosaur and geez aren't you ancient here and

weren't you in on the beginning, but I continue to feel that little bit like a neophyte because it really wasn't. You know, I came in 79 and it had already been going for quite a few years ago so.

MH: So, you had your 40 hours of training, which was once a week?

SB: I don't recall is either once or twice a week. Yeah.

MH: In the evening?

SB: Yeah.

MH: And when you finish that then you said you went you became a volunteer?

SB: An office volunteer because at that point, I lived in the Woods and didn't have a phone. So, I didn't work that line from home. But I would love to tell you all about my first hotline, 'cause that was a little different from the way we do things now.

MH: Tell us.

SB: There we were on Central Street in the old, the old 44 Central Street building, where you'd go up these dark cavernous stairs. It was where the training was too so I was used to it by that time, and you go into the building with a broken down couch with a tie dyed throw over it and have phones and papers, and people screaming all over the place, but I walked into this office one fine day and a woman named Donna Hamill was there. And she was, I forget what her position was there, I think she was the children worker at that point. And she said. Oh! Hello, I'm so glad to see you and you must be the person who's on call and I've gotta go to lunch and she left. And then another woman, I think it was Joan Reiff said great to see you, I'm the office coordinator and I gotta go, I have an appointment and she left. And there I was in this big empty room, and the phone rang. OK, the phone is ringing, this must be for me, so I picked it up and said something like Uhm, Spruce Run! And I had my first couple of hotline calls during that shift, which were fairly classic calling calls. There was one on who was in a very small town at the end of a very long dirt road who lived in a trailer had 3 preschool kids and was being battered and was terrified and had no resources and in fact, she was using a neighbor's phone 'cause she herself didn't have a phone so we chatted for a while and came up with a couple of different plans and my heart was just pounding. Like agree, I'll never forget these calls, ever? You know, ever. So, I thought wow! Well, that was quite the experience. Now what do I do? Is there something I'm supposed to fill out right now? What do, what am I supposed to do here? And then the phone ring again, so I picked it up and it was another

woman who was in an entirely different situation, was feeling very, very trapped. She was in her mid 20s and feeling trapped by her parents. She'd never had a date and was really just trying to sort of explore her sexuality and her what you know, was this normal? Was this not normal? How is this supposed to be? What was going on for so. Did a lot of active listening about that and it was really, OK now what do I do? Then the door opened, and Nancy Gentile came out and said hi, who are you? And an observing creature that she was, she said, so you talk about those calls? I spit out a few words about those calls and she kind of said that's nice and said all the right words in about 32 seconds and told me what she did and said have a cup of tea and then went back in her office. She was very nice and went back in her office and close the door. Pretty soon, Dona and Joanne came back and said, did you have a good time? And I said yeah, I sure did! OK, next shift.

MW: How did you feel afterwards these calls that you did, that day?

SB: I felt fine about the calls that I had done. The woman in the trailer where the preschool kids taught me a valuable lesson because I got caught right up in her situation and we had a contract and I did, I did live 50 miles north of here in the woods with no phone and what I did was to go up to the general store and call her back the next day, which is not something that we do and they hadn't covered that a whole lot in training. And asked how she was, and she was fine and couldn't figure out for her life to why I was I was calling her. It gave me a whole new perspective taught me in real life way about why it is people calling when they call and how they call them, how much they do on their own and just, what is my part in these people's lives? It was invaluable instruction, and I thank her to this day for that. But I felt no good about it, although I had even tortured it enough in that 40 hour training, I figured a little test and we still do it, you know, but I'll still remember it was Terry Lewis who was my sort of end of the training roleplay person and she gives you this whole test. Each individual goes and does this real like role play, it's long and you've never met this person before. It's not one of your co-trainees, hahaha, that you've been playing around with and giving each other a lot of slack at somebody else. Somebody who's been doing this and knows how to do it, and so they sit down and give you this little test role play. And I was terrified, and I thought I'd done horribly, and she told me I was wonderful. That was my initial experience. I'll never forget it!

MW: I know that you've been involved with Spruce Run for a long time, but can you tell us some of the most vivid memories that you've had of Spruce Run over the years? What's been important and vivid to you in your experience?

SB: I will preface it by saying that what's vivid to me changes from day to day and month to month, given whatever circumstance it is, so there are a whole lot of vivid places that you know, do you want vivid, sort of organizationally, or do you want vivid because I got a kick out of it?

MW: Whatever strikes you as something you went to tell us.

SB: Uhm. Line them up. There were, there were several vivid experiences, that first one that I just described certainly is one of the vivid ones. Another was sort of going into a couple of different Spruce Run meetings and watching folks. These particular people deal with consensus. I've seen it before with friends in university setting. In different women's groups, but I've never seen it in kind of a we have this task in this goal in this very real world kind of business to get taken care of sense. And I was very appreciative of how that played itself out.

MW: This is a staff meeting that you're talking about?

SB: No, I don't know. I forget what kind of and I never forget the faces except that Donna and Nancy were there and Johanne was there, I think there were some steering committee members who were there too, so I'm not to tell you the truth. I don't even recall it might have been some committee doing something together. I just remember, gosh, this is really neat that they do this. I was impressed at my first steering committee meeting where I went with my Anne Schonberger's house with my little heart beating again because this was like these were the mothers, you know, these were the moms, this is the steering committee, wow! You know?

MH: You were on staff and then you got invited to the steering committee?

SB: Yeah, well, staff could always go to the steering committee wanted to generally was assumed that the director who was Nancy was going to go 'cause she was definitely the link to the steering committee from the staff, but other people were I, I never felt as though we couldn't go. It was just why would you want to put yourself through that?

MH: So, this time you decided you wanted to...

SB: Give us some organizational reason for me being there maybe just to get to know one who knows that that was interesting. Did you have something to say?

MH: Well, why did it, so what did it look like? I would be curious to know going into an early well, 1980-81 steering committee?

MW: What it was like?

SB: There was a lot of talk about bake sales and fundraising, and I think one of the things that impressed me the most was the speed with which business got taken care of. I really am a very slow person. I speak slowly. I do things slowly and I give it a lot of thought and a lot of sort of tangents come in and the speed with which things sort of clicked right along was interesting to me, but that had always been interesting to me because Nancy spoke faster than anybody else on the planet, and so she sort of said that... Again, I don't recall what the actual business was except that they really did take care of a lot of money and fund-raising stuff, and there were probably some public education kind of events going on that they were talking about too. I was just sort of impressed at how much business and the speed at which it took place.

MW: How did decisions get made?

SB: It was consensual. However, was there was certainly that aspect. I think that exists in any group of the people with the loudest voices who talked the fastest, In fact who were the people who were heard, and then there were people such as myself at that point who didn't talk much. I know at that point I didn't. It wasn't too much skin off my nose 'cause I didn't have anything to say I was just using the mouth drop going wow, look at this. And trying to catch on to the process.

MW: And what happened after? You stayed on the Steering Committee for a while.

SB: I wasn't on the Steering Committee, I went as a member of the staff, and then go from time to time depending on what the issues on the agenda were, that kind of thing that was far less frequent until we did this sort of organizational structure change that we did.

MW: Tell us about that.

SB: Which would be another vivid memory here. Mary Ann Allen, I think was probably one of the biggest spearheads on the organizational structure change, and she and I worked quite diligently with Lynn Mancer and I have notes, but faces sort of go away from here and names go away from me from time to time, but there were several of us who worked really hard. We called ourselves the organizational Structure Committee and the Bylaws Committee and in various a lot of other different kinds of names.

MH: Now what year is this that we're talking about?

SB: You would ask me that, wouldn't you?

MH: Or how long has it been?

SB: I think we have these files around someplace, but it wasn't very far into it. It was before... It was while we were still on Exchange St, 189 Exchange Street and so it was before '83 which is when we purchased State Street.

MW: OK, can you describe a little bit about how you worked before committee met to change things?

SB: Well, we went through a lot of organizational sort of process changes. This is without, I think, really talking about the structure of the organization too much. I know that when I first came on, it was a consensual organization, and that's not true, when I first came on, Nancy really had just been hired as the director.

MW: So there was Nancy and yourself as part time bookkeeper and...

SB: There were other positions that were funded at that point to by seat basically.

MH: And did the staff, this was the staff is that right?

SB: Yes.

MH: And did you meet regularly?

SB: Yes, we always have staff meetings.

MH: Once a week?

SB: Yep, yeah, do you want me to talk about before I came or do you not?

MH: No.

SB: Just when I started? OK. So, when we started there, it was and she was the director I believe. And at that point there was a there was Donna who was the seat hazy from when I was a volunteer when I got hired, which wasn't a very long period in there, but there was a volunteer coordinator whose name was Joanne, Marian Allen also got hired about this a little bit before I did as a public education coordinator, I think, and there was a, I think Joanne had left when I got hired. Who else was there? You got me. You get that out of people work better than you want out of life. But that was the basic structure.

MH: And you had staff meetings?

SB: We had staff meetings basically weekly, and it was basically a benevolent dictatorship, with Nancy being the benevolent dictator although that wasn't how it felt to me. When we hired for instance, in 1980, we hired Connie Huntley as the Children Services Coordinator, and that process was very much a whole process. I know we were all in on that there was a first interview with a couple of us and then there was an interview with all of us. So, I mean, and so decisions that affected us all we definitely all meet together. I think how Nancy acted as a director was more as an information funnel, and that's what we felt needed to be changed because she always picked up the mail she had director after her name, so everybody would call to talk to the Director and that kind of thing. She was always the link between the staff and the steering committee and the outside world kind of and that got to be. Nobody, that didn't work for us very well because, and it wasn't anything that she did necessarily. It was just that was the way it was there would be decisions that would be made with not enough information because no one person can possibly decide which information goes where all the time and do that right. I mean it doesn't work very well, so we decided that we needed to change that.

MH: We being the staff, talked together?

SB: Yes. Well, there were some steering committee members in that too Lynn Mansour was a part of the Steering Committee at that point she agreed with that too.

MW: So all of you met to discuss new ways of organizing Spruce Run, what were those discussions like?

SB: At the beginning we were, I think there were shades of anxiety and fear and what's this going to be like and you know where things are going to be? You know everybody likes to know what the boundaries and limits are, and it wasn't clear when we first started talking about doing this consensus business and one piece of that is that Nancy at least had a history with the organization where consensus meant chaos and so did the steering committee. And so that wasn't, that wasn't good. You know? That was why they had reverted to a hierarchical structure.

MH: Was Nancy a part of this discussion? this group?

SB" Oh yeah, yeah, we were all in it and I think at that point there were there were there were four of us there were there was Nancy, and Mary, and Connie and myself. And I think that was, but also the time period when the funding was evaporating, and so we were the four of us. We were getting

more state funding and we just started getting United Way funding too. So the positions were being more stable. You were less likely to have sort of seven extra people all of a sudden on for six or eight months away. So, the organizational structure stuff, we started out with the bylaws committee doing, now let's see which came first. What I know for sure is that the staff met for over a year and Lynn Mansur is a representative from the steering committee came very often and what we did was to decide we wanted to move in this direction and how would we do that in the way the format of the discussions were structured? Where OK, so what do we do? What are the pieces of work that needs to be done by this agency and chunk them up, and which pieces sort of fit together? Which pieces don't and how long does it take to do these pieces? And who has the skills? Which of us as individuals have? Have the skills to do these different kinds of things and how many hours do you want to work? And we talked about money too, which was an interesting conversation, you know, and just sort of had wonderful conversations about, so how do we want to structure our pay scale? According to need, go according to community pay scale for what the job is worth or what cut, you know what? How can we create something that seems little realistic and fair all at the same time, so we did that. We did that for a year and a half. We came up with job descriptions and...

MW: You met how often for that year and a half?

SB: Once a week, they were part of our staff meetings. It was a long time, but we certainly didn't spend all our time doing that 'cause I mean there was the hotline. There was public education and all of the things that you had to do. But I thought it was just wonderful. I just thought what a kick and I still think what a kick. I thought it's an amazing thing.

MW: At the end of the year and a half what did you do? what happened? What was the outcome?

SB: Well, I'd like to think that when the curtain opened and we also wanted to indicate that we were all consensual folks, but we sort of dropped the job descriptions gave the steering committee and said this is what we want to do and the steering committee, kind of grumbled about it and said, well, all right, and we went on about our business. And it taken so long that we were sort of evolving, rather than open the curtains and go.

MH: Where did the push for consensus come from? We've used the word a lot, so it must have been a topic that was accepted from the very beginning.

SB: You know, this is where it's really hard and you must know this as historians. Where did it first come from? Because there is no original source. I mean, you climb up in that mountain and there are a whole lot of little streams that make that river, but I could name some of the streams. They were talking about this kind of stuff, certainly at the national level, I mean, it's been a topic of conversation throughout the women's movement, forever near as I can tell, and we always have been very much a part of the whole thing, so I mean, that's one piece. If you're looking for individuals, I certainly was in on that big time. And so is Marian Allen.

MH: So, a lot of it was the staff who said, we want to be run by a consensus. with a consensus model.

SB: Yup. I'm searching desperately because I know there are other people who are interested in that too, and I'm sure that there were volunteers and there were other pieces of the steering committee and individuals, but in my experience, if you want to know who spearheaded that, that was Mary Ann Allen and myself, those are the people who did that.

MH: And then, do you remember, was there a time when the coordinator stepped down from her position and you were all on an equal footing?

SB: There must been, but I don't remember to tell you the truth, probably Nancy being Nancy and us being us, it probably started October 1st 'cause that's the beginning of the fiscal year and that's when things change, job descriptions all change and if you couldn't pick a schedule that's the one, and the rest of us probably didn't care really when that happened.

MW: Did Nancy then stand in the way of the evolving move towards consensus over that year and a half, did she oppose it?

SB: No, no, she's very much for it, although she certainly was the most twisted by it. I mean, she was the director, she had the most to be twisted by I'm not going to say lose because we were all really clear that not only she wouldn't lose, but she would gain as would we all. That we were a small group of folks, there was only a few of us, you know, and we really had worked together for a while. We respected each other a lot and really trusted each other in a lot of ways to be able to say what we needed to say. We were pretty open with each other. So, and I think that's probably what made it possible. It's not that. I mean I can't speak directly for her, but she sure did. She got twisted by it. It's not that she didn't and there were little, there were sprints and outbursts. So how are you going to do this? How are you going to do that? It's got to be clear, she wanted structure. You had

to have it. Everything was written down. You know, but on the other hand she really believed in it too, so.

MW: It, meaning consensus?

SB: Consensus yeah. I think she was never quite sure how that would work with the steering committee with United Way with the community you know when she had had the previous experience of consensus, meaning chaos, and so I think that just gave her more reasons to fear that and feel anxious about it because she was the one who's going to take the calls and try to explain the way out of it. You know, reasons to be anxious. Over the years different projects in the state have tried to go to consensus from having directors, and it's been a torture and they really had some hard times, and I can't say that it was that way for us. It was a piece of cake. It obviously took us a long time to do that, and then we didn't have twisted feelings about it, but I don't think it was torture, not even for Nancy.

MH: You say it wasn't a piece of cake. Why wasn't, how did that manifest itself or what makes you find out?

SB: Through the discussions that we had. I mean, when you talk about money picture, most of the time a person paycheck is personal information and you get really grumpy if somebody else knows what you make, stuff like that in any business you know. That's the way it is. So, you know sex and money, they're hot topics, and we're talking about money, you know, and so that was one place where we had a little bit of a go around, and I don't have to do it well, you know, but we need the money to buy groceries. When you're making \$4.00 an hour and you're a single parent, as some of us were. You start thinking, wait, I want more of that pot and the salary structure had been structured given seed and the funding sources so that the director made a whole pile of money and the rest of us sort of worked along with minimum wage or someplace close to that. And because the funding sources really weren't changing at the same time, so it wasn't just us sort of sitting in this closed room in a vacuum making these decisions. They had there was impact from the environment about it too. So those were hard? No, that's hard stuff to talk about. To try and think about the good in the organization and the good of the group and not hurt each others feelings, but being direct and honest at the same time about what our needs were and what our thoughts were, and what we or I thought about what you want to make. What I thought about what I ought to make and what hours I wanted to do that, and stuff like that. Those are hard conversations so,

but we didn't, didn't generally erupt into shouting matches and screaming, yell, or there were certainly hurt feelings and elated feelings and the sense of movement. That was one hard spot. The other hard spot was the one I was trying to talk about before with the one that Nancy was in, which is, so that's fine, you take away my title and take away my extra salary. I don't think we did it that way. I think we built it off as opposed to spread it out, but she's already taken a cut. And yet people are still going to ask for me when the phone rings. And I am the one who's going to be writing the grants. But he's doing this so how you all going to help me with that? you know how are we going to spread this out? And then when we got concrete about that and trying to figure out how to spread it out.

MH: That's interesting to me because that says, we were not only adopting a consensus model, but you had to figure out how each of you would take an equal amount of responsibility. That maybe was the crux?

SB: Oh, that was the crux yes, ma'am. That's why you know, talk about it. There are two pieces to consensus. One is the structure, and one is the process. We've always been using the process. You know, how you speak to each other, how decisions get made within a group, rollers, that kind of stuff. But the structure is really important. You know who does have the power? Who does have the responsibility?

MW: It sounds as if you made those that move as you described it towards consensus before the steering committee.

SB: Yes, that's the next part.

MW: How did that fit with the steering committee? What was their response?

SB: Kind of like a brick and a nerf ball, I don't know. So that's where the bylaws and organizational structure Committee sort of came into the alias, me, Mary, and Nancy. And there was somebody else, I don't know who it was, but I have it all, I really do somewhere. You know they are looking at it like some grand and glorious chess board. That you just have to sort of position in the right place and we thought to ourselves. Well, yes, now we've done all this hard work. You know the staff has got its job descriptions down and everything is wonderful and now what needs to happen is that the steering committee needs to go and do the same thing. So yes, the steering committee needs to go and do the same thing and we all agreed, and it didn't happen.

MH: You decided that the steering committee had to, so you went to the steering committee and said, It's your turn?

SB: Yes, except the understanding that there was almost a steering committee member a piece of a process. You know, there really was. If it wasn't, I think Terry Lewis was in on this. I'm sure Ann was in on it too, although Ann, and we thought it was there when consensus made chaos and forgive me and she's a good mathematician. You know, and it was promised the high-level of anxiety in her. I think to have this all going for right reasons and so I don't think that she was like leader of the pack in terms of hey, let's go for consensus.

MH: I interrupted you. You said OK, then it was the steering committee's turn, right? Nothing happened.

SB: Because a person had, a steering committee member, had always been sort of a piece of this process. And so it wasn't so black and white, is OK the staff comes to you with a proposal that now you need to work on how to do this. This whole agency needs to be structured as consensus. What are you going to do about the fact that you as a steering committee, hire and fire the staff which operates by consensus? How do we make this whole organization consensus? How do we do that? And you know our bylaws in line with the structure that we're trying to adopt. I mean, all of those pieces. And they didn't. They agreed to talk about it and I think they talked about it a couple times and then.

MW: Where you in those meetings?

SB: I don't remember. We'd have to look at the minutes.

MW: Anyway, go ahead.

SB: And I think that caused us trouble for several years. A lot of years that caused us a lot of trouble.

MW: What kind of trouble?

SB: Well, we'd be going along thinking that we were, you know, doing it, doing what we were supposed to do. And if you're consensual, then how do you do supervision? You know how? How do you do worker accountability and responsibility and all of those kinds of things. And I think that was that was a hard one to get over and we struggled with that for a whole bunch of years when we tried a whole bunch of different models and methods to deal with that. I think that was the biggest issue

that sort of generalized anxiety. You know who you gonna call? People would get frustrated. They used to be able to just come up to Nancy.

MH: The Steering Committee was supposed to supervise the staff is that?

SB: Well, they did have responsibilities for hiring and firing, liability and all the rest of those kinds of things they did, it was the steering committee who was who was our board, responsible for the organization, they carry the liability, so they carry the liability, and you only run those with these staff people might do, although they loved and trusted us as individuals, I believe. You know if you're responsible for something, then you want the power to deal with it.

MH: And you were saying, you don't have the power to deal with it just like that.

SB: No, you have to understand that a lot of this is how I was thinking at the time and still do. That we weren't saying you don't have the power to do this, so you shouldn't have the power to do this. We were saying that this doesn't fit, it doesn't. It's not going to work. We're going to cause ourselves to grief if we keep going on with this structure. It needs to be different because we have changed. You need to change. And we need to change together, and the organization needs to be different. I mean, there's a whole other segment here the other volunteers, hotline workers and you know other kinds of volunteers to that, that also got pulled into the whole thing.

MH: So, the Steering Committee, wasn't moving. And then what happened?

SB: And there well, again there was no cataclysm. It wasn't moving, it wasn't moving, and we suffered a lot of irritation about that in terms of peer supervision. We did peer supervision. We did evaluations and things like that. We came up with an evaluation form to that we were supposed to do from time to time. Someone in basis and the steering committee needed to be involved in that and those kinds of things, and there were there were personnel problems too. I'm trying to think of a good concrete example of, you know what went wrong with that picture, but there were. There were lots and it was an irritating piece. It really was.

MW: What finally happened?

SB: Then there was the capital funds campaign. Oh my God. Well, I don't think so, so we went that way for a couple of years. It was kind of OK because there wasn't really anything to rock the boat. And then a donor said, so what are your dreams? Let's buy a shelter. So we did that and we're really busy. Like buying this building and getting ready for it and thinking about holy cow urban shelter.

What a thing to do. And then we ran smack dab head on into this capital funds campaign, which really did, I think, crystallize a lot of the difference is not a lot of structural problems.

MW: How?

SB: Well, if you have a difference of opinion between the staff and the steering committee, who gets the final say or how does it say? How did that decision get made between those two groups?

MH: And the final decision was what to do with this money.

SB: Well, I think the things that sort of indicated to us that there were problems were what were we going to put out as a public message. Now we have people on one hand who are really adept at running capital funds Campaigns who know, this is how you go out into the community and get money. And this is how you have to present yourself and this is what you have to say on the one end of the continuum and then we have... me for instance, and Marian I know is another person sort of on the hotline listening to women and thinking there's no way, there is no way that I'm going to get a picture of, you know, a woman with a black eye holding her baby tearfully and have that flaunted out there in that community for the purpose of raising funds. No, we don't do that, you know. So and there were certain ways that that we felt, that we needed to be portrayed and so which way do you go? And who decides that? That was torture, that and the color of the rugs, you know. How much money do you spend? There were tight money clashes on some level, and all within a fairly right time frame and right in the middle of the public eye, everybody looking at you, you know. And if Ann was talking to somebody in the community with a whole bunch of money and prestige and responsibility, and somebody else was talking to somebody in the in the community with a whole lot of political correctness. What do you say to those people? And when you come back together, how are you gonna make those decisions?

MH: It's fascinating to me 'cause I hadn't thought about it, where money is involved. Then you're involved in your image. And what is an image that works in the community and the staff is saying, What's an image that's real, is that right what? How do we protect the women that were working with is that some of what was behind your concerns?

SB: Yeah, it's not just protect, but it's how. How are they portrayed and how is the issue portrayed? And we did have a have a good long history of not selling out for bucks. When I say that I don't mean that that people who do or, you know are horrible people and totally corrupt, that kind of stuff. But I think that often folks don't realize the tradeoffs that they're making, and we don't. I had always

been extremely careful, for instance, when we got DHS funding, we say no, you can't have our stats, you can't have Social Security numbers. I don't care how righteous you are about your confidentiality. No, that will not be something that we will turn over. And so, how the issue got portrayed had always been something that's really important to us.

MH: Just a second.

[End of transcript]