

Interview with Deanna Robbins

July 5, 1980

Moscow, Idaho

Minute

- 1 Introduction, Family History
- 2.3 Childhood; tells how she moved from city to city because her father worked for the natural gas company.
- 3 Moved from Texas to Phoenix with her mother when she was a teenager.
- 4 Birth of her first daughter in L.A. hospital in 1969. Talks about being uneducated and not knowing she was being "insulted" by the medical profession.
- 5 Explains why she received no knowledge of childbirth from her mother; believes this was due her own mother's lack of knowledge and the fact that her mother gave birth unconsciously.
- 6.2 Second child born in Colfax, WA in 1973. She had planned an office birth, but went to the hospital at the doctor's urging. She was very upset at the treatment her son received; he was circumcised without her consent.
- 7.3 Her third child was born at home, with the help of some lady friends. She describes this child as her "easy" child. The birth was easy, and he has been an easy child to raise.
- 9 Describes the behavior patterns of her fourth child, now two months old. (Feeding and sleeping patterns.)
- 10 Describes the beginning of her country living experiences as being when she moved to the Moscow-Troy area. She came with five other "hippie" friends and her two-year-old daughter. (1971).
- 12 Talks about how she now appreciates the conveniences of town living; her husband works in Moscow, and its also easier to go to birthings because of childcare arrangements, etc.
- 12.5 Explains the arrangements she makes for childcare when she's called for a birth. Talks about her children's adjustments to her work.

Interview with Deanna Robbins, continued

Tape I, Side I

Minute

- 14.5 Tells how she dropped out of high school at age 17 and supported herself by working as a waitress for the years previous to moving to Moscow.
- 16 Explains how she got involved in midwifery; after she had her third child at home, people started inviting her to homebirths. Talks about medical professionals as being crisis oriented in their attitudes toward birth.
- 19 She feels that the basic difference between trained and lay medical people is that trained professionals have lack of faith in the body.
- 21 Stresses the importance of having experienced birth when working as a midwife.
- 22 Discusses the birth of her fourth child at the Moscow Hotel. Many people came to the birth. She talks about their reactions as well as the reactions of her children.
- 30 Discusses self as a rural woman; how she sees herself.

Tape I, Side II

- 1 Discusses the differences in country and city living; the biggest difference she has noticed is the people; country people seem more "laid back."
- At this point, two of her children come out with bottles they are taking to the store for refunds.---
- 1.5 Also mentions better air and a nicer pace of living in the country.
- 2 Talks about appreciating conveniences, but would go back to hauling water, etc. if the time were right. Says her husband would like to farm.
- 3.5 Talks about the struggles of some of her friends to be self-sufficient, yet they still use their generator to operate a T.V.



Interview with Deanna Robbins, continued

Tape I, Side II

Minute

- 5 She feels that her kids fit into both town and country living and enjoy both. The biggest difference she sees is the space they have in the country.
- 6.5 Talks of envying people who grew up in one spot.
- 7.2 Talks about differences in city and town women in childbearing; sees country women as having an easier time.
- 8.7 Describes her husband's attitude toward her practice as supportive.
- 10.5 Explains how she manages taking an infant with her to births.
- Kids come back from the store with candy they bought .----
- 12.7 Talks about "family first" as never being an issue for her. Her kids and husband accepts that this is what she does.
- 14.5 Discusses the problem of liability; her husband worries about what would happen to the business if she were to be sued.
- 15.1 Talks about legalities of midwifery and how it could affect her.
- 17.5 Discusses the medical community's reaction to her; at first they were defensive, now they just pretend that she's not there. Has had one offer to get involved with two doctors in Garfield, WA.
- 24 Talks about how she sees her future as a midwife in a small community. She would like to work on better homebirthing in some way. She does consider her practice a profession and treats it as such.

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