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Dorothy Huyck's National Park Service Oral History Project, 1942-1987



**Patricia Smith**  
**January 8, 1979**

Interview conducted by Dorothy B. Huyck  
Transcribed by Rev.com  
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NPS History Collection  
Harpers Ferry Center  
PO Box 50  
Harpers Ferry, WV 25425  
HFC\_Archivist@nps.gov

[START OF TAPE]

Dorothy Huyck: 00:00 In '57?

Patricia Smith: 00:02 September, '57.

Dorothy Huyck: 00:02 And this was a part-time work study—

Patricia Smith: 00:02 Right.

Dorothy Huyck: 00:02 —position?

Patricia Smith: 00:08 We worked three hours a day. No, we worked four hours a day. We worked for 1:15 until 5:15, 20 hours a week.

Dorothy Huyck: 00:17 That makes me want to go back in history for a minute and ask, were you born and raised in Illinois?

Patricia Smith: 00:19 Yes.

Dorothy Huyck: 00:20 And when were you born?

Patricia Smith: 00:26 '39, November '39.

Dorothy Huyck: 00:31 Are you by any chance an only child?

Patricia Smith: 00:31 No. I have a brother and sister.

Dorothy Huyck: 00:33 And are you the eldest of those?

Patricia Smith: 00:34 Yes.

Dorothy Huyck: 00:36 Which of your brother and sister the next child?

Patricia Smith: 00:42 My brother.

Dorothy Huyck: 00:42 And how many years younger is he?

Patricia Smith: 00:47 Two and a half.

Dorothy Huyck: 00:52 You went to high school in Illinois?

Patricia Smith: 00:52 Mm-hmm.

Dorothy Huyck: 00:52 And were either of your parents college graduates?

Patricia Smith: 00:52 No.

Dorothy Huyck: 00:59 What were their occupation?

Patricia Smith: 01:01 My mother didn't work. She stayed at home. She worked harder, but she didn't get paid for it. She wouldn't like me saying that. And my father worked for the old AB&W bus company.

Dorothy Huyck: 01:12 Oh, this is a while.

Patricia Smith: 01:15 Yes.

Dorothy Huyck: 01:18 Have you had college?

Patricia Smith: 01:19 Only a couple of classes that I took on my own. Nothing steady.

Dorothy Huyck: 01:27 During the time you were in high school, was there someone who encouraged you in the educational process? A parent or a teacher? Counselor?

Patricia Smith: 01:36 No. In fact, it was the old routine of the boy. The boy was the one that needed the education. And my mother's from the old school, and she pretty much instilled that in us at home. Also in high school, I very clearly remember it. People having made me think about it. They only talked about--They really geared us toward being a wife, and then the other thing was a teacher or a nurse or a secretary.

Dorothy Huyck: 02:06 So you could be a wife, a teacher, a nurse, or a secretary?

Patricia Smith: 02:08 Those are the ones that are really sticking in my mind.

Dorothy Huyck: 02:20 Was this a public school?

Patricia Smith: 02:20 Mm-hmm.

Dorothy Huyck: 02:20 And this was true among teachers and counselors as well?

Patricia Smith: 02:20 Yes. And in fact, I was very active in sports, and I remember that particularly, there were a group of us, and we were in on the basketball team, and they had state intramurals or something. I can't recall what it was now, but this group, we were outcast because they felt we were too aggressive, and we were competing with the boys. And

I remember that a couple of my teachers took me aside, told me I had everything going for me, except for that. And really wanted me to get out of that because it just wasn't the thing then.

And I remember we did not have showers, for instance. So, if you had gym first thing in the morning, you had the smell and we laughed about it. But the boys had showers. And whenever it was bad weather, we had one indoor gym and the girls were not allowed to use the indoor gym in bad weather. The boys used the gym and then we had to read or make to do with a study hall or have a health class or whatever make believe you wanted to do.

- Dorothy Huyck: 03:22 And you perceived these distinctions at the time?
- Patricia Smith: 03:26 I remember complaining about it. Why? And I remember even going to one of the Phys ed teachers and making the suggestion that--Have it on a rotation basis. Let the boys have the gym one month. For us, have it on another month. Or let them have it two weeks. Let us have it two weeks. She really went along because she was a little bit outgoing, and she felt too that she couldn't really do her job. But I remember that very vividly, and I resented it.
- Dorothy Huyck: 03:56 Did you have the similar experiences within the academic routine. In other words, did boys take sciences and the math and you, for instance, did not? I guess so, you were taking business courses.
- Patricia Smith: 04:08 Yeah. I haven't really thought about that, but when I stop and think about it, yeah, I'm pretty sure that's the way it was, because I remember there were just so many--Well, I can tell you, I did not have a single male in my shorthand class. May have had one in my typing class, business English class, business law. Very few. But they were mostly in, as you say, in the science, in the math classes.
- Dorothy Huyck: 04:34 Did you elect on your own knowingly take business course, or were you encouraged in that direction so that you did not—
- Patricia Smith: 04:41 I was really encouraged in that way.
- Dorothy Huyck: 04:42 You were not encouraged to take sciences and math?

Patricia Smith: 04:45 Not at all.

Dorothy Huyck: 04:47 That was [inaudible 00:04:52].

Patricia Smith: 04:51 Right.

Dorothy Huyck: 04:51 Did you play with boys as a child?

Patricia Smith: 04:55 Yeah. In fact, more with boys than with girls.

Dorothy Huyck: 04:57 Were you, by chance, considered a tomboy?

Patricia Smith: 04:59 Very much so. My mother was very worried.

Dorothy Huyck: 05:03 And as you became a teenager, were you expected to become something more a lady?

Patricia Smith: 05:08 Well, more of a lady would have drove me crazy because – I've only been married about six and a half years. All the girls were getting married and pairing off, and I didn't want that. I just didn't quite – And so there was something wrong with me. It was not that it was anything wrong with them. So, everyone, by the time they graduated from high school was going steady, engaged, and a year or so after high school, married. And now I look back on it, they were married two or three times. And I said, there wasn't anything wrong with me. It was more wrong with them. But I know now too, that it was society. I wasn't smart enough to realize then that it was society, but I had within my own family, uncles be very critical of me for not being married, "not settling down." That kind of thing.

Dorothy Huyck: 06:03 Did family members encourage you as a teenager to evolve into more of a ladylike individual?

Patricia Smith: 06:10 I think so. I don't really remember that so much. I've always been my own person and I just can't really remember that. I'm sure they did though, because I remember particularly, smoke has always bothered me. I have an allergy to it, but I can remember it was okay for my brother to smoke since "Oh, ladies don't smoke." That sticks in my mind, the double standard. I wasn't supposed to have a beer, but by the time he was 16, it was okay for him to have a beer. And I should be home by 11 o'clock, but it was okay for him to stay out until 1:00. Because I'm going to have a bad name if I stay out. That kind of thing. So, I'm sure it was.

Dorothy Huyck: 06:56 Did he go in college?

Patricia Smith: 06:59 No. What did he do? He did go for maybe – No, he went at night. I guess he went a couple years at night. That's what he did. I'm getting old. I can't remember.

Dorothy Huyck: 07:11 I'm asking you questions back [inaudible 00:07:13]. Were you involved in any extracurricular activities in high school that were later helpful in your Park Service career?

Patricia Smith: 07:20 No.

Dorothy Huyck: 07:22 Did you get to any national parks on camping trips or any of that sort?

Patricia Smith: 07:26 Oh, yeah. I've seen a lot of country, a lot of national parks.

Dorothy Huyck: 07:29 But during that growing up time?

Patricia Smith: 07:32 Well, I did that after I got out of school on my own.

Dorothy Huyck: 07:37 So through the period that you were working on a work, school combination routine—

Patricia Smith: 07:44 No.

Dorothy Huyck: 07:44 —you had not?

Patricia Smith: 07:45 No. That was only nine months. That was my last year in high school.

Dorothy Huyck: 07:47 That was your first awareness of the Park Service really came as you began working here at Sequoia?

Patricia Smith: 07:50 Well, when I say that, that isn't really true because I knew about Shenandoah National Park of course. Everybody goes there and you know about independence. Everybody goes there, everybody kind, but I'd never thought about the "Park Service" as an agency. I knew it was there taking care of these things and to provide services when we'd go as a school group or as a family.

Dorothy Huyck: 08:13 Once you graduated from high school, did you continue working for the Park Service [inaudible 00:08:19]?

- Patricia Smith: 08:19 They offered me a job and I went to Strayer's business college at night for, I can't remember, a year maybe or a couple semesters. I just don't remember, to be perfectly honest with you. And it's really funny. I'll never forget. I didn't know at the time, but I went to work in design and construction. And after I had been there for several weeks, and it was an older woman, and I say this only because it goes back to show you how women are much harder on women. And I think that's still true. But she laughed and she said to me – They told her about me. That I was a good worker. That I was reliable. That I was this. That I was whatever she wanted to hear, I guess is what they had told her. But she came up one day and I noticed she came in and I sat in an office with another lady, and she said like, whatever the lady's name was, "Mary, I'll see you for lunch tomorrow, today, or whatever."
- And she laughed. And she says, "The reason I came up—" She says, "We weren't going to lunch. I came up to take a look at you to see if you were some young, smart-alecky thing that I didn't want." And I said, "Oh, is that right?" And she said, "Yeah." And she says, "But of course, when you came up, I saw that you were very polite and that you knew how to answer the telephone." And that kind of thing. So, it made no difference that I was already qualified for the job. And of course, that was, like I say, 20 years ago. I guess they let her pretty much run the office. But had I, for whatever, I suppose I could have had on the wrong color that day or whatever, I would not have had the job. And I don't know, I probably then would've just gone out looking somewhere else.
- Dorothy Huyck: 10:07 So that first job, what grade was that?
- Patricia Smith: 10:12 Well, when I came – Let's see, when we were in school, I was a GS-1. So that either continued as a one or as a two, because they started inside at the lowest possible grade.
- Dorothy Huyck: 10:22 And what were you doing?
- Patricia Smith: 10:27 When I was working in school on that part-time basis, it was mainly just typing. As soon as I went downstairs, I actually started doing secretarial work, taking care of letters and files and telephones and things like that.
- Dorothy Huyck: 10:40 Where did you learn that?

- Patricia Smith: 10:44 I stayed in design and construction and in the secretarial field and just moved up, it seemed, as soon as I had an opportunity. Because other people started seeing my work, and so they were coming to me. And I do not like to be idle, and so I did work for a lot of different people, if my men were on travel or things like that. And I just stayed in design and construction until – can't remember the year. I guess '68, '69, '67, something like that. Clark Stratton, who was then the deputy director, and he had worked in design and construction. I then went to work for him and his office as one of two secretaries there. And from there went into the Service Center.
- Dorothy Huyck: 11:35 And when did you go to the Service Center?
- Patricia Smith: 11:39 When it was first established over in Roslyn, and I think that was '69.
- Dorothy Huyck: 11:44 What was it called at that point?
- Patricia Smith: 11:48 The Eastern Service Center.
- Dorothy Huyck: 11:50 Oh, I see. And what were you doing there?
- Patricia Smith: 11:55 I went over there. Mr. Stratton told me that would be an opportunity to get in the administrative field. So, I went over there as the administrative officer for the office of resource planning and supervised the clerical people and did the budget and the personnel programming contracts. And that was really interesting. And it was also a challenge because we were setting up an office, did a lot of recruiting, got some young people from colleges as well as some people from within the service that wanted to get into the planning field and design where it would be grouped together. So, it was just about everything you can name. And as far as administrative type work.
- Dorothy Huyck: 12:41 Did you go from there to the Denver Service Center?
- Patricia Smith: 12:44 Right? Then they sent us all to Denver.
- Dorothy Huyck: 12:46 I Honestly forgotten what year that was.
- Patricia Smith: 12:48 Was '71, October '71. I think it was October 10th. It was a three-day weekend. George Hartzog got a lot of flak about that in the newspaper.



- Dorothy Huyck: 12:59 And what were your responsibilities when you went to Denver?
- Patricia Smith: 13:04 Well, when I got to Denver, they had said I was going to be an administrative officer there, but in the Eastern Service Center we had not had a personnel office or payroll office, any of those functions, but we got to Denver, we did have those functions. So, I never really did do that. I assisted them in getting it started when they had any questions. Because I had worked with people in the east. Then I went into legislation and that's an interesting story because they had a GS-13 as a legislative coordinator. He had an assistant that was a GS-12, and they had a GS-5 secretary, and they reassigned the GS-13 to another division. So that left the GS-12. And then of course I was to become his assistant and they didn't think that we needed a secretary because I would be able to take care of the typing along with all the other work.
- So, then the GS-12 was there – and I've got all this documented – the GS-12 was there for nine months. And then he went on to another assignment and I was told when I was put into that, I could easily get my 11 and I did not get an 11. And of course, the man was there. It was a 12, of course the other man was a 13 and I was there for about two years or longer. I'd have to check my records to see, and I never could get the 11. And then when the Civil Service came in the exact same work, coordinating the work and everything or, well, I shouldn't say civil service because I never saw anything from Civil Service. So, I have to take their word for it. And I retract that because I don't trust him that my people, I will say the Park Service told me that it was a weak nine.
- But what is interesting is I was the only woman in legislation. They have legislative coordinators throughout the Park Service in the field. And I was the only one that was a GS-9. All the others are GS-12 and 13s. So, you figure it out.
- Dorothy Huyck: 15:01 Did you ever take any action?
- Patricia Smith: 15:03 No, because what happened was that I let it go too. You have 30 days or 60 days, whatever it is, from the time they either tell you or they initiated or something. And so, I never – in other words, I went in there and I didn't have

anything in writing and then I let it go too long, but I think I was wronged and I'm really sorry I didn't because I think I just cheated myself out a lot of money.

Dorothy Huyck: 15:34

Did you eventually become a GS-11?

Patricia Smith: 15:36

Not until just a few months ago. In fact, that will show you again. I feel it's just discrimination. It's very hard to prove there's all kinds of discrimination, but they advertised a job cooperative activity specialist at the GS-7/9/11 level. Okay. I applied at the nine and the 11 level because I was very much interested in it. And at that time, I was a writer-editor. They decided that they no longer needed a legislative coordinator. So, they reassigned me in the reorganization as a writer-editor, which I find interesting because now they've come back and decided they do need a legislative coordinator and they say it has promotion potential. And they reassigned a woman from Washington back to Denver. But needless to say.

Anyhow, when they advertise the cooperative activity specialist and I applied for two grades, the man that selected me told me that I came out highly qualified and probably the best qualified at both the nine and the 11 level. But "They," he says, "They," meaning he and his supervisor, which was the deputy manager of the Service Center, chose to select me at the nine level. If I wanted the job and I would have to serve a year at the nine. And I served, in fact, I served 15 months at the nine. I am the only person in the Denver Service Center that was ever highly qualified and had to serve at the lower level.

Dorothy Huyck: 17:14

How do you explain that?

Patricia Smith: 17:16

Cause I'm a woman. I was told that I'm the only, now I'm not speaking of people that come in off of the register where they're on the register and they're on the register, like a 7/9. And so, they don't know what they can do. And they say, "Well, I'll hire you at the seven."

Most of those that they come in and they see that they can do nine level work. For instance, you're talking about an architect than engineer landscape architect, then they will promote them within three months or six months because the written amendment does not apply because they are on a Civil Service register. So, the written amendment doesn't

apply where you have to serve that one year in grade. In my case, I am the only out of – it was 350 employees it's now up to 700 – I am the only employee of 700 that had ever been highly qualified at that level and served 15 months at that grade, and they knew what my records was. And I was told that by two or three people in Denver.

- Dorothy Huyck: 18:16 You must have asked questions?
- Patricia Smith: 18:17 Well, that's how I found out, but what can I do? You can't grieve a promotion. You're at their mercy and it's just a matter of if you've got – that supervisor, if in his heart, he would've felt better saying, "I'll hire you at a nine. And then if you can do the job in three months," even. I walked in that job. I'm the one that set up the guidelines, the procedures, I didn't get any day-to-day supervision. And he'll tell you that. I didn't need it. I knew enough about it.
- Dorothy Huyck: 18:57 When you left the Denver Service Center, you were then at GS-11?
- Patricia Smith: 19:00 Right.
- Dorothy Huyck: 19:01 And you resigned.
- Patricia Smith: 19:02 No. I was very smart. I did not resign. I had put in a memo asking them for a leave of absence to not to exceed a year, while I looked for a job. And the day before I was due to leave or two days before I was due to leave, I got a call from Dave Wright. That's right. I'm supposed to their names.
- Well, that's all right. It's a [inaudible 00:19:29]. So anyway, Dave Wright called, and he said that someone in his office had been detailed somewhere and he knew my predicament. And would I be willing to accept a detail in his office.
- Dorothy Huyck: 19:37 Here in Washington?
- Patricia Smith: 19:39 Here in Washington. I said, "That would really be great." He says, "Because at least then it'll give you the exposure. You'll see the announcements," things like that. And he says, "It'll be a help to me," because he is really in charge of the Service Center. The Service Center reports to him. So, he says, "You already know the operation of the

Service Center. And you know the people it'll work for both of us, and the planning documents come through it." And I said, "Great." And I will say that of all the people in the Park Service now, Dave Wright and John Henneberger really did everything they could for me.

They were extremely supportive. They really tried but I was misled. I was told, I came back here. I found nine jobs in July that I qualified for. I was willing to take a 35-hour week appointment. I was willing to take a nine. I was willing to cooperate with them in any way I could. I was told, "Yes, you've got this job." I was told, "I'll call you in a week." I was told, "Yes, I've got a job. I just have to rewrite the PD." Out of those nine jobs. None of the materialized. People would not return my calls.

So finally, after five and a half months, and I will say, Mr. Tobin, you certainly know that he doesn't care whether you're male or female or whatever, and I know they reassign people all the time. So, it wasn't like saying, "Do something for me. You don't do for anyone else," because they reassign men all the time. They reassign women. And my problem was I hadn't been a problem. They reassign problems all the time and we all know it. We hear about it. We can name names if need be. So, I finally went into Nan Brown who's the Department's Federal Woman's Program coordinator had been working with me. And she felt that the Park Service was really giving me a bad deal having 21-year service.

And she and I met with Ira Hutchinson, and I had talked to personnel. I had applied for jobs. I applied for jobs that I knew, same job and everything. The grapevine said they were pre-election. So, I guess they were pre-selection. They knew my predicament. There was nothing I could do, but I went in, and we talked to Ira Hutchison and Nan Brown. In essence, she told him, "Here's somebody, I know you don't owe her a job. She's got 21 years' service. She's got a good record. Why are they doing it? They would never do this to a man." And Mr. Hutchinson apologized and said that he did not realize that I'd had that problem. He thought that I should have come to him first. And Nan says, "Well, we've tried working through personnel because that's where you're supposed to go."

And he said, "Yes, that's true. But if you don't get anywhere then you should have come to me rather than letting it drag on like this." So, he says, "We'll be back in touch with you in a week or so." Mr. Tobin, then in about two weeks called me and said that he had a job in his office, which personnel had told me about it was at my grade level. He said that he was, and I'm quoting him practically. He said that they had told him that I wanted a job and that if I turned out to be a problem, to let them know, try me for two weeks. And then they place me somewhere else. And he says, "I've done my own checking. And you come out with a clean record."

And he says, "I would like, based on your 171, I know you've got the qualifications. I would like to try you for two weeks." He says, "That way, if you and I just really rub each other wrong, you're not boxed into something. I'll continue to help you. And I'm not boxed into something." And I said, "Fine." At least that's very fair. No one else has been willing to do that. They won't even talk to me. So, I went up there and I was there for nine days. And on the ninth day he told me I had the job and at least I know he is sincere. And he has told me, he wants me to be involved in with the women's committee and things like that with EEO to monitor the office.

And I know he's interested, or he did not have to give me a chance and he certainly didn't have to give job.

- Dorothy Huyck: 23:39 This is a GS-11?
- Patricia Smith: 23:42 Yeah. So, I was able to keep my grade and it's a good job. It's challenging and it's so different being in the Service Center, it's the day-to-day operations of the parks. You get involved with the problems they have with land acquisition, with the concessions, with personnel, with reassignments, superintendents. All of those kinds of things. So, I'm going to keep busy and I'm going to learn. I'm really fortunate.
- Dorothy Huyck: 24:09 This was a vacancy?
- Patricia Smith: 24:10 Yes.
- Dorothy Huyck: 24:11 Was it one of the nine jobs you had uncovered?

- Patricia Smith: 24:13 No, because it wasn't [unintelligible] in July when I was here, but personnel had mentioned it to me, but personnel would not do anything to help me.
- Dorothy Huyck: 24:24 Would a man have ever seen treated the same?
- Patricia Smith: 24:25 Absolutely not.
- Dorothy Huyck: 24:26 Why not?
- Patricia Smith: 24:29 Well, I think for one reason, men have more power because it's like with me, Dave Wright was a real help to me in saying, in offering me that detail. Okay. Had I not known Dave Wright, I would not have had a detail, but on the other hand, if Nan Brown – I would never have gone in, now, I know Bill Whalen from back when he was in National Capital Parks, I may have gone into Bill Whalen. I didn't know Ira Hutchinson but having someone from the Department gave me more clout because they knew then the Department was interested. I also had just chaired that national conference with federally employed women, which would make them come out with real egg on their face knowing what a success that had been, that I had enough people to say, "Hey, what is this agency doing?" But men, if one man doesn't help them, another man will. Look around, who's in charge. I'm very limited in the number of people I can go to. And besides that, there's still that old feeling that if a woman walks in and asks for something, she's a troublemaker.
- Dorothy Huyck: 25:44 I got a distinct impression of what your husband said that he agrees with that entirely, that this would've been a different situation for a man coming here. If he had transferred here in some similar situation, you were.
- Patricia Smith: 25:56 Oh, I think if I had been offered a position and had accepted it and my husband had gone into the manager of the Service Center and said, "Pat has accepted this position in Washington." I think they would've said, "Oh, that's great. We'll reassign you to our Bailey's Crossroads office." And he would still be on the Service Center, payrolls. And he would've been there. And I don't think he would've gone one day, much less five and a half months looking for a job.
- Dorothy Huyck: 26:20 It was not suggested that you could be reassigned at the Bailey's?

Patricia Smith: 26:23

I asked, and they told me they had nothing there. And I know of people from the Service Center that have been reassigned on Mickey Mouse reasons. Like, "I don't like living in Denver." I know of people from the Washington Office that couldn't get along with the supervisors when they changed. And they were reassigned to the National Capital Region. I know of people that have had personal problems and they wanted to get away from their mate. And so, they reassign them to some region or whatever. And I said, "Hey, all I want is a job. I am willing to do it. Any job that I know I can do, I was willing to take the 35-hour appointment," and I got nothing. And I tell you to be perfectly honest, I cannot put into words, the disappointment I felt for Park Service, because I've always felt the Park Service was a little bit special and a little bit more than the average agency.

And I still think it is only because of the people, because I know people do work overtime and they don't get paid. And people in the parks how dedicated they are. I do think that the people in personnel certainly need some sensitivity training. It is really frustrating. It is upsetting. And it is very hard to go in and a person say to you, "Well, yes, I have this position and I'm going to be back in touch with you in a week." And you sit and you wait, and you wait, and you wait and there's nothing. Or you go into personnel. And I went in and talked to the head man in personnel. And he said to me, "It's all in who you know."

I said, "What's the policy then on when, because the director," and I have a copy of that, "The director had said at one of the regional directors' meetings, that whenever we transfer a spouse, I want us to look at that person's mate and let's see what we can do. Let's see if there isn't a job available because if we have two productive employees and they're happy, you know they're going to do a better job." He didn't say let's give anything, but he says, "Let's look around and see what we have." I couldn't even get them to do that. You would've thought I was asking for a GS-15, something utterly ridiculous.

Dorothy Huyck: 28:42

Maybe this is an appropriate time to go back in history again, a little bit, and ask about supervisors that you encountered. And I'd read enough again. You mentioned names, but I'm interested in women and the relationships with supervisors in terms of whether or not supervisors are

encouraging or discouraging, or maybe you've encountered some of both?

Patricia Smith: 29:17

I think I've encountered both.

Dorothy Huyck: 29:23

When you have dealt with an encouraging supervisor, how has that encouragement been displayed?

Patricia Smith: 29:31

I think mostly when you know that they are giving you the responsibility of something. When I went over to the Service Center, for instance, I knew he was there when I had a problem, but I knew he was not breathing down my neck. He was letting me make the decision. And he was letting me come up with the idea. And then if it didn't work, he was telling why that wouldn't work. That kind of thing. And I think that's much better to have that kind of encouragement rather than just always saying, "You're doing a good job. You're doing a good job," that kind of thing. Whereas I've had others that let me know they didn't particularly like it that I was so aggressive, or they didn't like that if I have a job to do, I don't care if I got to go to 10 people, I'm going to get out and get the information I need.

And sometimes one in particular would rather I have not done that more or less came and said to him, "I really don't know how to do this," or "I can't get it." Or "Who do I go to?" Or that kind of thing. And I think that's the biggest encouragement. I think the other one is just, if you're going to fall down, that's okay. But just to be there with your hand to help me up. And that's the kind of supervisor you need. Whereas I think some men, once the woman falls down, they're ready to write her off, "She can't do the job," but they're always there to bail out their buddy.

Dorothy Huyck: 31:09

Some people consider them the National Park Service is rather male oriented organization—

Patricia Smith: 31:14

It is. It is.

Dorothy Huyck: 31:16

Do you see that changing now?

Patricia Smith: 31:19

Oh, I've seen a lot of change in the 20 years. Oh yeah. I can remember. There were never any female rangers and I think about the associate regional director in Southwest, we never had any really high-ranking women or the associate director administration that we have now. So, it's changing,



but it's very slow and we're fooling ourselves if we say it's not, it's still white male and it's still a buddy system and there's good and there's bad in that. And it's just going to be a very slow process in changing that.

- Dorothy Huyck: 31:59 Have you taken various training courses during the Park Service career?
- Patricia Smith: 32:07 Very few because I couldn't get them.
- Dorothy Huyck: 32:11 Why not?
- Patricia Smith: 32:13 Well, I don't know. I had some problems in the Service Center because I did try to get the women going and things like that. And I think that was used against me and I went outside, and I know in the training, I really don't know why I didn't get the training because I never could get a straight answer. But I know for instance, on the form that you fill out, the training that you're interested in, that's given at Harpers Ferry and Albright, I put down one course, something to do with communications because I was talking to people all the time and explaining things, international visitors before that it had been in legislation where you are dealing with the regions. On occasion, you might have reasons come in here and go on the Hill or something like that.
- Three years I put that down and they always sent someone else from the Service Center. And a lot of times they're not as directly related as the job that I was doing. So, who knows? It's a guessing game as to why. So, the way I am, I just thought, "Well, why fight a losing battle?" I'm not going to waste my time and continue to put in for something and fill out. I'm not going to waste my time and the government's money. So, I just I haven't put in for any training in three years except the Federal Women's conference. I was allowed to attend that and '76 and of course then '77, I was chairing it. So, I attended that. But other than that, I really haven't put in for any specific training, but now I'll try again. Now that I'm here, because it's a whole new ball game.
- Dorothy Huyck: 33:54 Would you tell me a bit about what you did with regarding the Federal Woman's Conference in July '76?

- Patricia Smith: 33:58 I'll never forget what May Walterhouse told me. She was the national president of FEW. She says, "If you can get this conference together and still have people speaking and have it successful, you can do anything." And she's right. But what we did, we put together a three-day workshop type training and we offered a variety of 121 workshops from women in health to then it was not geared to women. There was the technical government employee, the professional government employee, the clerical employee, how to switch careers, if you want to, how to go to school and work at the same time, how to live with yourself, entering into the single life again, which applies to men as well as does to women, all kinds of courses.
- And we had the professionals from all over the country and it was a matter of getting the word out nationwide. And we had people from practically every state, as well as Korea and Germany and other places. Coordinating it, getting the registration stuff, publicity on it. And of course, in Denver, we dealt with the TV and radio station and did a couple of talk shows and things like that to get it going and got some good publicity out of it, had good participation by both the governor's office and his wife. And it's all the little jobs that people just don't--it's like thinking about all the rooms that are needed for 121 workshops and making sure that in each room you have the number of pencils and erasers and the flip charts. Well, when people walk into a room, they only think about their flip chart and their eraser and things like that. And it's making sure that everything comes together in gels at the right time.
- It's an experience that I would not have wanted to miss out on, but I do not want another one like it for another 10 years, it will take me that long to recoup. But it was worthwhile.
- Dorothy Huyck: 36:12 What do you think you accomplished there?
- Patricia Smith: 36:14 Well, one thing I know I accomplished is that I made Denver aware of Federally Employed Women. A lot of women didn't even know that such an organization existed, and Denver has a great number of federal employees. And also, our chapter grew in number. And I think too, the other thing that we accomplished was that women found out they could work together. They could sit down, and they could figure out--I mean, we did not have a man to go to and we

put, we had over 3,000 people participate in that conference. They found out that we could make decisions. I'm a great delegator and they may come to me and say, "Do you want A or B?"

But I made them decide, "Okay, well, why do you recommend A over B?" They found out they could do things like that. That they could find hotels, that they could come up with recommendations to problems, that they could work together. Even though they would get very angry and very upset because the one thing I kept telling them is, "Remember, now you're going to hate each other tonight. But tomorrow when you get up, it's a new day." And I said, "Remember how men they go into a meeting, and they scream, and they holler, and they pound on the table, and they use all the four-letter words. And then I said, two hours later it's 'Hey Joe, you want to go for a drink?'" And I said, "Women never do that. Then they just crucify each other." And I think everybody could look on it with some real self-satisfaction. The people that worked on the program, the book, the program book, the people that worked on publicity, the people that worked with the hotel registration. There were problems naturally.

And we've told them that they should go on a computer, the registration this year, which they are going to do. But we had the most successful. There have been nine conferences. We had more people registered. We had more people attend the luncheon. We had more people attend the banquet and everything. It was the best that we've ever had. And I think if you can do that in Denver, because Denver has a lot of federal employees, but we had people coming from all over. Here, you've just got so many people they're so close too on the east coast. So, it's quite different. So, I just think – we self-pride is something too.

- Dorothy Huyck: 38:32 Would it be fair to say that you think that your specific talents and training are being well used by the Park Service?
- Patricia Smith: 38:42 I don't know yet, because I see I've only been on this job since December 4th, and I think this job's going to be a real challenge. I've had people tell me I'd really be a good supervisor. I can motivate people. I've done that. By being in various organizations and getting them going where they were falling apart before. And I think the key to that is that

I won't let you off the hook. I tell you, "You've got the responsibility." If you come back to me and say, "Well, I can't do it," then, "Well, why can't you do it?" So, I'm not sure. Right now, I'm just very pleased with what I have, and I think it's going to be a real challenge. And a year from now. I think I may be ready to go to something else.

Dorothy Huyck: 39:37

When you look at your past career up to this December position, do you feel that your talents and your specific training have been well used?

Patricia Smith: 39:45

Absolutely not. I think a lot of mine has been a complete waste.

Dorothy Huyck: 39:51

Would you say your talents are underused?

Patricia Smith: 39:53

Absolutely. And particularly when I was in the Service Center. Now, when I first went there, that isn't true when I was serving as administrative officer, but when you're bored you know. And I've been bored too much. And when you can do your job like that and then sit there and do your own thing, then you know something's wrong. And I have been to them and told them, "I want to do this." "I want to do that." "I want to do the other thing." And I don't know. I think in a way they were afraid of me. I know there are men that are afraid of me. They've told me that and they've told other people that, and I've tried then to stop and analyze, why is it that? But then there's no way it's not me because I've observed some of those men, they happen to be in supervisory positions.

Well, one of them is getting ready to leave. He's retiring. And that's a blessing, I think, but it's not me. It's women, any woman that can do a job. I have sat in meetings with them and watched them and if the women just sit there and, "Oh, yes, sir. Yes, you're right. That's right." And will agree with them and just go along with them and not cross them. That's fine. And I just did not do that in the Service Center. If I thought it was wrong, I spoke up and said, "I thought it was wrong." And I had a lot of people coming to me that would ask me, "Would you go in with me when I go to talk to my supervisor, my manager, whatever." I was chairing the EEO committee, and I could do it on that basis.

And then of course they knew I was in working with few on the outside. And I don't think they liked that. They just

didn't like the idea that I would question them, or I feel like it's just standing up for my rights, and I will advise people if they come to me, I'll give them best advice I can give them. And I think they knew that I was doing that. So, you don't want anyone like that in any responsible position, particularly if you're insecure. And I think a lot of men, if they could just learn that we women, we're not there to take anything away from them. There's enough for everybody, but I just think they're very fearful of that.

Dorothy Huyck: 42:16

And that they feel women threaten them?

Patricia Smith: 42:18

Oh yes. I think they feel that very much so. And if you get a supervisor that does not feel threatened, you're just very, very fortunate, because he's going to let you grow. And in fact, we just keep on giving you more and more responsibility to see how much you really can handle. And then you'll both reach a point. And I think that's all what it's all about. It's funny, I've watched men and it's sad, but I have watched them where they will pick out a buddy. That's like the dog in the window and they bring them up. They keep pouring more work on them and they keep praising them. And they're always, "That's such a good guy," but the guy over here, who's going to stand up for himself and his own beliefs and all, they're not going to be praising him.

And they're going to be a little leery of him if they can, they're going to stick in with the duds. The real bad jobs, so then when a woman comes along, she hasn't got a chance because she does not have a person. Unless she happens to get a good supervisor, but women are not in the positions that can really play the buddy game yet.

Dorothy Huyck: 43:35

Has anyone acted as a mentor for you?

Patricia Smith: 43:37

No. And I think there are pluses and minuses than that.

Dorothy Huyck: 43:48

Do you want to be more specific?

Patricia Smith: 43:50

Well, I think that if you have somebody that's always, you're their shadow okay. Everybody knows you're not going to make a move until you check it out. Then I've heard people that, where they know someone's serving in that capacity, they say, "Well, she never makes a decision on her own. It's his decision," that kind of thing. I think

that's one of the minuses is I think one of the pluses is, and probably the big plus is that he's had a lot more experience and he can teach you things. And I think to use them as a sounding board is really good, but I would not want to have one. I would like to have someone that I felt that I was really interested in me, and I haven't found – now I'm not speaking in my husband, certainly – but I haven't found someone that I could feel that I could go to and really open up with, as I could another woman.

Now, there are very few women that you could do that with too, because they'll use it against you.

Dorothy Huyck: 44:57

Why?

Patricia Smith: 44:59

I really wish I knew. I just simply don't know. And I think the other thing is once women make it to a certain grade level, they just forget. In fact, it's amazing. The number of women that I've already had come and talk to me here in the Washington Office and I have one or two and they're just pouring their hearts out to me. And I told them, I'm really not in a position where I can even begin to help you. I understand their problems and what they're saying at the time, I didn't even have a job of my own. And that's another reason I really like to get on the women's committee that they have and the EEO and see what are they doing?

And do they really know some of the problems they have? They have some very young talent here that they can work with, and they're interested, they're dynamic, but oh boy, do they feel the frustrations. They don't feel they have anyone to turn to. And then they happen to be working in an office where it's an older woman. And I really think that's unfair because she's only 40 ish, but the other one's 20 ish. And that's so she's not really oldish but older, but she's not an older woman. And yet she resents this young woman. And I could observe that just in listening into the two conversations, the young woman is interested in working, going to college and so forth. And she wants to be something more than a secretary and this other woman, she can't understand why she can't be happy, she's very happy.

She's a wife, she's a mother and she's a secretary. And so therein, you've got the big conflict and they both need somebody to talk to and you need to make them realize, "Hey, you both have something to offer. What you're

saying is right. What you're saying is right, the young one can certainly learn from the experiences of the older one. The older one has to learn. She's young. She has more wants more needs than I do. It's not wrong." But each one of them right now, they're just taking those frustrations out on each other, which makes it a very difficult working relationship.

Women are just not very sympathetic to other women. I know women are not sympathetic with my problem. And I will say this. I had far more help from the Black women than I did the white women.

- Dorothy Huyck: 47:17 That's interesting.
- Patricia Smith: 47:18 Far more help. And it was a Black woman that helped me and finally saw me through. And I went to some white women and white women didn't return the phone calls. And with white women, I was just a problem. And I had much more support from the Black women.
- Dorothy Huyck: 47:35 Is it possible that women have not really learned to support one another, in fact that they may carry over a certain competitive attitude from childhood or girlhood?
- Patricia Smith: 47:46 I don't think they want to support them because I don't think they really want to see too many women get ahead. Some-
- Dorothy Huyck: 47:53 "I've done it; therefore, I'm not interested in your doing it too."
- Patricia Smith: 47:57 Well. I think there's that. And I also think there's some women that think, "Hey, I've got it made." And so, they think that you're really going to upset their apple cart by – You know, it's like the ERA. I've been in sessions where women have stood up and said, "If this ERA is passed, I'm going to lose all of my child support and alimony." And your statistics will show you that they usually pay it for three months and then they don't pay and they're not going to lose anything. The only thing is if you're more capable of paying it than he is – and I don't have a problem with that but now some women see they have a real problem with that – Some women just don't think they have it all that bad. And so, I think they think we're taking something away from them.

Dorothy Huyck: 48:52 This seems like it's a superfluous question, but I'd still like to ask it. Do you think that being a woman has affected your opportunities for added responsibilities and promotion?

Patricia Smith: 49:03 Oh, absolutely. I have no doubt in my mind if I were a man, I think I'd be a 13, possibly 14 today.

Dorothy Huyck: 49:12 Are there any jobs in the National Park Service that you think a woman really should not tackle?

Patricia Smith: 49:19 I've never sat down and thought about that specific question, but off the top of my head, I can't think of one.

Dorothy Huyck: 49:28 You were referring to support that women can give each other. And I gather you've gotten support primarily from Black women recently.

Patricia Smith: 49:34 Right.

Dorothy Huyck: 49:35 You've also been supported on some occasion, by white women?

Patricia Smith: 49:40 Very limited, very limited.

Dorothy Huyck: 49:44 And I gather from their conversations with the two women you've just mentioned that you yourself are providing support, encouragement to some persons, some women?

Patricia Smith: 49:53 Trying to, yeah. I feel that women better learn to talk to each other and not at each other and about each other because only women I think can understand what it's like to always have to explain, for instance, "How can you have a career and a marriage?" But a man has never asked that question, or "Don't you feel guilty about leaving your child and going off to work?" And okay, we've been taught to feel guilty, but the father doesn't feel guilty about going off. So, we understand what it's like. We also know what it's like to know that we were qualified for a position and that we were passed over and a male was given that position, whether white or Black, we also know what it is like to do a good job and not be given the credit. And so, I think we can relate that to each other. And I think we better learn to sit down and talk to each other and be supportive of one another.



- Dorothy Huyck: 50:56 Do you see anything of an old girl network growing up in Park Service?
- Patricia Smith: 51:05 I don't think so. I think it's very difficult to get women to talk to each other.
- Dorothy Huyck: 51:16 If you look ahead, shall we say five years down the road, how do you feel about the possibilities and opportunities for women in the Park Service?
- Patricia Smith: 51:28 Well, what I've said all along is that until we can change the attitude of men, because they're the ones in charge – we can play games with statistics. Now we can have the people that are there because we have to have a certain number – but until we have changed the attitudes of the people in charge, I don't see any real change. Men have got to accept the fact that women are competent, capable workers and that because we look different, we really can do a job. And until they change that attitude and I'm hoping that – it may not be in my generation, but I'm hoping that, well, I don't have children, but for instance, my nephews that are coming along, they are growing up with the idea that their Aunt Pat tells her nieces, "You're not going to be a nurse. You're going to be a doctor," or "You're going to be a Senator."
- In the same way I've been telling my cousins that. So, they're also growing up with the idea their father – my father never did this – but their father will wax the floor or cook the dinner if their mother's not feeling well. Their mother is a substitute teacher, has taught then quit when she had the last baby and now does substitute. So, they're growing up with a different philosophy about women than I grew up when my brother grew up and they are changing. And I think until that changes, I don't think it's going to be five years. I think we may still have a few scattered here and there, but I still think they're going to be fighting an uphill battle.
- Dorothy Huyck: 53:09 You obviously did not resign from the Park Service when you were married.
- Patricia Smith: 53:13 No.
- Dorothy Huyck: 53:14 And what year were you married?

- Patricia Smith: 53:16 '72.
- Dorothy Huyck: 53:17 And you have no children. And you obviously continued to want to work for the Park Service as your husband has transferred. You hope to make a marriage and a career feasible side by side.
- Patricia Smith: 53:29 Right.
- Dorothy Huyck: 53:31 Is the Park Service encouraging that?
- Patricia Smith: 53:34 They certainly didn't encourage me, took me five and a half months to get a job. I would think they would encourage that, particularly if, whether the wife is transferred or the husband is transferred and they've had a good number of years, they certainly have to know something about the Park Service. And so, they would have something to offer. But I have to say, I don't think they're encouraging that at all. As I said earlier, the director has made this statement at one of the regional directors' meetings that when one was transferred, he wanted to take a look around and see if there wasn't a position that the other person could be worked into.
- Dorothy Huyck: 54:14 This obviously did not particularly happen in your case.
- Patricia Smith: 54:16 Absolutely not. They—
- Dorothy Huyck: 54:18 Do you if that affected other couples who have both been Park Service employees and have moved?
- Patricia Smith: 54:24 Well. Yeah, I do know. I know of one couple that went up to the New England area and she was offered a position about 50 miles from where they'd be located, which was too long a drive. I also know that during the time I was here, when I went up, one of my occasions to talk to them in personnel, they had mentioned to me that there was a woman there and her husband was being transferred to the Washington area. And that the man in personnel said just told her, "We don't have anything for you. We can't do anything to help you." And I asked him, "What's the policy then on this kind of thing?" And his comment to me was, "It's all in who you know." And I said, "Well, that's ridiculous because we've got a lot of good people. And for the time it takes for paperwork."

I know of another young woman that's in the Denver Service Center. And her husband has been located here since September, and they're waiting for their house to be built. And the reason she has not moved here is because now, and I'm talking about a GS-6. Now, you know how many jobs there are at the GS-6 level. And she is excellent. She's received an outstanding performance rating and she's just such a Cracker Jack, a real good worker, nothing. They say, "We have nothing for her." Now in an agency this size. And I mean, we're going to lose her because what she's going to do is she's going to have to resign. And she says then, and I can understand that because I was disappointed in the Park Service. She's worked for the Park Service about three years. But if the Park Service isn't interested in her, she's going to be snatched up. So, I think that certainly indicates how serious they are about helping women, because women don't get transfers. Only men get transfers.

- Dorothy Huyck: 56:05 Seem like an unusual question, but I'd like to ask if you have any financial responsibilities for other members of your family other than your immediate selves?
- Patricia Smith: 56:20 No, we don't.
- Dorothy Huyck: 56:21 We've talked about quite a number of things. One of the last things I'd like to ask you is whether or not you would encourage a recent school graduate, someone recently out of school to consider the Park Service for a career, if it was for a young for a woman?
- Patricia Smith: 56:39 Well, I think that things are changing, and it would really depend on what field she was in. I do think there are a lot of other agencies that are more progressive. And I think the agency, it has very rewarding work and that's important because, what you're doing is important for your country, as well as the rest of the world. And you enjoy it. When you go into a park, you can say, "Oh, I had something to do with this and that counts for something." And if that's what they're interested in, if they're interested in getting ahead, I'd say it's going to be a slow, uphill battle and I would go somewhere else.
- Dorothy Huyck: 57:16 We talked quite about a number of things, a variety of things. Is there something we've not touched on that you'd like to comment?

- Patricia Smith: 57:32 Can't think of anything.
- Dorothy Huyck: 57:36 Well, one thing occurs me that you are the only instance in the Park Service where I interviewed both you and your husband.
- Patricia Smith: 57:45 Oh, he didn't get me a job, which people automatically think that. So, I will point that out very quickly. First of all, I have 21 years' service and he has six. And, but no, he was hired in the Western Service Center. And in fact, when they hired him, one of the things he said was, "What's the possibility of being moved?" And they said, "Oh, we're never going to be moved because we've been here 14 years and they won't move us. If anything, they will move the people from the East to the West." Well, he was there six months when they moved him to Denver. So, I met him when we were consolidated, his office was moved from San Francisco and mine was moved from Washington, DC. And so, we met there and then we were married the following year, but I have to say this, and everybody will say it's being prejudiced, but you can talk to women that have worked for him.
- And if we had more of those kinds of men in the positions, believe me, women would not have the struggle. And I'm sure there are some more men out there that I, well, as I mentioned, Mr. Tobin that gave me an opportunity, I feel he certainly has to be given a great deal of credit. Because in five and a half months, he was the only person that would even talk to me seriously. Other people would not even talk to me. And that's when you know whether they're serious enough. My husband brought in women architects. I think we had one and then he did get her promotion and she had been eligible for promotion for a few years before he came in. And he finally did get her the promotion.
- She's doing the same work as the men, but she was one grade lower. And I'm sure that's true in a lot of other places until recently where they have started fighting it and by law, they just simply cannot do that. So, if he's been a real support of mine, I would not have made it in the five and a half months because I just got so tired of the run around and being misled and the disappointments, that kind of thing.
- Dorothy Huyck: 59:40 Thank you Pat.

Patricia Smith: 59:41 Well, thank you. I hope it's worthwhile.

Dorothy Huyck: 59:44 Indeed.

[END OF TAPE]

[END OF INTERVIEW]