

Gas Rush

Suzanne Escott Oral History

Date of Interview: June 23 (year unknown)

Location: Martins Ferry, Ohio

Length of Interview: 00:45:46

Interviewer: SP – Sandy Putorek

Transcriber: NCC

Sandy Putorek: My name is Sandy Putorek, and we are at the home of Suzanne Escott, on June 23rd, 1915 [sic], with Rob Arnold. Suzanne, would you just tell us your age, so we can put this in perspective.

Suzanne Escott: I'm 75 years old.

SP: Thank you, Suzanne. Now, would you tell me about your people and where you were raised?

SE: I was raised right here in Martins Ferry, and my grandfather originally came from England when he was a young man. So, we were raised right here in this town of Martins Ferry.

SP: Okay. How about your mother?

SE: She's from the same area. She went to Martins Ferry schools. They actually had farms right outside of town. Their farms were right next to each other.

SP: Here in Martins Ferry?

SE: Yes, right outside of town here.

SP: Wow.

SE: Yes.

SP: So, your parents were born in England then.

SE: No. They were actually born here.

SP: How far back is –

SE: Well, my grandfather, yes, my dad's father came from England.

SP: Okay. Your maternal side?

SE: She came from England also.

SP: Do you remember your grandparents at all?

SE: Yes, I do. Yes.

SP: What do you remember about them?

SE: I don't know, just old folks.

[laughter]

SP: Well, tell me about your life a little bit. I'm not going to be asking you a lot of questions. I'm just going to let you tell us what you feel is important to you growing up and as an adult, and what was your life like?

SE: Well, my life was – I like to read a lot, so I spent a lot of time reading. It took me several years to get through college, but I finally made it through college. But I went away for over 20 years, 25 years. I was in the Navy for 20 years. So, my last tour of duty was at the Pentagon. I worked for the Secretary of the Navy there. So, then I retired from there and came back home.

SP: That's exciting.

SE: Yes. So, I got to see a good part of the world, not all, but a large part. I got to meet people from all over the world.

SP: So, you did a lot of travelling.

SE: Yes.

SP: What age were you when you returned here to Martins Ferry?

SE: Oh, that was a long time ago. That was probably about 35 years ago.

SP: Oh, wow.

SE: That's when I got this house. Yes. So, I've been here a long time.

SP: So, what about your people, your family, when you grew up? Did you have siblings? You said you grew up on a farm?

SE: Well, no. We grew up here in town. I have two brothers and two sisters. One sister lives nearby. Well, my brother, too, lives over in Washington, PA, which is about a half hour drive. So, it's not so far. One in Florida, and my sister in Kettering, Ohio.

SP: I see. So, they're all still living.

SE: Yes.

SP: When you got back from the Navy, what were you doing?

SE: Well, I just worked various jobs. But I have been doing oil painting. So, I did a lot of oil painting. I've done some writing. I've written a couple of books and several short stories and some poetry.

SP: Tell me about your writing.

SE: Well, just, one is a science fiction thing that I really enjoyed writing. It was a lot of fun. Because then you can make up and just let your mind go. But actually, it's based on things I actually believe. I actually believe that, since it's an old African tradition, that the real thing is that people on this Earth came from outer space. You stop and think, how would so-called ignorant people who have never had any education, how could they possibly think that they came from outer space if it didn't actually happen? Because you would never think that you came from outer space. When you see all these signs in the land, they're shown from a distance that are like markings for something that might be outer space, I actually believe the idea that we did come from outer space. So, that's what I sort of base this story on. This planet has a couple of times actually, tipped on its axis. I mean, it's done it before. It'll do it again. I'm sure it will. So, all this thing about climate change and all this other stuff is going to just be a bunch of nonsense, really, when you think of things that have happened to the Earth in the past. It's most likely going to happen again. It's long history. Plus, you have the thing of the sun is just a normal star, and as a normal star will, it's growing larger. At some point, this Earth is going to be – because of the sun, it's going to be too hot to live on, and there's nothing anybody can do about it. That's just the way it's going to be. So, we really need to really take a look at this coming from other planets idea and start looking for a planet for us to move to and land on. So, the story is that the – when this tilt of the Earth happens again, you hear these sightings of flying saucers and stuff, but one of these lands and turns out these are very interesting people. I have them looking like the Navajo Indians only a little bit longer, because I like their attractive looks. So, that's what I have them look like. But anyway, they help us to set up our lines of communication again throughout the world, because they have that knowledge and experience. So, the people who lived in this area would probably still survive. Whereas the people in the oceans or whatever like that would probably be gone. Then communications would be all messed up.

SP: You mean the people around the coastline?

SE: Yes.

SP: I see.

SE: I would imagine they would be heavily flooded, tremendous floods and stuff.

SP: I see.

SE: But when they say the Earth has tipped on its axis before, you don't know to what degree. So, I don't – you know. So, I'm saying, thinking that the people who live within the continent have a chance to survive.

SP: I see.

SE: So, anyway, these people from this other planet, turns out their planet had reached a point that their sun was getting too hot for them to live, and they've been looking for another place. So, they saw that we needed help. They decided to help us here.

SP: Wow.

SE: So, I have people intermixing with each other and then eventually, intermarriage and children and stuff. Now, they all get along. Then when the kids get to be in high school age, they get their little flying saucer. But it has a block on it, so you can't get into outer space. You can just fly around, like the school and stuff [laughter]. So, that's what I mean. You can just let your mind go and just have fun with it. So, that's why I enjoyed writing that one.

SP: How long ago did you write this book?

SE: Oh, it's probably 20 years [laughter].

SP: What was the title of it?

SE: It was called, I think, *Obadiah* or something like that. I've never published. I never submitted it to any place to be published.

SP: I see. Was it a short story?

SE: It was like, 300 pages. So, it was a regular-size book.

SP: I think that's amazing. I love science fiction.

SE: Yes.

SP: I would love to read it.

SE: Yes. So, anyway, that's that.

SP: Have you written any other books?

SE: Well, short stories, I like to write short stories.

SP: Have you published any?

SE: No. I never attempted to get anything published.

SP: You do this for yourself.

SE: Yes.

SP: Okay. Do you belong to like, poetry clubs?

SE: I used to belong to a poetry club, yes. They did publish one of my poems.

SP: Did they?

SE: Yes. I used to have it hanging on the wall here, but I guess I took it down.

SP: Do you remember any of your poems that you could –

SE: Oh, no [laughter].

SP: Well, that's fascinating.

SE: Yes, just something to do to occupy your mind, something to do.

SP: So, you like writing, and you said that you did some painting.

SE: Yes.

SP: Do you still do that?

SE: Yes.

SP: What's your medium?

SE: Oil, yes.

SP: Oil. You like oil.

SE: Yes.

SP: Are you a self-taught artist?

SE: No. I had classes when I was in the D.C. area, especially there at the Corcoran Art Museum. In the basement, they had classes. Up in the attic, they had classes. But, yes, you just walk in there; you can just feel the energy of the artist. I mean, there's just so much energy there. Because you had sculpture and all kinds of different mediums in there, drawing and acrylics and oils and stuff. We had live models there. So, that was nice.

SP: So, you did this while you were in the Navy.

SE: Yes.

SP: When you were in the Navy, were you stationed overseas? You're mostly in the United States.

SE: I went to Hawaii. Hawaii was the most I got overseas. I did get down to visit Australia and New Zealand and Pango Pango. So, that was fun. Yes.

SP: What did you think about Australia and New Zealand?

SE: Oh, I loved it. Yes. I loved it there. It was like this country probably was 300 years ago, as far as it was a real scarce population. The people there are very nice.

SP: Did you get to see kangaroos and platypus?

SE: Oh, yes. I got to see. They had a zoo there.

SP Did they?

SE: Yes. They have a big zoo.

SP: What cities were you in in Australia?

SE: Sydney and their state capital. I can't think of the name right now. We took a bus tour down there. But we took a tour with – the rest of people on the bus all spoke French. They were from New Caledonia. We were the only – my friend and I were the only two in there that spoke English. Except for the driver, thank goodness, he spoke English.

SP: How did you end up joining the Navy?

SE: Just something to do in this area at that time. There were almost no jobs. The job situation was real bad.

SP: I see.

SE: So, I had to go somewhere and do something. So, I thought that sounded exciting.

SP: It was okay.

SE: Oh, yes.

SP: You didn't mind. Was it pretty rigid? You had to be up at a certain hour?

SE: Well, yes. You had to be at work on time every day and stuff like that. But it's like a regular job actually, the Navy is. Because we don't do any actual fighting with anybody. I mean, they'll ship a bomb off or drop a bomb or something, but there's no head-to-head like the other military services have.

SP: So, is that one reason you chose the Navy?

SE: Oh, yes.

SP: That was the safest.

SE: Yes. Plus, the idea of the ocean and stuff like that was interesting, being around the ocean.

SP: I see. So, you like water.

SE: Yes.

SP: Wow. Well, what do you remember about, say this here? You said you grew up around this area, Martins Ferry, right?

SE: Yes.

SP: You were born here. How do you think Martin ferry has changed since you were a little child?

SE: I don't think it's really changed a whole lot. Well, except, before, when I was growing up here, your father either worked in the coal mines or he worked in the steel mill. Pretty much that was it. Now, there's not as much as that even. Of course, now they have the big Martins Ferry town here. We have the big dairy here and Nickles Bakery. But other than that, there's not a lot of jobs in the area.

SP: So, what did your dad do?

SE: Well, he worked in the steel mill. My uncle worked in the coal mines. Yes.

SP: So, do you think the area has prospered since you were a child?

SE: Well, it is now with the oil and gas. It's prospering.

SP: The oil and gas?

SE: Yes, with the fracking and so forth.

SP: So, what do you think about that?

SE: I think it's great.

SP: You do?

SE: Oh, definitely. Because your water plane is up here. It's going down up there. Where they're fracking is way down here. So, there's no way you're going to interfere with the water supply.

SP: I see.

SE: So, it's not – anything unsafe about it.

SP: Do you think it's creating jobs for the Ohioans?



SE: Definitely. Yes.

SP: You do?

SE: Oh, yes. All the men are – even truck driving jobs and plus, working out on the pipelines and stuff. Yes, there's a lot of jobs available.

SP: So, what do you think about the pipelines going through? Do you think they're safe?

SE: Definitely. Much more safe than on a truck.

SP: Oh, you mean transporting.

SE: Yes. Right. It's much safer to have it in a pipeline.

SP: I see.

SE: It's because there are just too many trucks on the highway anyway, but just much less chance of an accident.

SP: Okay. So, how do you think the gas boom is affecting our country?

SE: Well, hopefully – and I'm so glad to see this happen. Because the number one thing we need to be is the – have our energy efficient. We need to stop buying oil from a foreign country that's using our money to fight and kill people and us. They hate us anyway over there. So, I mean, it's stupid to keep buying oil from them. We should have our own. We should be self-sufficient as far as energy goes. That should be a number one priority for this country, energy efficiency.

SP: What do you think about alternative energy, like solar and wind energy and geothermal?

SE: Well, some areas are using geothermal right here. In fact, I looked into that when I was – before I bought a new furnace last time. But they said, "No, you can't do it." Because you need much more land for them then to be able to get down there and do it. But that would be great, geothermal or solar, not in this area, because we don't get enough sun. So, that's not good. We really don't get that much wind.

SP: It depends on where you are.

SE: Well, some areas get some wind. But it probably wouldn't be enough to have it work out good as far as energy.

SP: Yes. Because Martins Ferry is down here in the valley.

SE: Right. Yes.

SP: Yes. But then when you get to St. Clairsville, you get a lot of wind.

SE: Yes. You get wind out there. There are some areas. But I don't know. One thing that bothers me about the wind energy is, to me, it just ruins the landscape to see all those white things up and go around from the many pictures that I've seen. All we see is those – I mean, this has totally ruined the landscape.

SP: Windmills.

SE: Windmills, yes. Plus, they're dangerous for them birds.

SP: They are.

SE: Yes.

SP: I heard they can be very dangerous for birds.

SE: Right. They wipe them out. So, it'd be nice to have an alternative energy. Also, I've read this on how far along they are, but if they could tap into a quasar and get energy from there, that would be fantastic.

SP: Yes, it would [laughter].

SE: So, they could get plenty of energy if they could figure out a way to tap into a quasar. Yes, all other forms of energy, but we don't have those now. What we have is coal right now that we need. On my electric bill, when they send it around, they show that 65 percent of the energy that our electric company gets, a lot we use here, comes from coal. But the bad thing is Obama's trying to shut down the coal mines. It's already shut down a lot of them. So, now, my electric bill has gone sky high and probably get worse, just for – so, he can have control I guess. I guess that's the main idea there. But it's not a good idea. A lot of poor people – I can afford my electric bill, but that's because I get more of a retirement than most people do. They can't afford the higher electric bills, but they're getting them.

SP: So, you were in the Navy long enough to get [inaudible].

SE: Yes. I have a retirement pension. Yes, I do.

SP: So, how old were you when you left the Navy?

SE: I think I was 37.

SP: Oh, you were in there for a while.

SE: Yes.

SP: After that, you kept working.

SE: Yes, I worked. Yes, I work other jobs. I worked bookkeeping and accounting jobs. I actually worked in a factory for about three years until our stupid union got us shut down. Came time for a new contract, and the company said, "If you go on strike, we're going to shut you down." Well, they'd done that two years earlier up in Cleveland, with the branch up there. They told them, "If you go on strike, we'll shut you down." Well, they went on strike. They shut them down. So, when they told us that, you'd think we'd have better sense. Nobody even wanted to go on strike. We had decent pay and all sorts of good benefits and everything. We didn't want to go on strike. But the union wanted to go on strike. So, they went on strike. They shut the plant down. So, that was the end of that job.

SP: So, they wanted to go on strike because they wanted to get you more money?

SE: Yes.

SP: But everybody was satisfied.

SE: We were quite satisfied with our income. Well, we believed them that they would shut it down. Because they said they would. So, that's what they did. They did do that. Yes. We didn't want to lose our jobs, but we didn't have any choice. Because in order to have that job, you had to belong to the union. So, they took out – our money out of our pay every payday. But it sure didn't do good by us.

SP: They didn't do much for you.

SE: No.

SP: When you're in the Navy, do they have like they have in the Army, a lot of people come out and go to school on the GI Bill?

SE: Oh, I did that, yes.

SP: So, the Navy has the same thing.

SE: Well, it's military. So, it's all the military.

SP: It's all the same. Where did you go? What did you study?

SE: I studied Psychology and Fine Arts.

SP: Where did you go? Right here?

SE: Well, I went around here, out to the university, Ohio University. Then I went out to Ohio State for a year. Because my niece was going out there for her first time. So, she wanted me to go out there. I went out there. Then I ended up graduating from William Jessup over here.

SP: Did you?

SE: Yes.

SP: That's a good school.

SE: That's a very good school. Yes.

SP: So, you had graduated with your bachelor's?

SE: Yes. Bachelor's, yes.

SP: Oh, wow. That was in Fine Arts and –

SP: Well, Liberal Arts is what it turned out to be.

SP: So, that's a Liberal Arts school.

SE: Yes. Right. Well, no, it's not necessarily a Liberal Arts school. They have a lot of medicine programs over there too.

SP: Oh, do they?

SE: Yes.

SP: I've been over there for various happenings. They have a really lovely campus.

SE: Oh, it is. Yes. The people there – I really liked it because it was a small school before it became a college. Anyway, everybody was on a first name basis.

SP: Wow.

SE: So, it was nice. You felt like the teacher was your friend or whatever, and they tried to be your friend.

SP: That's nice.

SE: They weren't aloof or anything.

SP: What year did you graduate?

SE: Let's see, [19]85.

SP: All right. So, do you remember anything you know about your childhood specifically? You said you grew up in Martins Ferry.

SE: Yes.

SP: You mentioned your parents grew up on farms.

SE: Yes.

SP: So, when you were growing up in Martins Ferry, was it much smaller?

SE: No. Actually, it was – they had a bigger – it's [inaudible] now, I think – they had a bigger population, much bigger population. It was about twice the size of this now.

SP: Would you say that's because of the steel mill?

SE: Steel mills and the coal jobs.

SP: I see.

SE: A lot of people left. A lot of people go to Columbus, or they go to Pittsburgh or someplace else. Columbus sees a lot of our people.

SP: So, when it was booming here, when it was a steel mill town, steel and coal, do you think it was more prosperous than it is now with oil and gas?

SE: Oh, definitely. Yes. Well, the oil and gas is just getting into here now, but people are just now starting to get their royalties from it. I know a friend of mine just started getting her royalties. I mean, they have that big payment they get but then takes a year or two to start getting the royalties. But yes, there's a lot of millionaires around this area now. I mean, you can drive around outside of town now and see all these fantastic big homes and stuff. So, oil and gas money there.

SP: So, how do you think the oil and gas is helping our community? Other than you said that it was bringing jobs here.

SE: Well, that's a big help right there, bringing jobs. Of course, our Martins Ferry Hospital here has just doubled – more than doubled in size.

SP: Oh, has it?

SE: Yes.

SP: That's because?

SE: Just through the years, it has grown. Now, they have, like, heart – you can get heart catheterizations there and all sorts of things you couldn't get before. They have there.

SP: Do you think that is equal to the Wheeling Hospital?

SE: Oh, definitely. It's the (highest?). Yes. They'll fight you on that.

[laughter]

SP: I'm sure they will. Yes.

SE: Yes.

SP: So, what do you do now?

SE: Actually, I just retired here this last year.

SP: Did you?

SE: Yes. I worked – so, I'm about to be 76 in August, but –

SP: Oh, Happy Birthday, coming up.

SE: Oh, yes. When people would refinance their home or buy a house, I would do the closing work as a notary.

SP: So, you're a notary as well.

SE: Yes. If they drew finance, I'd go to their office or their home or in the banks, work in the banks, just wherever they would call me. I worked from my home here. They would call me.

SP: I see.

SE: I'd go out maybe seven times a week or something, 6, 7 times a week or more. So, that kept me busy.

SP: So, were you trained – like in the Navy, trained you to be a bookkeeper – in bookkeeping?

SE: Yes. Well, they trained me in what they call storekeeper. I was a storekeeper. That was in supply. Also, I was a Navy recruiter for about seven years, 6, 7 years. Yes.

SP: Wow. You've had quite a varied career.

SE: Right. Yes. It was interesting. Every place I went, I did a totally different job.

SP: So, you enjoyed being out.

SE: Yes. Right.

SP: When you were in the Navy, did the women have to wear the navy-blue uniforms?

SE: Oh, yes. You had to wear uniforms. Yes.

SP: At that point, they always wore skirts, right?

SE: Yes. We wore skirts.

SP: No pants.

SE: No.

SP: What else do you remember about the Navy?

SE: Well, when I was in Hawaii, the job there was with the Military Airlift Command, and that was during the Vietnam War. So, we were processing people through to Saigon was the main place they would go. I also had to keep track of the various ships in the South Pacific to send somebody to whatever ship they were going to.

SP: Were you ever on the ships yourself?

SE: Just for like, a day thing. Back then, you didn't stay overnight.

SP: Did they still have that thing about it was unlucky for women to be on ships?

SE: No. I never heard anybody say that.

SP: But they didn't really have women on the ships.

SE: Not then. They do now.

SP: Do they now?

SE: Yes.

SP: Anything else you'd like to talk about?

SE: Years ago, I mean, probably over 50 years ago, I read an article by a man. He said, "30 years from now, this area is going to be a tropical area [laughter]." Because he was thinking of global warming. He said this area is going to be a tropical area, and the Ohio River – there's going to be a tremendous earthquake, and the Ohio River is going to be a mile wide. So, that's why I bought on the hill up here. [laughter] You never know that what that guy's saying, someday might come true. I don't know if he had any idea what he's talking about. Supposed to have been a really learned scholar.

SP: So, how do you like it up on this hill?

SE: Oh, I like it. Yes. It's fine.

SP: Because, yes, you're up here on the hill. Then you've got the flatlands.

SE: Yes. Right. So, it's private up here. Nobody pays any attention, no nosy neighbors, so.

SP: It never floods up here.

SE: Oh, no.

SP: Martins Ferry doesn't flood anyway, does it?

SE: It used to. When I was younger, it used to flood.

SP: It did?

SE: Yes. They would take rowboats down there on First Street. Yes.

SP: They did?

SE: Yes.

SP: Wow. Because that's really down by the river.

SE: [affirmative] I know my dad helped a friend of his deliver milk in a rowboat one year [laughter].

SP: Wow.

SE: Yes.

SP: So, are you on the highest hill up here?

SE: No. There's nothing – well, the hills go higher up above.

SP: No houses up there.

SE: Yes. No houses up there. Yes. That's route 647 that goes up the other town, goes up around that there.

SP: Takes you up To Sunset Heights?

SE: Yes.

SP: Do you get out in the country often?



SE: Oh, yes. I drive out there.

SP: You drive?

SE: Yes.

SP: But you said most of your sisters live close by here.

SE: Yes. Well, one lives in Colrain.

SP: Oh, Colrain.

SE: Yes.

SP: So, you'd been out to Colrain.

SE: Oh, yes.

SP: You like it out there?

SE: It's all right [laughter]. It's like any other town.

SP: You prefer the city though.

SE: Oh, yes, for being in town.

SP: Okay. So, now, you say you still paint. What about your family life? Were you ever married?

SE: No, never married. No.

SP: Just never happened, huh?

SE: No, I didn't. That's not been a big loss. I don't think.

SP: You've been very happy.

SE: Yes. Right.

SP: Okay. Good.

SE: That's like Barbra Streisand said she paid millions of dollars for psychiatrists. Another person can't make you happy. You have to make yourself happy. So, I agree with her on that.

SP: Well, you seem happy.

SE: Yes.

SP: You seem like you're at peace.

SE: Yes, I am. I've had four heart attacks. So, I have to be at peace. Because you never know. Any second might be the big one. So, you've got to get at peace.

SP: I see. So, you just kind of enjoy every day.

SE: Right. Yes.

SP: I see. Your dog is probably a good companion.

SE: Oh, yes. We have a cat.

SP: Oh, you have a cat too?

SE: Yes.

SP: Do you live alone?

SE: No. I have a good friend. We share the house here.

SP: Oh, that's nice.

SE: Yes. We finished up the attic. From the outside, it looks like a two-story house, but the upstairs had never been finished. So, when she came to live here, we finished all that up.

SP: So, she lives up there.

SE: Well, we share the whole – the downstairs.

SP: I see. She has her own private area.

SE: Private area, yes.

SP: Then you share the downstairs. Have you known her for a long time?

SE: Yes. Quite a while, yes. We've known each other from church.

SP: How long have you been living with her?

SE: About five years now.

SP: It's working very well.

SE: Yes. Right. Well, her husband wanted a divorce.

SP: I see.

SE: She had been sleeping in her office.

SP: Oh, my.

SE: So, I told her I had room here.

SP: I see.

SE: So, she came here. Yes.

SP: So, you're about the same age?

SE: No. She's 62.

SP: I see.

SE: Yes. She's a family doctor out in St. Clairsville.

SP: Oh, wow. So, she's still practicing.

SE: Yes.

SP: Oh, I see. It sounds like that's really a nice arrangement.

SE: Yes, it is. Yes.

SP: It's nice to have someone –

SE: Nice to have somebody else.

SP: – in the house to share everything.

SE: Yes. I mean, she works long hours, but still, it's nice to know that somebody's – will be coming home.

SP: Yes. Definitely. So, she has a practice in Colrain?

SE: St. Clairsville.

SP: St. Clairsville. Oh, okay.

SE: Yes. Then I have friends that come over. We play Scrabble. Tomorrow's going to be here. We'd go to each other's house once a week.

SP: That's nice. You take turns?

SE: Right.

SP: Okay. What else?

SE: Get together. Just going to church. Our church is very active being Unitarians. Pat probably – I don't know. Are you a Unitarian?

SP: I love the Unitarian. I was raised as a Catholic, but I don't practice. But is that the Unitarian church out in St. Clairsville?

SE: Yes.

SP: That is beautiful.

SE: Yes.

SP: So, you go out there.

SE: Oh, yes.

SP: Is that how you know Pat Jacobson?

SE: Yes.

SP: I got it now.

SE: Yes.

SP: All right. I just put two and two together.

SE: So, everywhere you go, like to a concert or Saturday with that arts festival in Wheeling, you always see other church members there. Because we all go to everything that's going on – cultural thing that's going on. You go to a symphony, there's the Unitarians everywhere you look.

SP: So, do they have a large congregation out there?

SE: No. It's small.

SP: Small, but you all know each other.

SE: Yes. Well, not necessarily. Most of them are – as far as politics go, they're liberal. There's just a few of us that are conservative.

SP: So, you consider yourself conservative.

SE: Oh, yes, definitely. Yes.

SP: But still, you seem to blend in.

SE: Oh, yes.

SP: So, you're pretty open minded.

SE: Right. Yes. Well, as far as religion goes, I'm liberal, you see.

SP: Oh, okay. I like that.

SE: Yes.

SP: Okay. Good.

SE: Yes.

SP: Well, I'm fascinated with your science fiction ideas. Tell me more about that.

SE: Well, I really think that's really what happened. Well, this one Buddhist Dalai Lama that I studied, he was saying that every so many years, you dig up your garden and replant it. That's what's happened with this Earth. Every so many years, it gets regenerated. So, I believe that's what happens with the tipping of the axis and everything. Everything will be regenerated, and we'll have a whole vast new mineral and everything.

SP: So, when it gets regenerated, is that what happened, do you think, 60 million years ago, with the dinosaurs?

SE: Could be, yes.

SP: They got wiped out.

SE: Could be, yes.

SP: Do you think it has to do with the axis tipping?

SE: I don't know what year the – I can't remember now, what year the axis – that they tip. But it's the same time period as the dinosaurs. I don't want to say that happened at the same time, but that could be. Yes.

SP: So, can you explain that a little more, the axis tipping you? Because I know our Earth is pretty steady on its axis. Whereas I read that Mars really wobbles.

SE: Well, we wobble a little bit.

SP: A little bit, but our moon is supposed to keep us from wobbling.

SE: But if you notice, if you look in the sky at night, if you look year-round in the sky, lot of times, right up above the trees there, you see the moon. But then you'll see it, it's way up here, the same month. It changes. So, it didn't like it stays the same the whole time.

SP: I see.

SE: You have to really look sometimes, see where it is. It isn't always where you're used to seeing it.

SP: Well, it doesn't. It goes around the Earth.

SE: Yes.

SP: So, it's continually moving.

SE: While the Earth is turning.

SP: Going around the sun.

SE: Yes.

SP: So, how long have you had this interest in outer space?

SE: Ever since I was a young person, young child.

SP: Yes?

SE: Yes. I had never believed in – I just couldn't believe in this Christianity thing.

SP: I see.

SE: It just never made any sense to me. Then I thought, to me, it was just children's stories. Then I was shocked to realize that grown people believe this stuff is real. It's like, what's wrong with you people [laughter]? So, that's why I started reading and looking at –

SP: So, you started thinking that that was the way it all happened.

SE: Right. Yes.

SP: God didn't create everything and put it here.

SE: Right. Yes.

SP: You think that we were visited from outer space.

SE: Well, just the natural evolution. I think, as far as it being peopled, I think the people were put here.

SP: You think, actually, the people were put here.

SE: Yes, put here. It might even be like when we pass on to the other side, I don't think you're just going to be wasting time. I think that you're designing other species. Because you're reading in the news every so often, "Gee, we found 2,000 new species here, there, another 2,000 species or something else, here, there." I think that's what you do. When you pass on the other side, you have jobs. Some people's jobs are like, there's somebody who helps us get through life. Don't you feel there's somebody helping you get through life?

SP: I do.

SE: Some people have that job. Some people have jobs that they're designing new things or new different – planets with different atmospheres, things have to be done differently, and created differently. I think it's a whole bright new world.

SP: So, you do believe there is another side.

SE: Oh, yes. Definitely. Yes.

SP: But you don't believe in, like, this heaven and hell business.

SE: I don't believe there's some God looking over here. If you do something wrong, you're going to get zapped or whatever.

[laughter]

SP: What about the devil?

SE: The devil? I think that's in your own mind.

SP: Do you?

SE: Yes. You allow yourself to go there. Well, heaven's the same way. Do you want to allow yourself to –

SP: Where you think you're going to go, you think that's where you go.

SE: Yes.

SP: Wow.

SE: I don't think that's where you go, but I just think if that helps you get through life, whatever helps you get through life. Yes.

SP: I see. Yes. How long have you been a Unitarian?

SE: Probably for about 15 years.

SP: How did you discover the Unitarian?

SE: In the Yellow Pages, yes. I was looking for a Buddhist teaching. Because I'd like the Buddhist way of thinking.

SP: I do too.

SE: Yes. So.

SP: But did you find anything around here?

SE: Well, they had Buddhist classes out there at the Unitarian church.

SP: They did?

SE: They did for a while, yes.

SP: But not now.

SE: Not now.

SP: So, there's nothing else in the area.

SE: None.

SP: I see.

SE: Well, I did meet some people from Pittsburgh, but the people that were Buddhist here had to move away for their job. So, that broke that up.

SP: What about the Hare Krishna group in Moundsville?

SE: I don't really know a lot about them. I met a man that gave me one of their books. He was really into it, but I don't really understand what they're all about. I never read and studied that or anything.



SP: I didn't either.

SE: Yes.

SP: So, do you think you might be writing anymore, doing any more writing?

SE: Probably, yes.

SP: What's your next project?

SE: Well, I don't know. I'd have to think about that.

[laughter]

SP: So, is it now, are you mostly doing short stories, or you still do poetry? Are you thinking of writing another novel?

SE: No. I haven't been thinking of writing anything right now.

SP: Okay. It just happens.

SE: Yes. Right. Well, my friend and I think we're – we want to do a – she wanted to do a bed and breakfast. So, I think, I don't want strange people coming into the house. So, we'll do something on the computer and have a virtual bed and breakfast, where people come and visit our site online. We have a calendar of events during the day. They can decide what they want to do for the day. They can write about what they did and everything and for other people to read. Everybody who comes to the virtual bed and breakfast can write their own story about what they did here or whatever.

SP: So, explain that a little. You mean you won't have a real bed and breakfast.

SE: No, not for real. It's on the internet.

SP: It's on the internet. So, you do have a computer here.

SE: Oh, yes.

SP: So, you're pretty computer savvy.

SE: A little bit, yes.

SP: A little bit. Well, that's good.

SE: So, I just think it'd be interesting. Because you can have them go to different – you know, having breakfast on the patio or the deck or visiting in the evening on the evening on the front

porch and then talk about what they did during the day stuff. Because there's quite a few things around the area to spend your day with.

SP: So, she wants to do the real bed and breakfast.

SE: Yes. Well, she wants to do the virtual too.

SP: She wants to do the virtual.

SE: Yes. We're going to do the virtual. Yes.

SP: That's nice.

SE: We're going to do different stories. Also, in our space, you have the wormholes. So, we have people visiting from time to time through one of the wormholes to make things a little more interesting.

SP: Have you met any of them?

SE: Have I met any of them?

SP: [affirmative]

SE: They're on the computer. I haven't met any of them. We don't have it set up yet really. We're just working on it.

SP: Oh, I thought you meant aliens coming through.

SE: Oh, aliens.

SP: The wormholes.

SE: Oh. Not until I knew for sure. Some, you wonder about.

[laughter]

SP: I know what you mean.

SE: Yes.

SP: Well, do you think you want to talk about anything else?

SE: No.

SP: That's about it?

SE: That's about it, yes.

SP: Well, we thank you very much.

SE: I know you can walk by and say, "That was a real wacko."

[laughter]

SP: Actually, you're quite interesting. You're quite diverse. I really enjoyed your story. So, we thank you very much. I guess we end now? Okay.

[end of transcript]