

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON ARCHIVES  
ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Interview

HAACK, PEGGY and RUDD, CINDY

HAACK, PEGGY (1952-) and RUDD, CINDY (1947-)  
Early Childhood Care Workers  
At UW: Early Childhood Education (Haack and Rudd)

Interviewed: September 14, 2022 and September 22, 2022  
Interviewer: Pat Calchina  
Index by: Pat Calchina  
Length: 47 minutes, 36 seconds and 51 minutes, 18 seconds

Abstract: In their 2022 interview with Pat Calchina, Peggy Haack and Cindy Rudd spoke of the time period between 1972 and the present. The following topics were covered: early childhood education, working in child care programs, lesbian culture in Madison, Wisconsin in the 1970s, and getting married in 2015 after being together for 34 years. Additional topics: relationships with respective families, fostering numerous children as out lesbians, adopting two girls, connection with lesbian parent's network, and running an infant care center out of their home.

Key Words: Madison (Wi), Early Childhood Education degrees, The Back Door, Judge Sarah O'Brien, Catholicism, foster parenting, Guardian Ad Litem, Birth Certificate, Worthy Wage Campaign, history of day care project, Lesbian Parent Network, Martha Crawford, Unitarian Church, Joyce Boggess, Black Church, Foster Parents of the Year, Rainbow Project, Linden Co-Housing.

INTERVIEW SESSION #1 (2022) Digital File

TIME	KEYWORDS
00:00:00	Start of Interview/Interviewer's Introduction
00:00:24	Cindy has lived in Madison her entire life and Peggy lived in Dane county.
00:01:24	Discussion of Early Childhood Education Degree (Peggy) and early job in daycare working with Cindy.
00:03:23	Social life in Madison, Peggy introduced to bar culture and lesbian friends.
00:07:45	Life together, purchasing a house in 1981 and marrying in 2015, officiated by a lesbian judge, Sarah O'Brien.
00:11:16	Discussion of families' reaction to Peggy and Cindy's lesbianism, Catholicism and family rituals.
00:15:42	"We were as much married to our jobs as to each other." The ways in which both women looked at their work in childcare as political work.
00:17:09	In 1985 Peggy and Cindy got their first foster child, ultimately as out lesbians.

“They just kept coming ... they gave us hard kids ... we did well.”

00:26:42 In addition to fostering children Peggy and Cindy also did emergency care (evenings, weekends, etc.). The Adoption of two foster children, Cinnamon and Autumn in 1990 was discussed and the foster care philosophy re. adoption. Peggy and Cindy talk about their varied experiences with children, as well as connections with some to this day.

00:33:29 Q: “If you could talk to people who run foster care programs, what would be your advice?” In depth, thoughtful answers from both women.

00:37:00 Discussion of what Peggy and Cindy needed to do to be adoptive parents. Story of how Cinnamon and Autumn came into Peggy and Cindy’s lives.

00:42:00 Ways in which Peggy and Cindy’s adoptive process was different from other lesbians who were adopting and the story of how the legal issues were worked out for them to adopt as out lesbians.

00:47:36 Memory Card Full

#### INTERVIEW # 2 (2022) Digital File

00:00:00 Start of Interview #2 and Interviewer’s Introduction

00:00:37 A bit of a summary from our last interview: Peggy and Cindy have been foster parents since 1985, and their two adoptive daughters were born in 1990. when the girls were 2-3 years old, it became clear that they were not going back to their birth parents. Cinnamon and Autumn were adopted in 1994.

Discussion of the girls’ Guardian Ad Litem (A neutral person that the court appoints to investigate what solutions would be in the best interests of the child.) Cindy and Peggy had adopted one child, the Guardian suggested they attempt to adopt the second child together. To everyone’s surprise, the Judge agreed. Discussion of process to unadopt and readopt the first child and the modification of the birth certificate to read “Parent and Parent,” a modification that, to their knowledge, has not been done since.

00:05:00 Discussion of Peggy and Cindy’s home childcare business begun in 1990, which continued until 2013. They also continued doing foster care until 1998. Discussion of attempt to adopt a third child and the heartbreak of not being able to do so, while also understanding the barriers.

00:10:42 Discussion of the 1990s and Peggy and Cindy’s involvement in child care provider activism around working conditions for childcare providers and decent wages through the “Worthy Wage Campaign.” Their motivation was always to make the world better and in so doing, make the world better for children; they always saw their day care work as political work. In 1992 the first rally was held in Madison on behalf of childcare workers, at which Peggy spoke.

00:14:22 Today, Peggy is working on a history of day care project from the mid 1970’s to the 1990’s. She concludes that child care work is “essential work” that is undervalued and it is a “struggle that is far from over.”

00:16:00 Q: “Did you have successes [in your political campaigns]?” They counted as

a success getting day care issues to be a part of the public discourse. They courted media attention and received a good deal. Wages were a difficult issue. Parents could not afford to pay more. Only through significant government investments was that issue going to really change. They felt they did a lot of education of parents and worked as partners with parents.

- 00:20:00 Further discussion of work as home day care providers. "People came to us." They had no need to advertise and had a waiting list. Clients came from the neighborhood and generally walked or biked their children to daycare.
- 00:23:00 Discussion of where Peggy and Cindy received their support: Lesbian Parent Network is discussed and a more important (for them) subgroup of parents raising biracial children. A good friend, Martha Crawford had adopted 3 siblings of color and became an important source of support.
- 00:26:00 Q "What did you do differently [raising children of color]?" Discussion of making a concerted effort to be around Black people, hair issues and various concerns. Further discussion of group of Black women perhaps wondering about the motivations of these two white women and Joyce Boggess says, "Its ok, she's raising our kids."
- By middle school the girls were identifying as Black and the moms are realizing that they had no idea what they were getting into. They were open and they learned personally and also learned about what was lacking in the Madison community. "Thank goodness we had supportive people around us."
- 00:35:50 Q "Did you ever contemplate being involved in the Black Church?" Discussion of how one finds a spiritual home and for Peggy and Cindy that home has been the Unitarian Church, which is open and affirming for all groups, but is not racially diverse.
- 00:42:40 Brief discussion of Peggy and Cindy being recognized for their work over the years: Foster Parents of the Year and recognition through the Rainbow Project, which deals with children who experience trauma. Says Peggy, "Recognition doesn't define who we are," but it was affirming.
- 00:44:50 Where Peggy and Cindy found support: Unitarian Church, Parents of the children they cared for [and added by interviewer, lesbian parent network subgroup].
- Currently finding support in Madison's newest co-housing community, Linden Co-Housing. Q: "What percentage of your community is gay or lesbian?" Out of 46 units, at least 7 identify as gay or lesbian. More importantly, the community holds shared values. "It's a good place for us to be."
- 00:49:19 Peggy and Cindy are now grandparents and both parenting and grandparenting continue. A sixteen year old granddaughter lives with them most of the time. "The challenges of parenting persist. We're old, but it's not over."
- 00:51:18 End of interview.

