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Interview with Judy Heyboer

Judy Heyboer

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Oral History Transcript

Interviewee: Judy Heyboer

Interviewers: Clarissa Perez & Johnnie Urquidi

Date: November 21, 2020

Location: Zoom

Collection: Auntie Sewing Squad Oral History Archive, SBS 112: Women and Social Change, From 1890s to the Present, Fall 2020

Length: 00:47:12

Overseen by: Dr. Chrissy Yee Lau

Bio: Judy Heyboer was born in Southern California and had very active liberal parents which led to her involvement in politics and activism. She is a public school teacher of 30 years. As a bilingual elementary teacher, she has taught transitional kindergarten through third grade and is now teaching special ed. She first became involved with sewing and mutual aid when she joined Afghans for Afghans, which made warm winter clothing and blankets for people in Afghanistan. In the Auntie Sewing Squad, Judy sews masks.

Summary: [00:00:50.08] Judy Heyboer discusses her background and how she is actively involved with politics. [00:09:11.25] She talks about the different organizations that she has worked with, including Afghans for Afghans and Knitted Knockers. [00:16:18.08] She goes into detail about her education and her profession. [00:25:38.01] She describes an organization that helps with arthritis research. [00:42:23.10] She then closes out the interview with giving advice on how to be involved in politics.

Transcript

[00:00:05.20]

JU: All right, so we're recording now.

[00:00:08.19]

JU: I'm Johnnie Urquidi.

[00:00:10.29]

CP: I'm Clarissa Perez.

[00:00:13.08]

JH: I'm Judy Heyboer.

[00:00:16.28]

JU: All right, and we're here to do an oral history interview here with you to get your perspective on the Auntie Sewing Squad and what's going on with the world today and your experiences...so thank you for coming on here and talking with us. We appreciate that.

[00:00:35.16]

JU: All right, so to start us off here, so first off, we did have a chance to read the introductory information that you had provided us on the spreadsheet, but would you mind introducing yourself for the recording and a little bit about your life up to this point?

[00:00:50.08]

JH: OK, um, my name's Judy. I was born in Southern California, um, to very active liberal parents, so I've been pretty involved in politics and activism my whole life, um, and I've also been a crafter my whole life, um, so they kind of came together in this time. Um, my profession, I'm a public school teacher. I've been teaching for 30 years now. I'm a bilingual elementary school teacher, I've taught grades from transitional kindergarten through third grade, and then last year I went back to CSUMB and got my, um, Ed. Specialist credential, so I now teach special ed. I work in Watsonville, which is a predominantly farmworker community, so the majority of my students for those 30 years have always been the children of migrant farmworkers, so a lot of what's happening in the world right now that's political feels also very personal to me, so I try to be involved in whatever ways I can find.

[00:02:03.10]

JU: OK, yeah. Watsonville's pretty close to us too.

[00:02:07.17]

JH: Yeah.

[00:02:08.23]

JU: All right. And you had mentioned that your parents were active politically and that you in turn were active because of that. How specifically were they involved politically, and how did you see yourself introduced to that at first, or influenced by it?

[00:02:22.10]

JH: Well, so I was born in 1964, so a lot of my early childhood was around the Vietnam War. I actually brought this, this is my protest hat for the Women's March, but one of the pins on it is my, um, see it very well, the mothers... "War is not healthy for children and other living things." It was an antiwar group predominantly of moms, and my mom was involved in that. She was the president of the Claremont Democratic Club for a few years. My dad was a political science, um, professor who taught at Mt. San Antonio College down in Southern California. So, you know, any time they had parents, friends over, colleagues over, that's what we talked about up until, really, the end of the war, so, you know, that was really just part of my growing up, was that conversation. Um, and... Claremont being a college town was very liberal and very active and so anywhere you went, people were talking about it. It was just sort of part of it. And then my mom went back to work when I was four and became a social worker, so I also, I kind of had that, the

human cost of policies was always something, kind of, that, you know, she'd try to not talk about work too much but it was always kind of there when she had a rough day and, you know, some child had been abused or abandoned or something, she was kind of carrying that weight with her. She primarily worked with family services, so she was working a lot with child abuse and neglect. So, it was just kind of part of the, the what I grew up with. But then I graduated from high school in 1981, and that was the Reagan years when so much of what we're dealing with right now was kind of started then. All of, a lot of the economic policies that have made things so hard for so many people right now started then. Um, and at that point through high school and college, I was just so out of sync with the world that had become fairly conservative, and if you were white, everything was fine, and nothing to worry about and no need to be an activist. And, um, then I was in theater and drama and, along about 83 we started losing people to AIDS, and it was just like it is now, where the government did nothing and more people died than should have because the government was like, well that's just their problem, that's "those" people. So it does feel a lot like everything that's happening right now is stuff that I just, my whole life, watched kind of building and growing.

[00:05:29.22]

JU: Oh, yeah, history repeating itself, in a way.

[00:05:33.16]

JH: Yeah, and the issues of today having very long roots.

[00:05:39.08]

JU: Absolutely. And, you kind of touched on a little bit of one of my next questions there. Uh, were there any other major influences on you entering into activism besides your parents?

[00:05:52.10]

JH: Um, I would say that was the main thing, and also, just, um, being a lifelong reader, which I think teaches you a lot of empathy and a lot of, kind of, the bigger context, so, um, you know, when we've gone through periods of, you know, "no, everything's fine, don't worry about it," it's, you know, I've had that kind of exposure to say, "wait, but there's a lot of people in the world that it's not fine for." And the area where I grew up, Upland and Claremont and Pomona, is very divided, like Pomona is predominantly African-American, Upland is predominantly white, but my neighborhood was a new subdivision, and like, all the neighbors, there were, there was a family from Cuba, a family from that was Greek, a family that was Japanese-American. It was, like, one of the few neighborhoods that wasn't all white, and it was so interesting to see how when we got to school, like, we were really like, "they're from 'that' neighborhood, they're the, the new kids and they're not really part of us." And so, you know, experiences like that, that I think shaped me to be, um, more sensitive maybe, to the fact that things are not equal and fair, and there are, you know, no matter how good things might be for one group, there's always somebody who's suffering, and that's not OK, and we can do something about it. So really, by the time I got to college, I really knew that I wanted, I was not going to be happy to just have a job, I needed to do something that made a difference. And that's really what, I kind of fell into teaching. I didn't know that's what it would be, but when I moved here to Santa Cruz, I was able to get a job because I had some Spanish, so I got a job as a classroom assistant, and then it was like... Oh, OK, this is what I have been looking for my whole life. And, you know, I've been

teaching with mostly immigrant and high-poverty kids ever since. And it really does feel like, you know, when I get out of bed and go to work in the morning, I'm going to make a difference. And when I, even when it's been a rough day, and, you know, the kids didn't all learn everything, but I know that they had someone who treated them like a human being and not like an illegal immigrant. Um, their parents know that I don't care what their status is or their papers. They're parents and their kids are here to learn, and that's my job. So it, you know, it does feel like every day I get to push back against that, the prejudices and the unfairness.

[00:08:56.22]

JU: Yeah. Transition over here a little bit. Uh, how long have you knitted? Were you drawn to it as a hobby, or did you start because of your activism and using that for different, like, organizations?

[00:09:11.25]

JH: It's been kind of a lifelong thing. As a kid, my mom was the one who first taught my sister and I how to sew, and you know, we did Girl Scouts and you had to, you know, do different crafts for your badges, things like that. Um, when I started as a freshman in college, I just got to the point where I needed something that wasn't reading a textbook or studying and just kind of happened to decide I'll make myself a sweater, started knitting, and I've been kind of addicted ever since. Um, I also sew, I also weave. I keep adding crafts, um, and somewhere in there, I think the craftivism kind of started around the beginning of, of the US sending troops to Afghanistan. That might've been my first thing I got involved with. There was a group that was started called Afghans for Afghans that made warm winter clothing and blankets to send to people in Afghanistan, you know, partly as a humanitarian aid kind of thing, but also as a, like, a real conscious message of, "Americans are not all horrible people." We are capable of compassion and, and, um, can push back against that idea of "Americans have to be imperialists." So I knit a lot for that, um, and then I've just kind of gotten involved in a lot of things since then. Another cause that I knit a lot for is Knitted Knockers, which makes, um, cotton breast prosthetics for people who've had breast reductions or breast mastectomies from breast cancer. So things like that where just, you know, I hear about an organization and think, "Oh, I can do that! That would be, you know, a way to help." So when it became, you know, when they, the CDC said, "Oh yeah, actually you should all be wearing masks," I was like, well I know people, all my friends know I sew. Everybody's going to say, you know, "Judy, do you have any?" So, I started sewing.

[00:11:24.06]

JU: Yeah... different organizations, good way to build up different skills, make different things too.

[00:11:29.27]

JH: Yeah.

[00:11:31.14]

JU: Which would you say you enjoy working with the most, and why?

[00:11:36.10]

JH: Um, I'd say knitting is probably my biggest passion, I think it's the most meditative. I mean, like, you can see I can do it and have a conversation, I can watch TV, it's portable. Um, I love weaving, so that's my loom right there.

[00:11:54.27]

JU: Oh.

[00:11:55.17]

JH: And it's, you know, it's too big to go with me anywhere, even around the house, so it... Oops, and now my camera just froze up, I think. Come back. Well, let's see if it comes back very well. It's been giving me problems lately. Um, but, it, you know knitting is something that I can do anywhere, but I like all three of them because I really like that idea of being able to use the thing that you've made. So I end up, I make most of my own clothes. I mean, not blue jeans and not shoes, but...

[00:12:38.19]

JU: Yeah.

[00:12:39.15]

JH: I have hand-knit socks, I have sweaters, I have hats, I have blankets.

[00:12:44.21]

JU: Mm. Well then, you know exactly what you're getting at the end.

[00:12:49.04]

JH: Yeah. Yeah, it doesn't always fit right, but, huh, more of the time. OK, let me try turning my camera on and off and see if I can get it to remember.

[00:12:58.08]

JU: OK.

[00:13:20.28]

JH: OK, now it's not...

[00:13:22.27]

JU: No? Well, it is a oral history, not a visual one.

[00:13:26.00]

JH: Ha ha, yeah. OK, we can just keep going.

[00:13:29.25]

JU: All right. So, working with all those different groups, how did you end up becoming involved with Auntie Sewing Squad, and how has that involvement shifted since you started with them?

[00:13:41.01]

JH: Um, well, so I started making masks, like, the first of April, and the first ones I did that were you know, for friends and colleagues and friends of friends, I charged for, you know, just a little bit, like \$10 a mask, and donated that money to local COVID relief. So I raised about \$3000 that way, but then after about maybe two months of, like, knitting like crazy because I had no idea how many people would actually want, like, I thought, you know, people would want a mask for themselves and maybe one for, you know, each person in their family, but I had some people who, you know, were ordering for everybody in the family and wanted two or three so that they could have clean ones. And so I was making, like, 20 at a, at a time, pretty intensely, had no idea that that was going to happen. Um, and then, you know, I kind of caught up with all of my friends, and they got a little calmer, and I kind of thought, well, you know, now I still have, you know, I'm in, I'm in the groove, I'm used to this, I still have the time. And so I started looking around for any organization that was, you know, making them for underserved communities or healthcare workers or, you know, anywhere where I could donate, um, and found them because they were on Facebook and I do Facebook a lot, so it was easy and so I got started and, you know, every time I think, "Well, maybe it'll calm down now," they publish another request for, you know, 3000 masks, or 6000 masks, and we all dive in and start sewing again. So at this point, I've, with the ones I do this weekend, I'll have made 1700 total.

[00:15:42.04]

JU: Wow, I g--

[00:15:44.20]

JH: If you had ever told me, ever, that I would make 1700 of anything, I would not have believed you. There was no way I would've agreed to do that. Um, but, you know, we do what we need to do.

[00:15:59.04]

JU: Yeah. I can't even fathom me making one without making a huge mess with it, ha ha. All right, I think I'll let Clarissa ask from here.

[00:16:10.17]

CP: OK, so you mentioned that you were a teacher. Can you tell me what inspired you to become one?

[00:16:18.08]

JH: Um, mostly I can tell you who. So I, like you said, I got, when I graduated from college, which took me eight years and three different universities because I didn't know what I was going to be, and I kept changing majors and changing schools, um, I got my bachelors in history, actually, but back when I got my bachelors, I finished in 89, I think, um, no, 88. Um, history was, like, the idea of doing oral histories and women's history and, you know, the history of anybody besides the kings and presidents was still pretty new. And I didn't really want to become a professor, and so I kind of didn't know what to do, and I could avoid paying my student loans if I kept taking classes. So I moved to Santa Cruz and was just, thought, well, I, you know, I like learning languages, I'll keep taking Spanish classes. And almost everyone in the Spanish classes was a teacher working in the area who was trying to improve their skills so they could communicate with their families better. And, you know, I already mentioned a little bit

about what the 80s were like and how out of touch I felt and, you know, everybody, especially being this close to Silicon Valley, it was like, “Why don’t you just get a job at the computer companies? Tech is booming! You’ll make a lot of money.” And I was like, “Yeah, I don’t... Making a lot of money is not my vision in life,” and people mostly treated me like I was nuts! And then I got to these classes with all of these teachers, and for the first time it was people who really shared my values, who were, like, passionate about what they did, and loved their jobs, and it just felt like, huh, this is cool. I like, you know, I like being around these people, and they told me how to get the job as a classroom aide. And so, I did that, and maybe a month into it, one of my first grade boys, Fidencio, saw me, like, I was walking to my next class, and he was walking back from the bathroom, and he just saw me, and he just walked up and gave me this huge hug, didn’t even say anything, and then just walked away back to class. And it was like, oh, OK, I, I’m going to do this. I’m going to stay here and, and I’m going to be part of this. So it was not really a conscious, “Gee, I want to be a teacher,” it was much more, OK, I found the place where I belong.

[00:18:55.27]

CP: Yeah, I think a lot of people can relate, like especially college students, like, they don’t know what they want to do, like, they have, like, they pick a major, and then they always change it. And I kind of relate to that because, like, I wanted to be a nurse, but I felt like I wasn’t in the right path, so and then, because my major’s kinesiology, so I was like, OK, you know what? I think I want to do a phys—, want to be a physical therapist, so I think a lot of people can relate to that.

[00:19:21.09]

JH: Yeah, I think a lot of it is you try things, and you find what fits, and it’s, I mean, I, I think it’s going to be extra hard for, for people your age because it is so much harder just to go intern at a job or, you know, get that experience and find out if you like something, when you have to do everything from home, on your Zoom.

[00:19:49.09]

CP: So, my next question is, you kind of talked about it, but how have any of your students you worked with impacted your life?

[00:19:59.19]

JH: Oh, all of them. I mean, there’s, in so many ways. I have a student right now who’s second grade. She and her father are refugees from Honduras, which is one of the categories that he-who-shall-not-be-named has ended the protected status, and so basically, he’s been informed by ICE that if it weren’t for the COVID, they’d have deported him already. Um, and so, then he has to decide whether to leave this, you know, nine-year-old girl, try to leave her here with her aunt, and who knows if he’ll ever see her again, or take her with him, but they’re not taking people all the way back to Honduras. They’re dumping them off in Mexico, so he would be stranded in a foreign country with a tiny kid. So, you know, there are those heartbreaking stories that always affect you, um, but on the other side of it, she’s one of the kids who’s really thriving with me in distance learning. She’s, you know, she hasn’t been in the US for very long. She didn’t do kindergarten, um, didn’t speak any English when she did first grade so really spent all of first grade kind of learning how to speak English, and started second grade still not reading,

and now she's reading and loves school and, and is, you know, not only gets to my Google classes on time but comes early and wants to stay late because she wants more attention. So, it's, you know, she's a reason to keep fighting for a more just society, and also a reason for me to just get up in the morning and do my job.

[00:21:55.21]

CP: Um, since you work primarily with farmworker families, have you worked with other students that weren't part of the farm-working families?

[00:22:05.01]

JH: Yeah, um, I've been at three different schools, the first one, um, for 14 years. I was in the bilingual program there, and it's one of the most, um, racially and linguistically isolated schools in our district, where, like, really 98% of the families are farmworkers. Um, but then I transferred to another one that was my neighborhood school so that my boys could be at the same school with me, and that one is, um, kind of on the edge of town where it's got a mix of farmworker families and farm-owner families, like a lot of the, the apple orchards for Martinelli's cider are in that area, and then a lot of, like, Silicon Valley people who want to pretend they're farmers and, you know, live out in the country and, you know, just have chickens and a horse. Um, so, that school has a huge range from poverty to some very wealthy families. Um, and that was, that was interesting, to make that shift, and then I was there for nine years, and then the school I'm at now is Downtown Watsonville, so it's a lot of farmworker families but also a lot of second- and third-generation families, and a lot of families who, you know, work at Target or work at the grocery store, you know, that kind of, a little more stable than being a farmworker but still, you know, just on that edge of poverty, a lot of families living in, you know, two or three families in a house.

[00:23:54.16]

CP: Um, you kind of talked about it a little bit, but how was the environment of the students different from each other, like the farmworker families and the ones that weren't part of the farmworker families?

[00:24:08.01]

JH: It was, it was definitely interesting because some of the, some of the families just were very conservative and, um, others were very, you know, there was, there was, like, one family where the, one of the fathers owned the apple orchard and had, um, some, like, trailers on the property where his workers could live, so I had the owner's kid and the farmworker's kid in the same class. Um, we had another year where there was a huge drug bust and the, one of the kids in the kindergarten class, her father was one of the SWAT team members and another girl in the class, one of her fathers was the guy who got arrested as being the meth kingpin. So, it was definitely interesting to have those kinds of, that range of experiences that the kids were bringing.

[00:25:21.25]

CP: Um, so, in, you mentioned in your bio that you have an Etsy shop to help raise money for arthritis research. Are you doing the research yourself, or do you help raise money for an organization that does the research?

[00:25:38.01]

JH: For an organization. It's the Arthritis National Research Foundation. Um, my mother has a rheumatoid arthritis and first really got, had, had symptoms, right after I was born, so I don't really remember a time before she was in pain and dealing with it. Um, and she's the one who taught me how to craft, so there's that kind of connection there, um, and people have, you know, friends have been telling me for years, "Oh my gosh, oh you're, you know, all this stuff you knit is so cool. You should open a shop." And I kept saying, "Yeah, I don't know." And then they finally kind of talked me into it, and after a couple of months I realized, "I don't like being a capitalist. I'm not, I am never going to be able to make this, like, a money-making shop. That's just not in me." Um, and so that's when I kind of dipped into like, "Well, but, I can make things more than I can, more than I can use, more than my family can use," so that's when I decided to just keep the shop going but have the profits all go to that foundation.

[00:26:53.09]

CP: Yeah, I can relate to that because, um, like, arthritis kind of runs in my family and my mom, she will, like, wake up in the middle of the night and she'll be like, "Oh my gosh, like, I'm so much—I'm like in pain." And like, I didn't know what to do, but, um, I get kind of like— She doesn't really get the pains anymore, but it kind of scares me because, like, what if I get it, you know? It runs in the family.

[00:27:17.13]

JH: Yeah.

[00:27:18.18]

CP: Um...

[00:27:18.28]

JH: It's a cruel disease, I, you know, I watched her, I mean, she and I were, were knitting buddies for years, and we would go to knitting, to yarn stores together. And, um, there's a big convention that happens over in Santa Clara once a year called Stitches, and we would go, you know, get a hotel room and stay for several days and take classes and spend money on yarn and just, you know, have fun together. And, maybe two, three years ago, her hands got, had gotten so bad that she can't knit anymore... Um, in fact, this is one of her yarns that I'm knitting right now that she bought for herself but never had a chance to use. So, that was part of it too. It was like, OK, well, I'm, you know, I'm getting all of her yarn because she can't use it anymore. I don't need that much yarn, you know, I already had a large stash of my own. So I thought, well, but, I can knit it up and either give it away or sell it and donate... so maybe other families don't have to go through what she's going through.

[00:28:25.19]

CP: Um, can you tell me more about what the research consists of?

[00:28:31.02]

JH: They're working on, they work on treatments and cures. Basically, it's a, it's a nonprofit that raises funds and then gives it out as grants to, um, scientists who are working in the field. So, actually, a lot of, um, what, what the researchers are using for COVID is actually from arthritis

and autoimmune disease research because the real problem with so much of COVID is the people who are getting really sick, it's the autoimmune system overreacting and starting that, that kind of cascade where your body attacks yourself. And so a lot of the drugs that they're using on it are actually arthritis and autoimmune disease drugs that are, that are the treatments that are working. I think it's an area that's going to become more and more important.

[00:29:33.13]

CP: You said—

[00:29:34.03]

JH: I—

[00:29:34.17]

CP: Oh, sorry, continue.

[00:29:36.00]

JH: —diagnosed, it was seen as a woman's disease and not a big deal and there was almost no funding for it because it didn't kill you, it just put you in pain, and, you know, um, in fact, a lot of times she was told by doctors, you know, "It's all in your head, or you're just depressed or, you know, take two aspirin," even though her joints were coming apart.

[00:30:04.04]

CP: Yeah, like when my mom went to the doctors, they said, "Oh, it's just your health, you just need to, like, have a better diet." But, you know, it didn't really help her. Like, she would take medications too, and it still wouldn't help... So you said that you raised \$3000 for local COVID relief—

[00:30:22.29]

JH: 3000.

[00:30:23.15]

CP: Um, 3000?

[00:30:24.26]

JH: Yeah, 3000.

[00:30:26.09]

CP: Um, how has COVID impacted you physically and mentally?

[00:30:33.11]

JH: Physically, not so much, um... I haven't gotten it, no one in my immediately fam— family has had it, um, but I am, you know, in the high-risk category, so I try to be careful and, you know, I'm mainly the caregiver for my mom, who is definitely in the high-risk category. So, you know, I do a lot of dinner grocery shopping for her and things like that so, um, definitely there's been a lot more stress. Um, my sister lives up in Oregon and owns a fabric store, so she's in retail and has to deal with, you know, she, it's her income, she can't really close it down and be

safe. So, um, she's had one employee who is recovering from it, and another employee whose son and daughter have it right now, so there's always that constant "Is she going to be OK?" Um, my oldest son lives in Palo Alto, and I've seen him maybe three times since the shutdown started. And that's hard, like, he's so close, and yet he might as well be several thousand miles away for as much as I can see him. And, you know, it's just that constant worry about him, well, what if he gets sick? What if my sister gets sick? She's not married, she's divorced, so there's not really anybody there to take care of her. So if she gets sick and needs somebody to take care of her, do I leave here and go do that and then risk getting sick myself? And then who would continue to take care of my mom? So there's definitely those kinds of thoughts that are always kind of in the back of my head, yeah. But for the most part, the other, you know, the actual dealing with it, we've been pretty lucky.

[00:32:43.22]

CP: Um, you mentioned that you are white European, including Eastern European Jewish from your mother's side, and Dutch on your father's side, is that correct?

[00:32:56.11]

JH: Yes.

[00:32:57.04]

CP: Um, what was it like growing up with different cultures?

[00:33:00.29]

JH: Um, we actually didn't know that much about the different cultures for a lot of my childhood. Um, my mother's mother did not tell her anything about her background, and I was 11 when she died, um, and had dementia, so... And she lived in New York, so we only saw her once, maybe twice a year, so we didn't have a really close relationship, um, but then when she was dying, my mother went back to New York to clean out her apartment and found the passport that had her mother's picture in it but a different name, and also found a silver menorah in the closet, and was like, "Why is this here?" Um, and then was able to contact one, the one other relative on that side of the family that she actually knew and found out that actually we, her mother was a refugee from, we think, Belarus area. The—the town that was on the passport is in that border area that's changed so much since World War II, where it was Poland then but it's not anymore, so we're not exactly sure where we're from, um, but... I'm, so I wasn't raised Jewish. I just discovered it as, you know, as a preteen, that we had that background. Um, and then on my dad's side, his mother was very fundamentalist Christian Dutch, who would've been horrified if she'd known who her son had actually married. Um, but my dad was very liberal, and the only one in the family to ever go to college, and his older brothers and sisters were absolutely horrified that his mother had allowed him to go to college because he got all those liberal ideas. Um, so he was kind of the black sheep of the family, and we only got together with them when we had to for, you know, Easter and Christmas. And, um, I was not brought up religious at all, and so it was always a, like, weird experience to go be around the very fundamentalist Christian folks, like I just didn't even get what they were talking about most of the time. Um, and then after he died when I was 13, basically I've had no contact with anyone on that side of the family since, so... And then, my mother's father was descended from some of the original Mormon pioneers who settled in Utah, but he refused to go on a mission in the Depression because he was

the oldest son and it was the Depression and he felt like he needed to get right to work to help support the family. And because he didn't do that, I think he, I think he was asked to leave the church, he wasn't actually excommunicated or anything, but it was, you know, a parting of the ways. So, I have all these, like, different backgrounds that are there and I know about, but I wasn't actually raised in any of those traditions.

[00:36:26.05]

CP: Since you didn't really, like, know, since you found out at a late time, did you ever, like, do research into your culture?

[00:36:34.04]

JH: Yeah, um, and I've done, we've tried a few times with, um, Ancestry.com and things like that to see if we can get more information, um... The Mormon side is the easiest to get information about, um. I would say that probably the Jewish side is the part that I feel the most connected to, just in terms of, um, the, the idea of— I, I have much more in common with people who are the persecuted than with the fundamentalist Christians who are the ones doing all the persecuting, so, um... You know, I know a lot about Jewish culture and history, but I also feel a little hesitant to say, like, you know, "Well yeah, but I'm really Jewish!" when I've never actually participated in any of the faith.

[00:37:36.10]

CP: Um, since you're an activist, what were some of your viewpoints on the presidential election?

[00:37:44.00]

JH: Um, that Donald Trump is a monster, and that Joe Biden is OK, not nearly progressive enough for me, um, but I do feel that he— he's the one that we can push, like, just over the course of the election season, he, his policies have moved further progressive, so I do think that, you know, Bernie Sanders, Elizabeth Warren, are going to have an effect on it. Um, I also know, I, my 21-year-old son lives with me, and he's definitely a socialist. I think he would consider himself a Marxist, um, definitely got some anarchist opinions too, and, you know, having these long conversations with him, making me realize how, you know, I consider myself pretty liberal and pretty progressive, and his generation is so much further along, um, and then I think it's really just a, a matter of time before, um, more and more young people are becoming involved and using their power and using their voice and just forcing things to happen. So that's when I get really, really, really discouraged and despairing by all of the awful things that have happened in the last four years. I also get really excited and really hopeful looking at how involved young people are and how many people have been willing to take to the streets and march and protest and, you know, the wall of moms and the dads with their leaf blowers up in Portland, things like that where it's— that's one of the things that's so different now from when I was his age. When I was his age, there were activists, like I had friends who were AIDS activists, and my mother was very involved in women's rights, but it was like they were separate things, and, you know, civil rights was a whole separate thing. And now, it seems so much as all one movement, that it's all connected, that we can't have economic justice without climate change justice, and we can't have racial justice without economic justice, and we can't have women's rights without trans

women's rights, and, like, that idea of everybody coming together is, just blows me away. It is so exciting to watch that happen because there's so much more power in that.

[00:40:54.05]

CP: Yeah, I think a lot of the, of this generation is getting more into politics because, you know, they want to see more change.

[00:41:02.07]

JH: Well, I think that now, people have a much stronger sense of their lives literally depending on it.

[00:41:09.24]

CP: Mm-hmm.

[00:41:10.18]

JH: Um, I keep joking with him that, you know, I'll play some of the, like, punk music that they were into when they were in, like, junior high, and I'll be like, you know, 10, 15 years ago, this seemed, like, kind of melodramatic, and now, it's all happening, so it does feel like [not that] really. Well, I mean, I used to joke with my friends about how, you know, when the zombie apocalypse came, they'd be glad to know me because of all my, you know, my knitting skills, my sewing skills, and I'd, I'd be able to take care of everybody, but I didn't think it would literally be true that women with sewing machines would be saving the damn world right now, so... It's been an interesting year.

[00:42:00.29]

CP: Yes, it has, ha ha.

[00:42:02.03]

JU: Yes. Yes, it has.

[00:42:05.19]

CP: Um, say if someone wanted you to get into, like, um, like a organization, what are some tips that could help them find one?

[00:42:17.03]

JH: Like, to be an activist, they want to get, they want to get involved and they're not quite sure how?

[00:42:21.18]

CP: Yes.

[00:42:23.10]

JH: Um, I think it's always about just, figure out what you care about, figure out what your values are, um, but then also look to see what it is that you can do. I think a lot of people in the past, and I don't think it's true so much anymore, people used to kind of have this idea, like when I was in college, Greenpeace was, like, the big climate environmental organization, and

they were doing things like, you know, going out in motorboats and trying to stop the whaling ships. So they were, like, really putting their lives on the line and clearly not people who were holding down nine-to-five jobs because you couldn't just take off from your job to go be in the middle of the Atlantic. So there was that kind of sense, like, activists are these special people just, you know, and there's, it's a kind of a rare breed, not everybody can do it, and the rest of us are just kind of normal. Um, and I think that that's really shifted, um, certainly from the Women's March, and, and some of those movements, and the Black Lives Matter movements, where people are realizing that there are lots of little things that we can do, um, to make a difference, to be involved, I mean, even just speaking up if you hear someone say a racist joke, and that doesn't take you away from your job, that doesn't put your life on the line or anything, but not doing it adds to the problem. Doing it helps to correct the problem, and I think that's so much of it, just look for every moment that you can, you know. I make masks because I can. Other people have other skills, like look at what you can do and find a way to do it. And if you don't feel like you have any skills, there's always a group that could use your money. Have a bake sale. Do— just do something. I, I have a good friend who teaches fourth and fifth grade who always tells her kids, "You're either part of the problem or part of the solution," and I think that's really true, that, especially in times like, like this, like, you know, you're either wearing your mask or you're spreading the disease. Like, there's no in-between, like, pick the thing that's going to help other people. Pick the thing that's going to show kindness. Pick the thing that's going to help people feel safe.

[00:45:06.04]

CP: OK, that in— that concludes all our questions we have.

[00:45:13.28]

JU: Yeah, was, was there anything else that you wanted to add, or a message that you want to share in particular? They said we are putting this in archive, so it'll be there forever, whatever message you want to get out there.

[00:45:26.02]

JH: I, I think that what I just said is, is probably the most important, just don't— if you're sitting on the sidelines, you really are part of the problem. There's always, you know, and it doesn't always have to be a big grand gesture. Being nice to your neighbors even if they're a different skin color from you or speak a different language, you know, being polite, not calling people names, there's— there's so many little things that we can do that make the world a better place. And if more people would do them, we could get out of some of the messes that we're in.

[00:46:10.05]

JU: Yeah, exactly right. Just a little bit of kindness goes a long way.

[00:46:15.06]

JH: Yeah. I hope that empathy becomes a national value at some point.

[00:46:26.21]

JU: One can hope. Well, I don't have anything else, unless you have anything else, Clarissa?

[00:46:35.14]

CP: No, I think that's it.

[00:46:38.05]

JU: All right. Thank you for joining us. We did enjoy it. It wasn't what I was expecting, but I had a good time doing it, ha ha.

[00:46:47.13]

CP: Thank you so much.

[00:46:48.25]

JH: Thank you for giving me the opportunity to, to talk and, hopefully, more and more people will become activists too.

[00:47:01.12]

JU: Hopefully. All right, have a good rest of your weekend.

[00:47:06.05]

JH: Thank you. Take care.

[00:47:08.03]

CP: Bye.

[00:47:08.16]

JU: Thank you, buh-bye.