2 VOICES of the Oral History Project of GLHSNC

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6 Interview with Kathy Martinez

7 Date of Birth: 2/25/41

8 By Interviewer: JoAnn Castillo

9 Date: 9/25/81

11

10 GLHS OHP 81-004, Lesbian ID

12 Tape 1 of 2, Side 1 = 1S1:000-099

13 KC: This is an interview with Kathy Martinez

14 interviewed by JoAnn Castillo on Sept. 25, 1981. Okay,

15 first of all I want to ask you about the restrictions

16 and the release that we discussed a few moments ago.

17 You've chosen to use your name on this tape, and do

18 you place any other restrictions.

19 KM: None whatsoever.

20 KC: Okay. All right, let's start at the beginning. I'd

21 like you to tell me when you were born and where your

22 family lived and who your mother was, your father,

23 your brothers and sisters, that kind of thing.

24 KM: All right, I was born Feb. 25, 1941, in New York

25 City. My parents originally came from Puerto Rico. At

http://www.glbthistory.org GLHSNC 2 brothers, one 39 and one 35 and I have a 22-year-old

3 sister

4 KC: So you're the oldest?

5 KM: And I am the oldest.

6 KC: Where'd you live?

7 KM: From early, I've always lived in New York. First

8 few years, I think we lived in the Bronx and then we

9 moved when I was 8 years old to Long Island City to

10 the Queens Bridge Housing Projects where I lived until

11 I was 21. Then I moved into Manhattan. First I had a

12 studio apartment I believe it was 83rd Street between

13 Central Park and Columbus. I lived there a couple

14 years, and from there I moved to the East Side, to

15 East 26th Street between 2nd and 3rd Avenues. I lived

16 there until 1965 until, at that time I went into the

17 military. I went into the Marine Corps. The apartment

18 changed hands. I kept the apartment but I gave it to a

19 friend of mine to sort of sublease it so that I would

20 have a place to come to. Then in 1967 when I got out

21 of the service, I went back to the apartment and I

22 lived there again until September of 1970 when I then

23 went into the United States Army. My brother, at that

24 time, subleased the apartment from me and he kept it a 25 couple years and then he got broken into a few times

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1 so he wrote me and decided that he was going to give

2 it up, which was okay with me at that time.

3 KC: Did both your parents work?

4 KM: My parents are divorced.

5 KC: How old were you when they got separated?

6 KM: I believe I was around four years old when they

7 divorced. Then my mother raised us alone, primarily

8 alone. And she remarried many, many years later to my

9 young sister's father and they stayed married only a

10 couple years and then they divorced. And then my

11 mother married again, moved to L.A. where she lives at

12 present, and since divorced that husband.

13 KC: Did she work to support you?

14 KM: My mother always worked, yes. I believe she was on

15 welfare when we were young and got a job under an

16 assumed name and the story goes that someone, being

17 jealous because she was making a few extra bucks and

18 we could have a few extra, you know, pair of socks or 19 clothes, turned her in to the Welfare Department and I

20 believe the social worker showed up at work one day

21 and found my mother, you know, working. They did take
22 her to court, I believe, and, of course, with three

23 children at the time, they made her promise to repay

24 it at something like five dollars, ten dollars a

25 month, I'm not quite sure. I don't know exactly if she Page 3 1 ever paid it off or what, you know. But she's always

2 worked. After that, she's always worked.

3 KC: What kind of work did she do?

4 KM: She's always been an assembly line worker doing

5 wiring and soldering on electronic parts. Like I think

6 she started out doing TV's and radios, then years

7 later she worked for some company that made parts for

8 the telephone company. At present, she's disabled. She

9 has a severe hearing handicap so I think she's on

10 welfare right now.

11 KC: How'd you get along with your brothers and

12 sisters? Did you have a nice childhood?

13 KM: Yeah, I was in a family, it wasn't a very close

14 family I guess with my mother working all our lives

15 and I being the oldest and having, you know, the

16 responsibility of my brother and the house, it didn't

17 make for friendships. So I would say we're not a very

18 close-knit family. Although, my sister, since she came

19 along so late in life, of course, I have a lot of love

20 and regard for her. My brothers, they're my brothers.

21 KC: You took care of them.

22 KM: Yeah, I was responsible.

23 KC: Was there, do you have any particular memories

24 from your childhood, particular friends, adults that

25 were important to you aside from your mother, any

1 thing that stands out in your memory? http://www.glbthistory.prg.urse, I had no plans to marry.

GLBT Historical Society

- 2 KM: Well, the only thing that stands out in my memory
- 3 is that I probably feel that I never really had a
- 4 childhood but, you know. Other than that I had the
- 5 normal gang that I kind of grew up with in the housing
- 6 project. Basically the same friends for many years,
- 7 nothing spectacular. Mostly meeting at the school, at
- 8 the corner candy store which were at that time the
- popular meeting places and hanging out on the corner
- 10 for, basically, you know, every day and weekends and
- 11 being bored.
- 12 KC: Mostly women or was it a mixed crowd?
- 13 KM: No, it was definitely a mixed crowd, you know, the
- 14 boys and the girls. And then when people got old
- 15 enough to have cars, the guys have the cars and on
- 16 weekends then we'd started going out to like miniature
- golf and going out on the island for miniature golf
- 18 and bowling and stuff like that. But nothing too
- 19 spectacular. Everybody got married at a very young
- 20 age. Most of the girls that I grew up with married at
- 21 18 as soon as they could. And mostly married the boys
- 22 that we grew up with. I went to more weddings during
- 23 that period of my life than I can believe. I had no
- 24 particular interest in getting married at the time. In
- 25 fact I already knew that I was gay when I was 16 so,

- 2 KC: How did you know?
- 3 KM: My recollection of how I knew I was gay was really
- 4 strange for me. It was one day I was hanging out on
- 5 the corner, as I always did, with my friends and one
- 6 woman in particular was a good friend. And I remember
- 7 going home that night, going up and getting ready for
- 8 bed and going to sleep, and waking up the next morning
- 9 and getting dressed and going outside. And I think it
- 10 was summer and going to this particular friend's house
- 11 and calling her from the window, which was the thing
- 12 you did in those days, you called your friend from the
- 13 window. And I remember her coming her downstairs and I
- 14 remember looking at her and getting this funny feeling
- 15 and not understanding what that was about right away.
- 16 And then the funny feeling persisted and I realized
- 17 that I liked her more than just as a friend. But this
- 18 time, of course, we always talked about @the@ queers.
- 19 We used to go down to Greenwich Village sometimes and
- 20 see gays and, you know, of course, snicker and call
- 21 them queer and stuff like that. And then I realized,
- 22 oh my goodness, I think I'm queer. It wasn't earth-
- 23 shaking for me. I didn't go through any major changes
- 24 around it. The only thing I felt was that I had no one
- 25 to talk to about it. The only lesbian that I knew of

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- 1 in our neighborhood had recently moved so that was my
- 2 one and only source and she was no longer there. So
- 3 for three years until I was 19, I kind of just knew I
- 4 was gay but I kept it inside.
- 5 KC: Did you go out with men or with the other boys?
- 6 1S1:100-199
- 7 KM: No, after everybody got married after 18 years
- 8 old, I mean, there was no more gang. So I was working
- full-time all this time so I had met other people at
- 10 work and stuff so I was doing different things now.
- 11 But all these people were straight basically. But they
- 12 didn't involve men as a rule. It was usually other
- 13 women. And just keeping all this feeling inside
- 14 because there was no one and still, even at 19 there
- 15 was still no one that I had met to talk to. I used to
- 16 go down to Greenwich Village and walk around down
- 17 there on the weekends by myself hoping that someone
- 18 would recognize I was gay and talk to me, you know. Or
- 19 I would try to look for the bars 'cause I mean, I knew
- 20 they were down there, but I didn't know where they
- 21 were and I wasn't about to start sticking my nose into
- 22 every bar in Greenwich Village. So it was a sad time
- 23 only because I couldn't talk about it or, you know,
- 24 find out more about it or meet other gay people.
- 25 KC: Did anyone else in your family know that you know

- 1 of? Was anybody hip to it?
- 2 KM: I believe my mother was. I believe that now
- 3 because when I came out to her about six or seven
- 4 years ago, she just said well, I've always known. So I
- 5 would imagine she had some suspicions at that time,
- 6 you know. But I didn't give her any reason to really
- 7 know for sure because, you know, until I was 19, I
- 8 didn't have any gay friends nor was I involved in any
- 9 gay relationships.
- 10 KC: You once told me a story about how you used to
- 11 comb your hair.
- 12 KM: Yeah, I used to wear my hair very short and
- 13 because I have ten fingers when it comes to doing
- 14 anything feminine with my hair, the easiest way out
- 15 for me was just to comb my hair back. And my mother
- 16 hated it, absolutely hated it. And she walked into the
- 17 bathroom one day when I was combing my hair and I was
- 18 standing in front of the mirror and with sort of my
- 19 legs spread apart in a stance, you know, and had the
- 20 comb up to my hair with one hand on my hair which 21 follows the line of the comb going through your hair
- 22 which was definitely a very masculine type way of
- 23 combing your hair. I remember my mother being very
- 24 perturbed about that and sort of indicating to me that
- 25 perhaps I should let my grow or, you know. She would

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- 1 try and sit me down and pin-curl my harrand, www.glbthistory.org
- 2 know, do all kind of things to kind of fluff it up,
- 3 but it didn't work.
- 4 KC: How'd you dress?
- 5 KM: Well, for work, of course, at the time pant-suits
- 6 had not come in yet so I definitely wore sweaters and
- 7 skirts or blouses and skirts with nylons to work.
- 8 After work, it would be slacks and a blouse and, of
- 9 course, when I moved eventually, my clothes got
- 10 somewhat more severe. Although now that I look at
- 11 photographs of myself, I realize in a lot of ways that
- 12 I was not as heavy a dresser as a lot of lesbians were
- 13 then. But definitely always slacks and button-down
- 14 shirts.
- 15 KC: Was that unusual among your friends that you used
- 16 to hang out with?
- 17 KM: No, that attire was pretty much the rule for quote
- 18 @butches,@ and, of course, the fems dressed more
- 19 feminine.
- 20 KC: There was another question I wanted to ask before
- 21 we get into your coming out. I wanted to ask you, was
- 22 your background as you grew up, was it strongly Puerto
- 23 Rican? Did you live in Puerto Rican neighborhoods? Did
- 24 you speak Spanish at home?
- 25 KM: No, we didn't speak Spanish at home. My mother Page 9

- 2 questioned her the last few years as to why she, you 3 know, found it necessary not to speak Spanish at home,
- 4 and I don't know, she did a whole denial trip on it so
- 5 that if we had wanted to learn Spanish, we could have
- 6 learned it on our own which I think is pretty fucked
- 7 up because we didn't have any other Spanish friends.
- 8 Me and my brothers grew up primarily with all I know
- 9 I did white people. My brother Robert, which is the
- 10 youngest boy, predominantly he hung around with black
- 11 kids. And my brother John, my middle brother, also
- 12 tended to lean toward having more white friends than
- 13 not. But none of us had Spanish friends. And I don't
- 14 speak Spanish well today although I can speak it. I
- 15 understand it pretty well.
- 16 KC: You speak it better than you let on.
- 17 KM: And as far as identifying, for years we called
- 18 ourselves Mar-tin-ez' and not Mar-tin'-ez because
- 19 that's how we were taught to say our name and it was
- 20 an instructor in school, I remember, and I can't
- 21 remember whether it was a male or a female, I remember
- 22 them saying to me, your name is not Mar-tin-ez', your
- 23 name is Mar-tin'-ez. And once that was said to me
- 24 after that, I would never let anybody call me Mar-tin-
- 25 ez' and I would start correcting people when they

- 1 would call me Mar-tin-ez'.
- 2 KC: About hold old do you think you were?
- 3 KM: I was not yet in junior high school. I was in
- 4 grade school somewhere, but already about 5th or 6th
- 5 or maybe even 7th grade. So our identification, I
- 6 would say I was a Puerto Rican and I think my brothers
- 7 would say it too, but I don't think that we really
- 8 knew what that meant, you know. I grew up mainly in a
- 9 white environment and so I think really I spent years
- 10 of my life identifying white, thinking white and 11 acting white. It was only when I became a correctional
- 12 officer some years later, that I started hanging
- 13 around with a lot of third-world women because
- 14 primarily the staff was third-world. So our
- 15 identification was pretty, pretty non-existent.
- 16 KC: All right, so at about 19, you sort of indicate
- 17 that that was a turning point. What happened at that
- 18 time?
- 19 KM: Well, my mother was pregnant at the time with my
- 20 sister and got to be friendly with this woman neighbor
- 21 that lived in the housing project in another building
- 22 and she was a young wornan, and they got to be better
- 23 and better friends. And my mother asked her to be my
- 24 sister's godmother which is, you know, a big honor
- 25 among Latin families. I didn't like this particular
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- 1 woman at first. She was married and had two children.
- 2 two boys. So I guess she decided that since she was 3 going to be a member of the family, that she would try
- 4 to cultivate my friendship and one day she invited me
- 5 over to her house for dinner. Well, that was the
- 6 beginning of a very good friendship because she was an
- 7 excellent cook and since I loved to eat, I saw her in
- 8 a different light. So I started going over there quite
- 9 a bit to eat.
- 10 KC: Was your mother a good cook?
- 11 1S1:200-299
- 12 KM: My mother was a good cook but she was not into as
- 13 much Latin cooking as this woman was. And I got to eat
- 14 more varieties of Latin food that I hadn't experienced
- 15 at home. But my mother was a good cook but I remember
- 16 my mother starting to manifest this feeling of
- 17 jealousy because all of a sudden, out of seven days in
- 18 a week, I was eating at Carmen's house six days a
- 19 week, you know. So my mother started what's the matter
- 20 for you, you know, don't you like my cooking, you
- 21 know, that kind of nonsense. But during that time,
- 22 Carmen and I spent a lot of time with each other. Her
- 23 husband was about 20-some odd years older than she
- 24 was. And Carmen was four years older than I was when I
- 25 met her so she was 23. So her husband spent a lot of

GLHS OHP 81-004, Lesbian ID 1 time away from home with his cronies and stuff. So we I apartment - I don't know why I decided to sleep over 2 spent a lot of time together. And I don't know, one 3 day, you know, she caught me looking at her and I 4 would, you know, look away and I began to realize I 5 was getting a crush on this woman and that was very weird for me 'cause I didn't know what to do about it 7 and, you know, she was married and had kids and so I 8 thought that was taboo. But as it turned out, she was the one that actually ended up, actually instigating 10 any physical contact between us. It wasn't me, 11 definitely wasn't me. And that was - on a trip back 12 from the Island, we had gone out on a weekend, like on 13 a Sunday to a Puerto Rican family's home. They were 14 having a big festival and they were roasting a pig and 15 it was really, you know, a great day and stuff and on 16 the way back, I was riding in the back seat with 17 Carmen and her husband and a friend, male-type, were 18 in the front seat. And I remember sitting there next 19 to her, being very aware of her, and the next thing I 20 know, she slips off her shoes and starts playing with 21 my feet and around my ankles, you know, and god, the 21 looking out of the window and putting my hands behind 22 blood just rushed to my face and I just - it was about an hour's drive back from the Island to our house and

20 who did what but I know that we kissed and I remember 22 my back and saying hm, a beautiful night. You know,

2 there, I don't know whether we had already made those

5 minutes later, Carmen turns around to her husband and

6 says that she's hungry and I remember her husband's

8 big eater - saying you're hungry? You know, we had

7 reaction because Carmen was not in any shape or form a

9 this tremendous feast out at the Island. Anyway, so

10 the next thing I know, he's being packed off to this

12 food. And his friend had left already and so Carmen

14 disappears into her bedroom and in the next minute or 15 so, she comes out in this peignoir set. And I was

16 rocked on my heels. I just didn't know what was going

18 know, drive back with the feetsy game. And the next I

19 know, she's standing next to me and I don't remember

17 down. I was still flying high from this whole, you

11 Italian restaurant to pick up some up some Italian

13 and I were left together and all of a sudden she

3 plans prior. But I was going to spend the night there

4 on the sofa. And when we get into the house, a few

23 and I remember this woman just busting out laughing 24 'cause it must have been so weird going, @Hm, a

25 beautiful night, you know.@ And the next thing I know,

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1 I guess we were kissing again and it got very hot and 2 passionate. Both of us kind of fumbling around 'cause

24 to the projects. And my god, my god, I was sweating

25 and couldn't swallow. So we get back to her

3 we didn't know what the hell was going on, we didn't

4 know what to do. But it seemed to take a natural

5 course. But Tony was on the way back so we, you know,

6 had to cut it short. But the next day after he left

7 for work, it was - we were off and running. And we had

8 a relationship for two years.

9 KC: Did anyone know?

10 KM: I'm sure my mother knew, I'm sure that Carmen's

11 husband knew but no one ever made it difficult for us.

12 In fact the only person that probably made it any kind

13 of difficult was my mother. After a while, she just

14 got very, very questiony about well, why are you

15 always spending so much time at Carmen's house, you

16 know, every night. So that after a while, I would not

17 go some evenings, but I would take off in the daytime

18 and, you know, be home in the evening so my mother

19 wouldn't have so much to say around it.

20 KC: How'd you manage to keep your job?

21 KM: Well, you know, I had been there going on seven

22 years so it wasn't like, they needed me.

23 KC: What were you doing, by the way?

24 KM: I was doing bookkeeping for a small company.

25 KC: And you started this job as soon as you finished

1 high school?

2 KM: No, I didn't finish high school. I quit school

3 when I was 16 and worked at a couple of jobs. Almost

4 before my 18th birthday, I got this job and I stayed

5 there until I was about 24.

6 KC: Okay, so back to Carmen, she had kids, didn't she?

7 KM: Yeah, she had two boys.

8 KC: How old were school age, you know, so they went to

9 school during the day. And at night I would help them

10 with their homework and, you know, they would take

11 their baths and help them and stuff and put them to

12 bed. And we'd be in the living room doing whatever,

13 you know, carefully of course. I was always very

14 conscious of the kids being there. But it seemed to

15 work out, the kids, I had a good rapport with them so

16 they never seemed to indicate that anything was 17 strange. We weren't demonstrative with each other when

18 the kids were up and around. In fact in front of

19 anybody, just when we were alone. I think Carmen's

20 mother might have also had some idea. But the thing

21 was that Carmen's family really cared about me. So

22 they took me into the family. I felt guilty at times

23 about Tony because he was such a nice man and he

24 always referred to me like his daughter, but that

25 didn't stop me or Carmen for that matter.

- 1 KC: So from your first attempts at fumbling around, 1 KC: But it was a total and satisfying with expression
- 2 did any sexual pattern set in as to how you two
- 3 related to each other?
- 4 1S1:300-399
- 5 KM: Well, of course, we did find out all the wonderful
- 6 things that were open to us as lesbians or at least as
- 7 women, you know. Yeah, the pattern was that we didn't
- 8 refer to each other as butch and fem 'cause I really
- 9 didn't know too much about it yet. But I was basically
- 10 the aggressor and she was usually passive. It's real
- 11 hard for me to even remember at this point in my life
- 12 with Carmen whether or not she ever actually made love
- 13 to me, I don't remember. It's real strange. Sometimes
- 14 I wonder about some of my ex-relationships and whether
- 15 or not they actually ever touched me or not. But I
- 16 can't remember them, you know, so maybe if they did,
- 17 it certainly wasn't that often.
- 18 KC: Did you climax do you think?
- 19 KM: I mean, that's strange, I don't know, I mean,
- 20 compared to what I, you know, experience now and what
- 21 I remember about then, it wasn't the same kind of
- 22 climax. It was a climax of having given pleasure and
- 23 feeling good about that. But as far as remembering an
- 24 actual climax, I don't remember many of those in my
- 25 earlier years.

- 2 of love.
- 3 KM: Yes, it was. I, you know, until I learned many,
- 4 many, many years later, it felt very satisfactory to
- 5 me. I didn't feel that I was not getting something in
- 6 return.
- 7 KC: Or that you were being left hanging, like excited
- 8 but not satiated?
- 9 KM: Right, yeah, I mean, I always felt okay. I mean,
- 10 it felt okay I remember, yeah.
- 11 KC: So what brought that to an end? Wait a minute! You
- 12 said you found out about things that were open to you
- 13 as women. You mean sexually, just by exploring? So you
- 14 had no other contact with lesbians? You never went to
- 15 bars?
- 16 KM: No, I still had never been to my first bar. In
- 17 fact I never went to my first bar 'til I was 24. And
- 18 prior to that, I didn't meet lesbians until I was 21
- 19 which happened in Puerto Rico on a vacation and I met
- 20 some women down there and they were older than I was.
- 21 I think the youngest was eight years older than I was
- 22 at the time. And I remember liking them; they were
- 23 very, very intelligent attractive women. And we made
- 24 plans to get in touch with each other when we got back
- 25 to New York. And I definitely did get in touch with

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- 1 them and started getting invited out to different
- 2 things with them. But I wasn't sure if they were gay
- 3 or not when I first met them. I just knew that they
- 4 were a class of women that I wanted to get to know.
- 5 KC: Did this coincide, the trip to Puerto Rico, was
- 6 this at about the time that your relationship with
- 7 Carmen was ending?
- 8 KM: No, no, it was after the trip to Puerto Rico that
- 9 things between us started getting shaky. And it had to
- 10 do a lot with the fact that I started seeing this
- 11 group of women more and more and more. I started
- 12 spending more time with them. They introduced me to a
- 13 really new area which I really enjoyed, like music,
- 14 the ballet, art museums, just, you know, all these
- 15 things that I had never really done before which I
- 16 always wanted to do. But growing up with the kind of
- 17 crowd I did, you didn't mention going and doing those
- 18 kinds of things. So I started spending a lot more time
- 19 with them, and seeing less of Carmen. And, of course,
- 20 she started balking at that. And finally at one point
- 21 gave me an ultimatum choosing between her and this new
- 22 life that I had found. And, of course, I opted for the
- 23 new life knowing that Carmen and I would probably go 23 Puerto Rico? How'd you run into them?
- 24 on like that forever. I didn't see her getting a
- 25 divorce. I didn't even contemplate her getting a Page 19

- 1 divorce and us living together with the kids and
- 2 stuff. So that primarily is what happened. She gave me
- 3 this ultimatum and I just went the other way.
- 4 KC: Did you ever see her again?
- 5 KM: Well, yeah, of course, I saw her. She lived in the
- 6 housing project for years as did my mother, so I would
- 7 see her when I went back to visit and stuff.
- 8 KC: Did she ever establish any other liaisons to your
- 9 knowledge?
- 10 KM: Not to my knowledge. I mean, she stayed with her
- 11 husband and the kids also. She was always very bitter
- 12 toward me afterwards. Carmen started drinking a lot
- 13 later in her life and I remember once getting together
- 14 with her at a sort of family reunion type thing and
- 15 she was pretty intoxicated.
- 16 1S1:400-405
- 17 And I remember her indicating to me that she would
- 18 never forgive me for having left her.
- 19 End of Side 1, Tape 1 of 2
- 20 1S2:010-099
- 21 KC: Okay, so you started to see this group of women.
- 22 How many women were there and how did you meet them in
- 24 KM: I believe we were staying at the same hotel which
- 25 was more like a smaller version of a hotel. It wasn't

- so big that, you know, you didn't see other people. I so big that, you know, you didn't see other people.
- 2 And I think we were on the beach one day or something
- 3 of that nature and I started talking to them or they
- 4 talked to me. I'm not quite sure. But I just
- 5 realized I only met two of them there. And when I
- 6 got back, they in turn introduced me to some of their
- 7 friends which I ended up becoming very close friends
- 8 with two of the women they introduced me to.
- 9 KC: Were these women Puerto Rican?
- 10 KM: No, one was black and one was Jewish, and the two
- 11 people that I met in Puerto Rico were Jewish women.
- 12 One of the two women eventually became my lover. Not
- 13 the women I met in Puerto Rico but the women they
- 14 introduced me to.
- 15 KC: Were those two women lovers at the time?
- 16 KM: No. But they were the best of friends, they were
- 17 best friends. And it happened very in sort of a just a
- 18 natural course of events because this particular woman
- 19 had never had, that I've ever been about to know of,
- 20 had ever had a gay relationship. And she kind of took
- 24 this particular woman said to me, well, why don't you
- 25 apartment-sit for me while I'm gone and see how you Page 21
- 1 KM: Okay, Sally. While I stayed with her during this 2 two-month period, we got into a relationship.

2 time, my new friends were wondering why, at 21, I was

3 still living at home. Basically I couldn't, you know,

6 KM: Yeah, and then there was Carmen, that's true too,

8 chance and she had this great, you know, apartment in

a brownstone in New York up in the 80's near Central

7 so I stayed at home. So I, you know, I jumped at the

10 Park West. It was summertime and it was fabulous. I

11 loved it. I must have cleaned that woman's house five

14 when the other friends would call, the two women that

16 cleaning this house and it became a joke. But anyway,

17 when my friend came back from her vacation, it was

20 offer which was that she would let me stay with her at

21 her apartment and, in turn, I would have to turn over

22 my paycheck to her and she would give me enough money

23 to get to work and for cigarettes and for lunches and

24 for my bills. Because I had already started a habit of

25 living, you know, credit. I mean, that's how I grew

18 real clear that I loved living, you know, out of my

19 home, out from my mother's house. So she made me an

12 times a day, I mean, I was so nervous about, you know,

13 taking care of somebody else's space. And in fact,

15 I met in Puerto Rico, it inevitably seemed I was

4 I couldn't afford to do otherwise.

5 KC: And also if Carmen were to catch you.

- - 3 KC: And you don't think that she had had a lesbian
 - 4 affair prior to?
 - 5 KM: No, I mean, I had asked her and she said no.
 - 6 KC: But she'd been hanging out with all these other
 - 7 lesbians.
 - 8 KM: Well, the thing is to this day, I still don't know
 - 9 whether the two women I met in Puerto Rico were,
 - 10 although they were the best of friends, forever in
 - 11 each other's company. But I never saw them be
 - 12 demonstrative. So I was very confused as to whether
 - 13 they were or not. There was no conversations around
 - 14 gayness and stuff, I mean, so it was really like if
 - 15 they were, they definitely were in the closet to
 - 16 everybody, even their friends. So Sally and I just
 - 17 sort of slid into this relationship. It just started
 - 18 with, you know, first my sleeping on the sofa and then
 - 19 eventually, you know, sleeping in bed with her and
 - 20 then bodies touching and then a general kiss. And it
 - 21 just went one step at a time until we were.
 - 22 KC: With no one in particular initiating it?
 - 23 KM: Right, yeah. It was just our constantly being
 - 24 together and around each other. We just sort of slid
 - 25 into it. It was kind of nice. It was nice the way it

- 21 me under her wing. And what happened was I remember I
- 22 started spending a lot of time with them and they were
- 23 all getting ready to go to Haiti for a vacation. And

- 1 up. Everything was on credit so I thought that's the
- 2 way you did it. And incredibly in two months, this
- 3 woman had enough money saved for me for first and
- 4 last, deposit on PG&E and all kind of things.
- 5 KC: So she was basically saving money out of your
- 6 paycheck for you. She wasn't taking it and paying her
- 7 rent? She was managing your money.
- 8 KM: No, she didn't accept any money from me while I
- 9 stayed with her.
- 10 KC: So she was basically doing you a favor all the way
- 11 around.
- 12 KM: Oh, very much so. She was a social worker. I
- 13 think, you know, she wanted to be a social worker.
- 14 KC: So she was a social worker. Were most of these
- 15 women semi-professional, professional?
- 16 KM: Yeah.
- 17 KC: Well, judging from the vacations.
- 18 KM: Yeah, they were professionals, all of them. And
- 19 during that two-month period that I stayed at my
- 20 friend's house -
- 21 KC: What's her name?
- 22 KM: I hesitate to say her name, I do, in this one
- 23 particular case.
- 24 KC: You could make up a name for her to refer to her.
- 25 Whatever easiest for you.

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- 1 happened. It was very slow and very nice, very gentle. 1 Sally is, to this day, best friends with this woman
- 2 And so, but I was never allowed to ever, ever, ever
- 3 indicate to anyone that she and I were having a
- 4 relationship. And to this day I still hold that
- 5 promise inside. That's why I don't feel comfortable,
- 6 you know, mentioning who she is.
- 7 KC: So you guys socialized primarily with women but
- 8 nobody wasn't all that nobody discussed it.
- 9 KM: Nobody discussed it. I'm trying to remember now, I
- 10 think I was out to them. I think I was. I don't even
- 11 remember if I was or whether it was just assumed I
- 12 was, I don't know as a matter of fact. I don't
- 13 remember, you know, ever discussing it. I mean, here
- 14 was Sally and I having this relationship totally,
- 15 totally involving just the two of us. I mean, there
- 16 was nobody else outside of the two of us that, as far
- 17 as we knew, knew. There was one person that would
- 18 accuse us off and on of having one, which was Sally's
- 19 best friend. And, of course, it was denial, denial,
- 20 denial, you know, even to this day. It was a total
- 22 KC: Do you ever see Sally or her friend when you go
- 23 back east?
- 24 KM: Yes, I do, yeah, I do. Yeah, because I mean, they
- 25 were, they are very important in my life. So yes, Page 25
- 1 mean, I definitely was impressed by her. She started,
- 2 especially when she drank, she would get very, very
- 3 loose in some ways. And I started getting hints that
- 4 she was coming on to me. And at first, I was like nah,
- 5 that's not happening. But after a while it became real
- 6 clear that that was exactly what was happening. And
- 7 after a while, she just let it, when we were alone
- 8 together, oh, she started, you know, if not
- 9 verbalizing suggestive things to me, she would tease
- 10 me in ways that were really beginning to really turn
- 11 me on to her, you know. But I also knew something
- 12 about her and it was that anything that she could have
- 13 immediately, she would discard soon after. So I was
- 14 young but I wasn't stupid. So we played this game of
- 15 chase and run. I was running and she chased. And for a
- 16 whole summer, and I'll never forget it, it was the
- 17 summer of '62 it was incredible summer for me. It
- 18 was just fun-filled with wonderful days in the parks
- 19 and concerts in the park and playing tennis which I
- 20 was learning how to do. And just wonderful days spent,
- 21 weekend especially, spent with them. And she got very
- 22 persistent at that time. And it was getting pretty
- 23 scary because I knew I was getting really attracted to
- 24 her.
- 25 KC: And you were still -

- 2 who's been her best friend for seventeen or so years.
- 3 But whether they are involved in any other way, you
- 4 would never know it.
- 5 1S2:100-199
- 6 To this day, I still don't know if she and this other
- 7 woman have something going. It's amazing.
- 8 KC: I mean, over and over again, people tell me
- 9 circles of friends where everybody was coupled and
- 10 nobody ever discussed it.
- 11 KM: Oh yeah, so this is not uncommon, you know, but
- 12 when I look back on it now and see how much time we
- 13 spent with each other, and yet there was no
- 14 verbalization at all. And the only time you might have
- 15 thought there might have been some involvement amongst
- 16 these women was the fact that maybe every now and
- 17 then, you would see a tender touch or something. But
- 18 even that you couldn't really say was indicative of a
- 19 lesbian relationship. What happened was I ended up the
- 20 best friend of Sally's was definitely one of the most
- 21 fantastic women I had ever met in my life. She
- 22 definitely was a Bohemian before the word became
- 23 popular. She definitely was into health foods. She was
- 24 an incredible person. She had a gaiety about life that
- 25 was, you know, enormous. I was very, very impressed, I

- 1 KM: Yes, I was still involved with Sally.
- 2 KC: You weren't living together with Sally?
- 3 KM: No, by this time, I mean, I had moved out a few
- 4 months after I stayed with her and got my own place,
- 5 not too far away.
- 6 KC: And this was in the 80's?
- 7 KM: Yeah, in the '80's, so I was only a few blocks
- 8 away from her. And so it got pretty hairy and it was
- 9 getting to the point where I really wanted to sleep
- 10 with this woman and eventually I did, even though I
- 11 was still involved with Sally. I was guilty and I felt
- 12 torn but I was so, so infatuated with this other woman
- 13 that there was just no way I could have stopped
- 14 myself. Eventually the upshot came that I did break up
- 15 with Sally.

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- 16 KC: Did she know why?
- 17 KM: Yes. And it was my first experience with
- 18 heartbreak. I felt really bad. I felt bad around
- 19 Carmen too, but not as bad I felt, you know, she had
- 20 a husband and kids, I don't know. But with Sally
- 21 because she had been so wonderful to me, I felt really
- 22 rotten. But, like I said, I was just so infatuated
- 23 with the other woman that that just didn't stop me. So
- 24 I think my relationship with Sally went on, it was
- 25 about two years. And toward the end of that two years

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- that's when myself and the other woman started getting 1 other woman at this time. So that was 24. Then we go
- 2 involved. And then (phone rings) we lasted for about
- 3 two years also. (Recorder turned off momentarily).
- 4 KC: Okay, so you're breaking up with Sally and
- 5 starting to see her friend.
- 6 KM: It was traumatic because I remember she cried a
- 7 lot. I cried but it just boiled down to I could not,
- 8 you know, I could not help myself. I was thoroughly,
- 9 thoroughly in love with this woman.
- 10 KC: So Sally knew that you were starting a
- 11 relationship with her best friend.
- 12 KM: But the best friend, never to this day, knows that
- 13 for sure that Sally and I ever had a relationship. So
- 14 I hope to god she never finds out but somehow I feel I
- 15 broke a solemn pledge.
- 16 KC: So I'm a little bit confused about the chronology
- 17 because the summer when you were 21, that was the
- 18 summer of '62.
- 19 KM: I believe so.
- 20 KC: And that was the summer in which Sally's friend
- 21 was chasing you but you said that you saw Sally for
- 22 two years which would have meant that you started to
- 23 see Sally when you were 19.
- 24 KM: All right, I see. I went into, I remember going
- 25 into the Marine Corps when I was 24 and I was with the

- 2 backwards, 23. So many it was a year but it was at
- 3 least from 21 to almost 23 when I was seeing Sally for
- 5 least from 21 to almost 25 when I was seeing saily to
- 4 sure. And then it may have been only a year or so. It
- 5 seemed like forever but it was only a year with her
- 6 friend. And maybe they intertwined for a while there
- 7 too. I don't know how long we really played footsies
- 8 like that before we actually decided to become lovers.
- 9 I get mixed up too, you know, what can I say?
- 10 KC: Did you continue to play the same type of sexual
- 11 roles?
- 12 KM: No, not with Jay. No, she was a totally
- 13 uninhibited woman and she was much more into showing
- 14 me new things sexually.
- 15 KC: Such as?
- 16 KM: I believe it's really strange with me, I don't
- 17 know why I block out things. But I believe that I
- 18 performed 69 with her the first time, but I might have
- 19 before but I don't remember. It seems vivid in my mind
- 20 that I experienced that with her.
- 21 KC: And did she make love to you?
- 22 KM: Yes, yes, she did, she did. Like I said, she was
- 23 totally different from anybody that I had met up to
- 24 that point. She wasn't into roles or anything. She
- 25 still saw men too, I mean, she did what she wanted to

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- 1 do.
- 2 1S2@200-299
- 3 She did exactly what she pleased and I guess that's
- 4 maybe what I found so fascinating about her, until it
- 5 started infringing on our relationship then.
- 6 KC: Had Sally been seeing men while you two were
- 7 involved with each other?
- 8 KM: She would have an occasional date and would always
- 9 seem to be very happy to get home. But very
- 10 occasionally because I don't remember it bothering me
- 11 or anything like that.
- 12 KC: And you always maintained a separate house, a
- 13 separate apartment?
- 14 KM: Always.
- 15 KC: And where would you spend most of your time?
- 16 KM: It was funny, wait a minute, oh yeah, I forgot.
- 17 Jay and I used to go to hotels a lot 'cause I forgot.
- 18 Somewhere along the line, she was going with somebody
- 19 else too. That's right, I forgot about that.
- 20 KC: Woman of man?
- 21 KM: No, a woman. And they lived together. This is very
- 22 I think I'll have to remember this story correctly
- 23 now. Yeah, somewhere along the line, she started going
- 24 with this other woman when we were playing footsies.
- 25 Actually, when we started playing around with each Page 31

- 1 other, I was going with someone and actually she was
- 2 going with someone. And maybe that's why the years
- 3 overlapped because she stayed with this other woman
- 4 and I stayed with Sally and we'd go to hotels and
- 5 stuff for a long time. And I remember once there was a
- 6 mix-up and I ended up in one place and Jay ended up in
- 7 another place and so we never came together that night
- 8 and it was real funny 'cause I ended up staying in the
- 9 room. I slept there, you know, woke up the next
- 10 morning and realized, you know, she had never shown
- 11 up. And I remember finally getting her on the phone
- 12 that afternoon 'cause her line was busy, busy, busy,
- 13 busy. I couldn't understand what was going on. And
- 14 when I finally got her on the phone, she was so angry.
- 15 And I tried to figure out what she was so angry about.
- 16 I laughed. I thought it was a funny, I thought it was
- 17 a funny, you know, mix-up. She was absolutely livid,
- 18 livid. In fact, she was so livid that she had almost
- 19 literally destroyed her apartment, she was so upset.
- 20 KC: Why didn't you go to your apartment? You were
- 21 living alone.
- 22 KM: No, I wasn't. I had a roommate. That's right, I
- 23 did have a roommate in that apartment. I started out
- 24 there alone and then eventually this woman ended up
- 25 being my roommate somehow. So yeah, that was another,

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- 1 right. We couldn't do it at my house and we couldn't 1 still at Enterprise? Yeah, actually I was still
- 2 do it at her house, so we would go to hotels. And so I
- 3 remember finally going over there after I talked to
- 4 her on the phone and the furniture was all upside down
- 5 and the woman she was living with tried to calm her
- 6 down. And oh, it was terrible and I'm laughing through
- 7 the whole thing. She almost knocked me out because I
- 8 thought it was funny. She wasn't very pleased about
- 9 that. Yeah, so for a long time, that's exactly what we
- 10 did, now that I think back on it. We both had these
- 11 relationships going and yet we had an affair going
- 12 together and we went to hotels.
- 13 KC: Were you jealous of her other lover? You always
- 14 paint yourself as a very jealous possessive person to
- 15 me. But these early relationships don't bear that out.
- 16 KM: Hm, that's food for thought. No, I guess maybe
- 17 because I was still involved with Sally, it didn't,
- 18 you know. I know somewhere along the line, we both
- 19 eventually broke up with our respective lovers and
- 20 became lovers. And in fact by this time I was living
- 21 on East 26th Street and now I was actually living by
- 22 myself. And so the motels and hotels ceased.
- 23 KC: What kind of work were you doing at this time?
- 24 Were you still bookkeeping?
- 25 KM: No, I had already been into, let me see, was I

- 2 working as bookkeeper for that small company. In fact
- 3 I stayed with that company until September of '65
- 4 'cause I entered the Marine Corps at that time. So my
- 5 relationship with Jay was coming to an end. I was -
- 6 once she and I became lovers, then the jealousy
- 7 happened. I mean, then I became very possessive, very
- 8 jealous of her. And she still was who she was. And I
- 9 remember spending many, many nights by myself while
- 10 she would go out with other people and do other things
- 11 and I would sit home and brood instead of maintaining
- 12 or establishing friendships of my own. And that led to
- 13 anger on her part that I would be sitting home and
- 14 then maybe a little bit of guilt on her part. So our
- 15 relationship started kind of falling apart. I became
- 16 angrier and angrier at her for spending less and less
- 17 time with me. And one day I left work, I left work,
- 18 went to 42nd Street where there was a recruiting
- 19 station for all four services, all housed in one small
- 20 little building. And it was funny, I don't even
- 21 consciously remember making the decision to go to 42nd
- 22 Street and do this. All I know is the next thing I
- 23 know I'm on 42nd Street at the recruiting station. And
- 24 I had always wanted to join the Navy even since I saw
- 25 my first World War Two movie and I saw women in

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- 1 uniforms. I fell in love with the Navy uniform for
- women. I loved the hat, actually it was the hat. So
- 3 when I walked into the recruiting station, I made a
- 4 beeline for the Navy recruiter or the Navy desk
- 5 anyway, and the recruiter was not there. So this slick
- 6 Marine Corps recruiter slides up to me and the next
- 7 thing I know, I am going into the Marine Corps. I
- 8 think mainly it was one of these ideas that if I
- didn't go ahead and do it, I might chicken out and I
- 10 wouldn't go back. So the next thing I know, I'm being
- 11 processed to go into the Marine Corps.
- 12 KC: Aside from your dream to be in the Navy, you'd
- 13 never acted on it until this time?
- 14 KM: I sent away for some written material on it at
- 15 some time.
- 16 1S2:300-399
- 17 And I don't know why I never followed through with it.
- 18 But I remember going home that night and seeing Jay
- 19 and telling her what I did and I remember her being
- 20 bitchy and saying oh, I'll bet you won't go through
- 21 with it. And I said something like well, how much do
- 22 you bet? And I don't remember whether the figure was
- 23 50 or 25 or 50 dollars, but anyway we settled on a
- 24 figure. And I did go through with it.
- 25 KC: Could you have even backed out?

- 1 KM: Oh yeah, I hadn't gotten sworn in yet. Just
- 2 paperwork and stuff had been done. And so I wonder now
- 3 that we talk about it, I wonder would I have changed
- 4 my mind, I don't know. I mean, you can't go back and
- 5 decide but I wonder. But anyway the bet was made and,
- 6 of course, I tend to have a stubborn streak so I went
- 7 through with it. And the next thing that I know after
- 8 I had been sworn in, that day or the next day after
- 9 that, Jay turns up with either 25 or 50 crisp, I mean,
- 10 crisp, brand new one-dollar bills and counts them out
- 11 to me. I'll never forget that, you know, all these
- 12 brand new dollar bills. So I took my money. Anyway, so
- 13 she kept the apartment, as a matter of fact, for a
- 14 while.
- 15 KC: So you guys didn't live together?
- 16 KM: No, no, no, I mean, I didn't want to give up the
- 17 apartment because it was a cute little apartment in a
- 18 nice area which was rapidly becoming a very @in@ area.
- 19 And I remember I only paid something like \$63.78 for
- 20 this studio apartment but it was a cute little place;
- 21 it was very nice for one person. So I think she sublet
- 22 it from me and eventually ended up subletting it to
- 23 someone else, but the apartment still was mine. So
- 24 then I went into the Marine Corps in September of 1965
- 25 and went into basic training at Fort McClellan,

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- 2 Island, South Carolina. And went through nine weeks of
- 3 that nonsense. And then was assigned to permanent duty
- 4 at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot in San Diego which I
- 5 was ecstatic about because, of course, I wanted to
- 6 come to California. So when I got the station of my
- 7 choice, I was just, you know, beside myself with
- 8 happiness. And I went home for seven days. I went back
- 9 to New York for a 7-day leave prior to coming out to
- 10 California to report to my duty station. And I saw all
- 11 my friends and had a great time for a week.
- 12 KC: You still had not been going to lesbian bars. Is
- 13 that correct?
- 14 KM: Oh, no. Let me see, 'cause it was Jay who
- 15 introduced me to my first lesbian bar. In fact, I went
- 16 just before I went into the Corps, as a matter of
- 17 fact. She took me to my first lesbian bar.
- 18 KC: What bar or where was it?
- 19 KM: It was down, not in the Village, it was off the
- 20 Village. I always have the name of the place on the
- 21 tip of my tongue and then it goes away. And then some
- 22 time later after I think about it, it comes back. So
- 23 if it comes back to me, I'll -
- 24 KC: Do you remember whereabouts it was?
- 25 KM: Somewhere off 14th Street, somewhere.

- 1 Alabama, no, no, I'm sorry, that's the Army. Parris 1 KC: What was it like? What did you feel like going in
 - 2 there?
 - 3 KM: Well, I remember the first time, she had found out
 - 4 where one was and asked me if I wanted to go and I
 - 5 said yes. And I think we both were dressed in skirts
 - 6 or dresses that evening. I don't know, I think we had
 - 7 been out to the theater or something and then she said
 - 8 I know of a lesbian bar and I went wow, you know. So
 - 9 we went, but I remember being absolutely, my heart was

 - 10 in my mouth as we approached the door and walked in.
 - 11 And it wasn't crowded, it was during the week so it
 - 12 wasn't really crowded but I remember just feeling I
 - 13 have found a home. It felt great. I just sat there and
 - 14 looked around and, you know, just looked at all these
 - 15 women.
 - 16 KC: What was it like?
 - 17 KM: Oh, it was a lot of women dressed in pants and
 - 18 shirts and a lot of short hair, you know.
 - 19 KC: It was all lesbian? There were no men?
 - 20 KM: No, it was all lesbian. And just feeling, wow, it
 - 21 was just an incredible wonderful feeling for me, I
 - 22 remember. And after that introduction, I was there
 - 23 literally almost every night. By myself I would go. I
 - 24 mean, it was just and then made some friends, made
 - 25 some pretty good friends, as matter of fact. And had

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- 1 this going-away party for myself when I was going to
- 2 leave for Basic. And ended up with about 60 women in
- 3 my house. I'm trying to remember, you know, where all
- 4 these women came from into this studio apartment. But
- 5 it was great. I remember waking up the next morning
- 6 and finding people sleeping on my floor, you know. So
- 7 it was fun.
- 8 1S2:400-425
- 9 I kept, you know, the few friends that I had made, I
- 10 stayed in touch with them and, you know, we got back
- 11 together when I came home two years later. But it was
- 12 just great finding a bar.
- 13 KC: Would you say that the women in the bar were
- 14 fairly well role-defined or?
- 15 KM: Oh yeah, I mean, the roles were clearly defined. I
- 16 mean, there was no question of who was a butch and who
- 17 was a fem.
- 18 KC: And aside from the sexual style, what other thing
- 19 characterized butches and fems.
- 20 KM: The thing that I noted mostly was that there were
- 21 two classes. There were your friends and there were
- 22 your lovers. And I guess your lover really was your
- 23 friend but you didn't look at her as your friend. She
- 24 was your lover. Whatever that conjured up, that's who
- 25 she was, that was your lover.

- 1 End of Side 2, Tape 1 of 2
- 2 2S1:000-099
- 3 KM: that you partied with, that you spent time with,
- 4 and spent time with them without your lover. And in a
- 5 lot of ways, your lover would end up staying home
- 6 maybe. And you'd go out. It would be like boys night
- 7 out.
- 8 KC: How did you know that you were a butch or not?
- 9 KM: I don't even remember it being a choice for me. I
- 10 was always very tomboyish, always tended to dress and
- 11 comb my hair like, you know, like a boy. I always was
- 12 an aggressor. For me, I feel it was a natural
- 13 instinct.
- 14 KC: And you think that other people easily identified
- 15 you?

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- 16 KM: Oh yeah, sure. There was no question that, you
- 17 know, that you would think that I was a fem in those
- 18 years of my life.
- 19 KC: Do you have photographs?
- 20 KM: Yeah, I have some.
- 21 KC: Was there a phenomenon in your life of more
- 22 experiences, butches in the bars sort of helping you
- 23 along, or had you already been a lesbian so long?
- 24 KM: I'd been a lesbian long enough, you know, to hold 25 my own. First of all, even the butches, there was not

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- 1 a lot of sharing of oh you would sit and you would be weekends when I was in New York finally in the bars
- 2 look at the women, you know, you make oh isn't she hot
- 3 or isn't she mm, I'd like to get to know her. You
- 4 know, you did all those type of things together. But
- 5 you didn't really sit down and talk to each other
- 6 about your relationships. In a lot of ways, you didn't
- 7 even talk about your friendships, you know. I'm sure
- 8 there were times when I did something to a friend that
- 9 might have hurt her and vice versa, but you didn't
- 10 talk about it. You just swallowed the pain and put it
- 11 aside. Compared to today when everybody's into, you
- 12 know, discussion and talking about relationships and
- 13 your friendships and being open and upfront, I don't
- 14 remember that being the same with them back then. You
- 15 acted like rowdy boys together, you oogled the women
- 16 and, you know, maybe you made certain kinds of
- 17 remarks, you know, like oh, I'd like to get next to
- 18 her and stuff like that. But you never shared personal
- 19 intimacies with each other the way I feel that I know
- 20 relate to people. But in my circle anyway, it seemed
- 21 to be the accepted rule of thumb. I never questioned
- 22 it.
- 23 KC: And it was exciting and wonderful to have found
- 24 these women.
- 25 KM: Oh, that was without question. I had more fun on Page 41

- 2 than I really remember having since. I really had good
- 3 times; it was a lot of fun.
- 4 KC: Did you hang in more than one bar?
- 5 KM: Yeah, oh yeah, I mean, after while there were
- 6 quite a few bars opened at the same time. So you could
- 7 go, you know, bar-hop around. I mean, for a while, we
- 8 hung out at a place called the One-Two-Three Club
- 9 which was right 14th Street right off the main big
- 10 shopping area where Klein's and all these stores were.
- 11 It was on a side street. And it was a nice looking
- 12 club compared to, you know, some that I've been in.
- 13 And for a while we, you know, hung out in the One-Two-
- 14 Three and then for a while we would hang out in
- 15 Cookie's. And then there was Gianan'i's or Gi'anani's,
- 16 I never quite got the name straight on that one, which
- 17 was in the Village. It was very close to the Women's
- 18 House of Detention. I remember always being a little
- 19 apprehensive about going in there simply because it
- 20 was so close to the Women's House and I used to work
- 21 there. You know, I was always afraid somebody would
- 22 see me and my friends.
- 23 KC: Is this after you got out of the service?
- 24 KM: Yeah, after I got out of the Marine Corps, I
- 25 became a correctional officer at the Women's House of

- 1 Detention.
- 2 KC: What was it like in the Marine Corps? I don't want
- 3 to skip those years.
- 4 KM: Well first of all, of course, I got stationed in
- 5 California which was just wonderful for me 'cause I
- 6 loved being out here. I loved San Diego, I loved the
- 7 weather and all that. The Marine Corps was permanent
- 8 party, that's after Basic and you get assigned to your
- 9 regular duty station. It was fun. I met a lot of
- 10 younger women, that was number one. Most of the women
- 11 were young. I was already 24 when I went in, going on 11 KM: If I'd become an officer, yeah, probably, or maybe
- 12 25. And most of the women I met were 18 and so at that
- 13 time, most of my friends became these little 18-year-
- 14 olds. And they were gay, I mean, we found each other
- 15 out pretty much soon after we got there.
- 16 KC: Would you say that the Women's Marine Corps was
- 17 predominantly gay at that time?
- 18 KM: No. I definitely do not feel that was true.
- 19 KC: Was it homophobic?
- 20 KM: Very.
- 21 KC: Did you have any officers who were gay, who acted
- 22 to sort of protect you?
- 23 KM: No, there was only one officer in the Marine
- 24 Corps, at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot that I
- 25 thought was gay. I mean, you know, she had all, if you 25 know, regular sightseer things an stuff like that. I Page 43

- 1 went by the characteristics, I mean, she was very
- 2 tomboyish, very short hair, she walked with a swagger,
- 3 you know. But it never came up in discussion whether
- 4 she was or not. We hung out with her eventually. Some
- 5 of us did. I mean, she was an officer and it was only
- 6 after I became a sergeant that we started hanging out
- 7 together. But even then that was a no-no but we did. I
- 8 mean, enlisted and officers were not supposed to hang
- 9 around together.
- 10 KC: Even if you got to be -
- 12 had I been much, much higher in the ranks of the non-
- 13 commissioned officer ranks, maybe. But as a sergeant,
- 14 I was still low enough in the ranks that I, you know,
- 15 it would have not been well looked at had they, you
- 16 know, been found out.
- 17 KC: Is sergeant the first to go?
- 18 KM: That's when you get into your first NCO category,
- 19 non-commissioned officer, and then it goes up higher
- 20 after that. But sergeant is the very first level that
- 21 you hit. So I was, you know, at the low end of the NCO
- 22 corps. So we did a lot of stuff with her. We used to
- 23 go out of town a lot and do weekends away and stuff.
- 24 But it was not around gay things. We just did, you

- http://www.glbthistory.org
- 2 conducted by the CID. And at this time, I did have a
- 3 lover as a matter of fact, I had a lover.
- 4 KC: When was this, how long had you been in the
- 5 service?
- 6 KM: I believe the investigation came down either, I
- 7 think it was early '67. But I did have a lover at this
- 8 time. And when I first went into the service, I
- 9 really, really strived not to have a lover. For the
- 10 first year I had, you know, no involvement.
- 11 KC: Why was that?
- 12 KM: Well, you know, as everybody else, I had heard the
- 13 stories about witch hunts and, you know, all that and
- 14 I didn't want to get thrown out of the service. So for
- 15 the first year, I hung around with a lot of kids, you
- 16 know, and I partied and stuff but I had no involvement
- 17 physically with any women while I was in the service,
- 18 with anybody. I mean, but and then the second year,
- 19 this woman and I got together.
- 20 2S1:100-199
- 21 And we even had an apartment off-post, which we were
- 22 not really supposed to do, but we did anyway.
- 23 KC: Did that mean that you didn't sleep there all the
- 25 KM: Right, I mean, we spent time at the apartment and Page 45
- 1 that meant. And what it meant was, after we talked
- 1 more in my company. And that got to be a hindrance at 2 some point because some of the gay kids I was hanging
- 3 around with were nervous about her. So I couldn't
- 4 always invite her on some of our excursions. And
- 5 finally somewhere along the line I had to tell her
- that she couldn't keep hanging with me, and she wanted
- 7 to know why, so I came out to her and told her why.
- 8 And she said that didn't matter, you know, she wanted
- 9 to check it out, as a matter of fact, you know, and I
- 10 said you ain't going to check it out with me. You
- 11 know, really I was real adamant about not bringing
- 12 out. And as it turned out, I don't really remember
- 13 having much of a choice. I think she also, a friend of
- 14 mine had an apartment, went away for a weekend and
- 15 said why don't you guys stay over, you know, at the
- 16 apartment and we did. And being thrown together in
- 17 that sort of, you know, without a lot of people around
- 18 us. She kind of started coming on to me, you know, I
- 19 mean, it was really crazy 'cause I didn't. I was
- 20 really fighting this woman because I did not want to
- 21 do this thing. And finally I remember her putting her
- 22 arms around me and, you know, kissing me and saying
- please or something like that. And yes, so then I made
- 24 love to her and I remember she cried afterwards and I
- 25 was very taken aback by that and I didn't know what Page 47

- 4 time. And I remember being very, very afraid, not for 5 myself. I was afraid for the other woman, mainly

2 eventually, like I said, there was an investigation, I

3 was called in. So was the woman I was seeing at the

- 6 because I didn't think that she could stand up under
- 7 the questioning and stuff and that she would blurt out
- 8 that yes, in fact, we were having a relationship. I
- 9 should add that this woman never had had a prior gay
- 10 relationship before. In fact, she'd been married to a
- 11 Marine and it was because of a @Dear Kathy@ letter,
- 12 her name was Kathy, letter that we kind of got thrown
- 13 together. I heard her crying one day in her cubicle,
- 14 in her space, and went over, you know. I didn't know
- 15 her that well. We lived in the same housing area but I
- 16 didn't know her that well. And I heard her crying.
- 17 There was nobody around, I went in, I said what's the
- 18 matter. And she told me she'd gotten this letter from
- 19 her husband, that he'd made a mistake, they were too
- 20 young, all that crap and stuff. So I sort of
- 21 befriended her. We also worked in the same duty area.
- 22 But that was funny, I had no sexual interest in Kathy
- 23 at all. I mean, it was really purely from a, I felt
- 24 bad for her. And she just started, I wouldn't say
- 25 clinging, but she definitely started being more and
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- 2 about it, was that she was really naive and she really
- 3 had an impression that all women did was kiss and hug.
- 4 And from that experience, I learned that I would never
- 5 again be so, I would be a little more gentler around
- 6 it and go maybe a little slower, or maybe talk about
- 7 it or get some idea of what the woman thought women
- 8 did together. But after that though, we ended up in a
- 9 relationship. But I never loved her and it was hard
- 10 for me because I didn't love. I liked her but I didn't
- 11 love her, and found that our sexual life together
- 12 wasn't good, mainly because I really didn't want to
- 13 have a lot of sex with her. Although she always seemed
- 14 to want to, I always it was funny, I always ended up
- 15 with a headache or sleepy or I didn't well. It was
- 16 feeling funny but now that I look back on it. But
- 17 anyway, when the investigation did come down, I was
- 18 very nervous 'cause I didn't really know if Kathy
- 19 could stand up under it. As it turned out, she came
- 20 through with flying colors. They kept me in there
- 21 quite a while. I don't know, because I was older, I
- 22 found that women in the military who are older and
- 23 gay, always seem to get the heap of it, you know,
- 24 thrown on their shoulders, that you're the one that

25 just went through and just turned all these women gay Page 48

- 1 I mean, it was, you know, ridiculous. Some of the 1 remember that her name was Suzanne, this woman, she
- 2 women, yes, I knew did come out in the military but I
- 3 didn't bring them out. They came out with other women.
- 4 And I fought very hard not to bring out the one woman
- 5 that I did bring out. So as it turned out, they did
- 6 not have any kind of proof or evidence against Kathy
- 7 or myself, so that they had to drop the investigation
- 8 eventually.
- 9 KC: Were they investigating other women or only you?
- 10 KM: Yeah, I mean, other women were called in and stuff
- 11 like that.
- 12 KC: Did any women get kicked out?
- 13 KM: No, no one would have gotten kicked out under that
- 14 particular investigation but two other women did, to
- 15 this day unknown to me why, did turn themselves in.
- 16 One of the women was brought out by the other woman,
- 17 okay? And somewhere along the line, they decided that
- 18 they wanted to be together and they couldn't under the
- 19 circumstances, being in service. So they themselves in
- as being gay. I remember I was heartbroken, I was
- 21 absolutely crushed, because one of the women, the one
- 22 that was straight when I first met her, I remember she
- 23 had a crush on me, a very heavy crush, as a matter of
- 24 fact, and I refused to bring her out; I would not. And
- 25 then eventually this other woman did bring her out. I
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- 2 had such potential. She, you know, I mean, she was
- 3 being groomed for OCS, Office Candidate School, she
- 4 was very bright, she was gorgeous to look at, I mean,
- 5 she was real olive-complected with real, real black
- 6 eyebrows and beautiful black short hair, and beautiful
- 7 black eyes. I mean, she was just a beautiful woman.
- 8 And I just could not believe that she had turned
- 9 herself in. The other woman I didn't care about
- 10 because I didn't like her anyway. But for Suzanne I
- 11 was just heartbroken for her.
- 12 KC: So did they leave the service?
- 13 KM: Yeah, they got out, they got out.
- 14 KC: Did they get dishonorable discharges?
- 15 KM: No, no, I think they got generals. And so I was
- 16 coming up for discharge pretty soon under my regular
- 17 discharge contract, you know. I was only in for two
- 18 years active service. And Kathy, the woman that I was
- 19 lovers with, got orders to Okinawa. She had another
- 20 year to do. And so, I was discharged in September of
- 21 '67 and Kathy was sent to Okinawa a couple weeks prior
- 22 to that. And we stayed in touch for a good six months
- 23 after I got out and, you know, claimed undying love
- 24 for each other, and I was even being faithful to her,
- 25 and that was really ridiculous in some ways 'cause I

- 1 wasn't in love with the woman, but I don't know, I
- 2 guess maybe I had gotten used to her.
- 3 2S1:200-299
- 4 But then after six months I said, you know, this is
- 5 ridiculous, you know, she's going to be in Okinawa for
- 6 another, god knows how long and, you know, I'm out
- 7 here with all these wonderful women and stuff, you
- 8 know.
- 9 KC: You stayed in San Diego?
- 10 KM: No, I went back to New York, came back to New York
- 11 and reapplied for my job as a correctional office with
- 12 the Women's House of Detention.
- 13 KC: Oh, you didn't tell me the story about that.
- 14 KM: Well, what I had done was I had taken the civil
- 15 service test prior to going into the military, and
- 16 then while I was in the military, I got a letter
- 17 saying come down for the interview, whatever. And then
- 18 I wrote them back that I was in the service. So what
- 19 happens is if you're in the service, they put you on a
- 20 special list. And so when I got out, one of the first
- 21 things I did was go down there and say okay, I'm out
- 22 of the service now. And about four months later, in
- 23 fact January of '68, I got my appointment as a
- 24 correctional officer.
- 25 KC: What made you think of becoming a correctional Page 51

- 1 officer? Did you have other friends in it?
- 2 KM: No, but I wanted to be in civil service, I wanted
- 3 to be a civil service worker because of the benefits 4 and all that good stuff. And there was a great
- 5 newspaper out in New York called @The Chief@ and it
- 6 was a civil service newspaper, which I really wish
- 7 they had out here. But anyway, it would list, oh,
- 8 upcoming tests and stuff. So I used to buy it every
- 9 two weeks I think it came out or once a month. And on
- 10 one of these trips when I bought it, the correctional
- 11 officer test was coming up and the qualifications were
- 12 minimal, you know, high school or GED which, by this
- 13 time, I had gotten my GED. You know, good health, and
- 14 that was about it, you know, so I said well, I
- 15 definitely had the requirements. I could get the job -
- 16 me and about five or a thousand other women thought so
- 17 too. I mean, there was a lot of us that took the test
- 18 that day I remember. But I did pass it and I got put
- 19 on the list and eventually got called for a job. And
- 20 it was good money too, it was darn good money. We're
- 21 talking about, you know, 65 when I took the best. That
- 22 was darn good money at that time, and then by the time
- 23 I came out and got the job in '68, the money was even
- 24 fantastic for the qualifications. But then after I got
- 25 the job, I realized why, you know. You know, being a Page 52

- 1 correctional officer, especially at the Women's House 1 to love working the four to midnight shift and so did
- 2 of Detention, was the pits. I did it for three years,
- 3 and I hated every moment of it, hated absolutely every
- 4 moment of that job. But, like I said, for somebody
- 5 with just a GED, the money was fantastic. So I stayed
- 6 and stayed and stayed because of the money. And then I
- 7 met a whole new group of friends through that job. The
- 8 correctional staff was, oh, I don't know, I would say
- 9 half gay and half straight. And the straight part, I'd
- 10 say half of them were curious. So that I had a lot of
- 11 fun being a correctional office, I can tell you.
- 12 KC: And there were a lot of third-world women; you
- 13 mentioned that before.
- 14 KM: Oh yeah, they were basically all third-world when
- 15 I got there. In fact, I was the only, I was the third
- 16 Puerto Rican on the staff, two of them being sisters,
- 17 and then I was the third one. And basically all of the
- 18 other officers were black and then there was a
- 19 smattering of white officers. Toward the end of my
- 20 three years, a large influx of white officers did come
- 21 on the job as a matter of fact. I don't know what that
- 22 was all about. I'd never seen as many white officers
- 23 in training before at one time prior to my leaving.
- 24 But I made two or three good, good friends and we hung
- 25 around together basically. And I worked mainly, I used Page 53
- 1 know, you didn't even bother to answer those kind of
- 2 questions. But that wasn't even the point. The point
- 3 is that you would go to the bars and you'd run into
- 4 the inmates.
- 5 2S1:300-399
- 6 You know, eventually they'd get released and the gay
- 7 inmates would end up going to the same bars you went
- 8 to and, of course, you always ran into them. Then they
- 9 got busted again and went back in the Women's House of
- 10 Detention and, of course, said oh, I saw Ms Martinez
- 11 and I saw Ms Smith and I saw Ms Jones, you know, and
- 12 then you'd or they'd slide up to you and say hey, Ms
- 13 Martinez, didn't I see you at Gianani's? You'd just
- 14 look at them and say I don't know what you're talking
- 15 about and go, you know, and keep stepping. But I'll
- 16 never forget one of the most frightening times for me
- 17 was, it was after a particular New Years so it would
- 18 had to have been some time, either the New Year of '68
- 19 or '69, that an inmate came up to me and said hey, Ms
- 20 Martinez, I have a real nice picture of you. And I
- 21 could feel the blood freeze in my veins. But outwardly
- 22 I just said, what are you talking about? And she said
- 23 oh, do you remember the New Years Eve party up at
- 24 Tubby's. This was a bar up on 123rd Street I believe,
- 25 or 122nd. Do you remember somebody, you know, walking
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- 2 my friends. So that usually, and I lived very close, I
- 2 didn't live that for from the Warren't Have of
- 3 didn't live that far from the Women's House of
- 4 Detention so that when the three of us like working
- 5 the same shift on the same days, we would get off
- 6 work, come over to my house, change our clothes and go
- 7 out and hit the bars for a few hours. And that's
- 8 basically 'cause I thought I had the best of both
- 9 worlds. I could sleep late in the morning and still be
- 10 able to hang out for a few hours after 12 o'clock. And
- 11 as far as ever having anything to do with the inmates,
- 12 that was I know most people I hung around with, that
- 13 wasn't even, you know, considered. I mean, you were,
- 14 after eight hours, you went out and did your own
- 15 thing, so we didn't have to fool around in that area.
- 16 Although there were one or two who were, you know,
- 17 really cute, but that was definitely a no-no.
- 18 KC: Well, you in fact didn't want the other inmates to
- 19 know you were gay?
- 20 KM: Oh no, I mean, you know, we went through a lot of
- 21 the trials and tribulations, you know, with the
- 22 inmates. Inmates would come up to you and say, @Are
- 23 you gay, Ms Martinez?@ You know, right to your face or
- 24 things of that nature, and you would have to just
- 25 stand there and look like what, are you crazy? You

- 1 across the dance floor and somebody taking a picture?
 2 Well, as soon as she said that, I flashed on that
- 3 scene because that's exactly what happened. I remember
- 4 walking across the dance floor, somebody was taking a
- 5 picture of other people and it seemed I ended up in
- 6 this picture just as big as life. So, of course, I
- 7 just denied any knowledge of what she was talking
- 8 about and she said well, that's cool, I can dig it.
- 9 She said next time my old lady comes to visit me, I'll
- 10 tell her to bring the picture with her. So I'm trying
- 11 to be as cool and I'm just saying yeah, you do that.
- 12 And I sauntered off and went along my merry way. But I
- 13 can tell you, I went through some moments of being
- 14 really scared. I never did end up seeing this picture.
- 15 Now whether it was because her friend couldn't get the
- 16 picture smuggled into the prison or what, I don't 17 know. But I definitely never saw the picture. Or
- 18 unless the woman was released in the meantime, which
- 19 could have been the case, I don't remember. But I
- 20 remember that being real scary for me. But other than
- 21 that, you just try to pretend that they didn't know
- 22 what they were talking about, even though, you know,
- 23 you had seen them ten times, you know, in so many days
- 24 in a bar or something. So you just pretended. They
- 25 pretended, you pretended, you know. One big pretense.

- 2 years, I just, again, a real unconscious move on my
- 3 part, I again left work one day. I was working the
- 4 midnight shift. Midnight and I got off at eight and
- 5 the next thing I know, I find myself at a Army
- 6 recruiter. And this time I went and I joined the Army.
- 7 And I got home and I called one of my best friends and
- said guess what I just did and I told her and she
- said @Far Out.@ And the next day she went and she
- 10 joined. She had always wanted to join but, you know,
- 11 so when I went ahead and did it, she did it. And as it
- 12 turned out, we were able to leave together and go into
- 13 the buddy system into Basic. I ended up leaving her in
- 14 Basic because of my Marine Corps background and
- 15 because I had not it was like almost ten days, it
- 16 would have been three years I would have been out of
- 17 the military, out of the Marine Corps. And that ten
- 18 days made a difference. And what they did was, they
- pulled me out of Basic, sat me down, I took this test
- 20 for the Army. It was the Army's eight-week, that would
- 21 have been the test I would have taken had I went
- 22 through Basic. And if I passed the test, then I
- 23 wouldn't have had to go through Basic. As it turned
- 24 out, I passed the test. I think I needed 147 points to
- 25 pass the test; I think I got 149. But I passed it and

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- But I really just hated the job and after almost three I therefore I did not have to go through all of the Army
 - 2 Basic Training. So I had to leave my buddy behind. And 3 then I went off Fort Lee, Virginia, for some advanced

 - 4 training in stock control in Accounting which is sort
 - 5 of a supply job. And while I was there, I met this
 - 6 woman. She was also in the Army. And I fell head over
 - 7 heels in love. I mean, it was love at first sight. I
 - 8 mean, I had never experienced that before. But I just
 - 9 looked at her and I was just knocked out. I seem to
 - 10 have these pageants for these women who never had
 - 11 prior gay relationships before. Because, as it turned
 - 12 out, she had never had one either, I mean, I just fell
 - 13 in love with her. And within a few weeks, we were
 - 14 lovers. Yes, we were. But as it turned out, I got
 - 15 orders for Fort Ord, California.
 - 16 2S1:400-425
 - 17 And she got orders for Fort Rachuca, Arizona. And we
 - 18 were both, you know, really just crushed. And so we
 - 19 separated, we were still lovers but we had to go
 - 20 separate ways. And as it turned out, her name was Gay,
 - 21 by the way and as it turned out, Gay hated the
 - 22 service, absolutely hated it. And what happened was
 - 23 after a few weeks at Fort Rachuca, she was very, very
 - 24 unhappy and went AWOL and then went back, and started
 - 25 writing me letters. And after a while, this guy's name

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- 1 started popping up in a lot of her letters. And I
- 2 don't know, it turned out that they ended up -
- 3 End of Side 1, Tape 2 of 2
- 4 2S2:000-099
- 5 KM: to Vietnam. And he wanted to marry her and she
- was all confused and whatever and whatever and
- 7 whatever. And I was crushed, of course, but there
- 8 wasn't too much I could about it being at Fort Ord,
- California. So she went AWOL again and the next thing
- 10 I know, she pops up in California and I'm harboring
- 11 her, she's staying with me, right?
- 12 KC: You're not living on the base?
- 13 KM: No, I had an apartment off-base. Well, I was
- 14 living on base at that time, but when she wrote me and
- 15 told me she was coming out to California, I went out
- 16 and found, you know, a small house. I rented this
- 17 small dilapidated house. But, of course, it soon
- 18 became apparent to other people that she was AWOL and
- 19 I got called into my commanding officer's office who
- 20 said, you know, you can't do this, you know, I know
- 21 that this woman's AWOL and you can't have her staying
- 22 with you. Either tell her, which I thought was rather
- cruel of my CO to, you know, to take off and to go to
- 24 other parts or turn herself in. So I went back with
- 25 that word to her, to Gay, and said, you know, they

- 1 would help get out and get you a general if you, you 2 know, turn yourself in and they'll get you out.
- 3 They'll expedite your paperwork and stuff. So I think
- 4 she drank half a bottle of brandy the next morning or 5 a couple of mornings. She didn't make up her mind
- 6 right away. But I had gotten an ultimatum. She had to
- 7 be either out or turn herself in with X amount of
- 8 days. And I was thoroughly, you know, beside myself
- 9 'cause I didn't know what she was going to do. So,
- 10 anyway, in the long run she said okay and drank this
- 11 half a bottle of brandy for breakfast and turned
- 12 herself in which meant she had to live on the base.
- 13 Anyway, my co did keep her word and did expedite her
- 14 discharge so she got out in a really short time
- 15 compared to some of the other people that linger on
- 16 and linger on and wait and wait and wait. And after 17 she was discharged, she stayed for a while with me.
- 18 And then guy wrote again and she was back in a flux
- 19 again. Anyway, the long and short of it was that she
- 20 decided to marry him and joined him wherever the heck
- 21 he was and got married. And I continued in the
- 22 service. I was involved in another investigation at
- 23 Fort Ord, again they couldn't prove anything. So that
- 24 one died down very quickly and why these things start,

25 I have no idea. To this day I would love to know, you Page 60 GLHS OHP 81-004, Lesbian ID 1 know, why one starts. But I had put in my paperwork | 1 reenlistment and I reenlisted and right after I 2 for Germany, I had wanted to go overseas. And I had 3 been sent back to Fort McClellan, Alabama, for what 4 they called Advanced NCO training which was like a 5 six-week intensive course in public speaking and oh, 6 all kinds of stuff. And while I was at this particular 7 training, I got a telephone call from Washington. It 8 was real funny because usually they don't, you know, you don't messages that you should call Washington. 10 But I got a message to go call Washington and I went 11 and I talked to this woman sergeant and she said 12 well - I was a sergeant by this time - she said Sgt. 13 Martinez, we have your request on file for Germany but 14 we have an opening in Japan for a supply sergeant. 15 Would you be interested? But I mean, it was like I 16 couldn't believe that I was even asked. But, of 17 course, I was interested, I mean, Japan I mean, it was 18 just such a thrill. So, of course, I said yes, I would 19 love to go. So this in May I got the word that I was 20 going to go to Japan but I didn't actually get to go 21 to Japan until about August. The military doesn't move 21 I've ever taken in my life. But I was really crushed 22 very fast, only around certain things. So I went to Japan in August of '72 and that was incredible 24 experience for me. I loved every moment of it. But 25 unfortunately while I was in Japan, I came up for

KATHY MARTINEZ 2 reenlisted, they had an investigation and I think they 3 investigated about five or six of us and I ended up 4 with an honorable discharge but I was discharged for 5 homosexual reasons. And I was the only one. 6 KC: Is there anything on your discharge that indicates 7 why you were discharged? 8 KM: Originally there was. You get what they call a DD-214 and on there it has all your history and, you 10 know, all this good stuff. And it also has the type of 11 discharge that you got. Now mine said honorable but it 12 also had a code on it. And the code was, for some 13 reason it's latent homosexuality. But it was coded 14 that way. And, you know, I did not get a job I 15 remember with PG&E which would have been a pretty good 16 job simply because they had the code books. And when 17 they looked up the code, although they didn't tell me 18 that was the reason why I didn't get the job. They 19 told me I didn't pass my math test which I knew was 20 absolutely ridiculous. It was the simplest math test 22 and I didn't fight it or anything like that. But soon 23 after that incident, the Supreme Court came down with

Page 61 1 with a code on it could apply for a new one. And I was 2 one of the very first people to have applied for one 3 and I got a new one and all that extra stuff with 4 codes and stuff was not there anymore. And after that 5 I had no problems. Although I became a correctional 6 office again, this time for the federal government, 7 which is the same thing. And I had to have my 8 fingerprints taken and stuff, but I got the job prior 9 to my background investigation coming back because 10 those things take a long time. So I was hired based on 11 my prior experience, based the fact I was in the 12 service, all this good stuff. And it was some months down the road when my background investigation came 14 back and, of course, it came back that I had been 15 discharged for homosexual reasons. I remember the warden of the institution calling me in and telling me 17 that, you know, it had come back in that way and, you 18 know, but I was a good officer and stuff that he 19 didn't see any reason let me go. I don't really he could have legally. But anyway, he didn't choose to go 21 through any changes so I stayed on the job. 22 KC: Where were you working at the time?

23 KM: I was working at the Federal Youth Institution in

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25 KC: So after when you came of San Francisco?

24 the decision that that was unconstitutional and the 25 services put out that anyone that had gotten a DD-214 Page 62 1 KM: After Japan. Yeah, I was discharged in Oakland, 2 California, and then I chose to stay. 3 KC: Did your family know what the reason for your 4 discharge was? 5 KM: That was the bitchy part about it because my 6 mother did get something from the service saying I was 7 being discharged for those reasons, I believe. I think 8 so, I never asked her. I know that if you were 18, 9 over 18, I'm not quite sure. But I remember my mother 10 saying yes, she had gotten some kind of a letter and I 11 never quite wanted to go into it with her so I never 12 asked her what it said. But I believe I was told by 13 other people that they sent, you know, your parent a 14 letter telling them that you're being discharged for 15 this reason. But my mother and I never discussed it 16 although I know she did get a letter. And I was 17 crushed, I was really, really crushed. I fought the 18 service a long time because they did not want to give 19 me an honorable originally. They wanted to go for a general and I refused to accept it because my record 21 up to that point, including that time, was outstanding 22 and I just refused to take a general, and I told them 23 I would fight them to the nth degree. 24 2S1:100-199 25 KC: Were you talking to lawyers or were you doing this

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24 Pleasanton, California.

GLHS OHP 81-004, Lesbian ID **GLBT Historical Society** KATHY MARTINEZ http://www.glbthistory.org 1 all on your own? 2 KM: No, I had a military lawyer. I think if I had been 2 relationships before she and I became involved. But 3 in America, I would have gone for a civilian lawyer 3 they kept her in the service. So I don't know, it was 4 and maybe have won, I don't know. But I was in Japan 4 a real hard time for me. Especially since the young 5 and I didn't have access to the ACLU or any other 5 lady lived in the room right next-door to me. And my 6 organization so I went with a military lawyer 'cause I 6 commanding officer, who hated me, I mean, she was a 7 had no other choice. And I think he did the best he 7 very strange lady. I don't know whether she was a 8 could under the circumstances. 8 closet case herself or if she was just scared to death KC: You got an honorable so you did win. 9 that she might be gay or what. But she had a 10 KM: Oh yes, I got my honorable. The general, I 10 passionate dislike for me. And it was at her 11 understand, just got fed up with the whole thing and 11 instigation that they wanted to - in fact, she wanted 12 just said give her the honorable already. So I never 12 to give me a bad conduct discharge, for god's sakes, I 13 waived my rights, though, I never admitted to being 13 mean, that's how much the woman disliked me. But I 14 gay. So it was a sad time for me; I was heartbroken. 14 remember going down and requesting that the young 15 KC: Did you have any lovers when you were in Japan? 15 woman that lived next door to me that turned me in, be 16 moved, or that I be moved to another floor or to 16 KM: One. In fact we were no longer lovers and it was 17 she who implicated me as being a lesbian and based on 17 another building 'cause we had two buildings that 18 her word and her statement, which is all they really 18 housed women. And she refused, she absolutely refused 19 had, I was thrown out. This is why I feel - and it was 19 because her premise was that I had such a bad temper 20 really funny because she admitted in her statement, 20 that she knew, she just knew, that at some point I 21 which I have a copy of, under the Freedom of 21 would do something to this woman and therefore I 22 definitely would get, if not a bad conduct discharge, 22 Information Act, I was able to get a lot of that 23 stuff. 23 I would definitely get a general, 'cause she did not 24 KC: I was going to ask you if you'd done that. 24 want to see me get an honorable. And to the day I left 25 KM: And I read her statement and she had explicitly 25 Japan, I lived next door to that woman, I saw her in Page 65 Page 66 1 the common bathroom we used, I saw her in the 2 hallways, I saw her, you know, constantly and never 3 once, never once, did I say one word to her. Although 4 sometimes I just wanted to ask her, why in god's name 5 did you do this to me? But I was not going to give my 6 commanding officer once ounce information that I was 7 harassing or bothering this woman in any way. 8 KC: Right, you weren't going to give her any rope. KM: No rope, no satisfaction. In fact she was livid, 10 absolutely livid, when she found out I was going to 11 get the honorable. In fact, she ended up losing her 12 command which I felt real good about because I think 13 she was a little sick. Anyway, I left Japan and I came 14 home. Well, I came to Oakland and I settled here in 15 San Francisco. 16 KC: Why don't we stop? I know we can get together and 17 talk about some of the rest of it. 18 KM: Fine, sounds good, yeah. 19 End of Side 2, Tape 2 of 2 End of Interview 21 22

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