

Interview with Gladys Shingobe Ray  
T-N-T Café, Moorhead, MN  
April 22, 2004 – 6:00pm

Interviewers:  
Keith Johnson (primary)  
Jorrie Rarick  
Kim Harper

K: Guess we should first of all verify spelling of your name and everything. Gladys Ray. Correct?

GR: Yeah.

K: And you're uh...

GR: I'd like to have my maiden name put in there too.

K: Sure, sure. Absolutely. That's, how do you pronounce it?

GR: Shingobe.

K: Okay. And um... excuse me; if you could just, what is your ethnicity?

GR: Um, my ethnicity...um, I am um, I'm an American Indian. I am a member of the Mille Lacs Band of the Ojibwe Nation in Minnesota. I grew up on White Earth Indian reservation, but I'm a member of the Mille Lacs band. My parents were from Mille Lacs area. Um my father was from near Onamia, MN. That was his birth place and that's where he grew up. And my mother was from east of Hinckley, MN. On the Wisconsin border.

K: Your birthplace?

GR: My birthplace was in Mahnomon County in Minnesota. I was born at home.

K: And then if you want to tell us your birth date?

GR: My birth date was January 3, 1933

K: If you could briefly describe your employment history, not necessarily voluntary, but...

GR: I think my employment history, I put it listed in there (refers to her resume,) how my employment history has been um...homemaker (laughter) and volunteer. That and food service. I give that credit too.

K: (hands Ms. Ray a sheet of prepared questions)

GR: Do I start from the beginning, right to the..?

K: Whatever you feel is important. What stands out I guess in your eyes.

GR: The last place I worked was I worked as a food service worker at the VA hospital here in Fargo, ND. From about, maybe 1976 to 1987. At that time I was disabled and had to discontinue working. I had to...I took my retirement from there. And prior to that I worked as a coordinator for the Fargo-Moorhead Indian Center in Fargo, ND. That was about in 1971. Prior to that I worked as an outreach worker for the Community Action Agency (CAA) from 1969-1970. I was employed to survey the American Indian community in the Fargo-Moorhead area. By the CAA, which led into the development of the FM Indian Center in 1971. Prior to that I worked as a nurse's aid at Deaconess Hospital in Grand Forks ND, and prior to that I was in the Women's Army Corps. I was in the medical corps, I was a Medical Corps Technician, so I am a veteran. That's where I went after I graduated from high school.

K: Some of your volunteer work which stands out was...

GR: I think um.... In my volunteer work there was a lot in organization. I organized the FM Indian Club, which you know, preceded the development of the FM Indian Center in 1971, I think the center came up to be about 69 or so. I was hired to go out and find the American Indian people. There was no one way to find them. I didn't drive...but I managed. People gave me rides, I helped them, they would take me to a certain area where I would locate the few people, and they would tell me other people's names. I got a survey together and started having meetings and I found that there was an interest in developing a club, which we did. And then the club decided that they were interested in um... in the development of an Indian Center because of all, you know, the problems. Well, actually my survey had a lot to do with problems. I had to go out and find out what kind of problems that people in the community were having and I had a lot of problems and tried to refer them to agencies that would give them help. I had no experience in this work and I learned on the job. Then the people that I found that joined the organization at that time then decided that they would like to have an Indian Center. And sometimes I just ended up in the right place at the right time. I was kind of a shy person, but I, then, one year of Communiversities because there was a lot of activism during that time, in the seventies. The American Indian movement was very active; the women's movement was very active. So Communiversities was kind of getting started, too, and was addressing issues in the community, so, and some of the people, some of the leadership that I happened to reach through my involvement with community action and the model cities program put me in touch with community leaders that also supported, what I was trying to do. I had Catholic Family Services helping me, Lutheran Social Services, and when I spoke at the Communiversities I was put on a panel with several other native people. A couple were from the college here at Moorhead State. One of them was a social worker for Lutheran Social Services. When I talked, then, I told basically a little bit about my background, and I was shaking but I, and I brought up what I was trying to do. My

dream was to have an Indian Center for the Indian people here as a referral center and a meeting place and that was what the people had been telling us at the meetings that we had at our Indian club.

I have a funny little story about the Indian Club. When we had elected our officers and stuff and the next thing we were going to name our club. And we had a lot of jokers around who... I contacted some of the students, they had some trade schools here. And the Indians like to have fun no matter how dire the circumstances sometimes, they always find something to laugh about. I think humor is very sacred and humor is something that kind of keeps us going. But I learned that early in my life. So this was not new to me but when we were trying to name our Indian Club then everybody wrote down little papers little suggestions what they were going to name then I opened the papers and at that time we were having fry bread feeds every (week), once a week. We'd have somebody make fry bread and we would have fry bread and coffee and Kool-Aid or something and one of those guys wanted to name it Snoopy's Fry Bread Club. (Laughter) I was going around surveying these people all week and once a week we would have fry bread. (More laughter) But the FM Indian Center won out on Snoopy's, so it was kind of funny.

But I think that was important, an important... thing in my history of my volunteer work was to actually accomplish—when I made that speech at the Communiversiety, then I, my part of that panel, I told them that my outreach work and then my meetings with these people and what some of the needs that were coming up, you know. There was employment needs, there was education needs, there was a place, you know, that people had to go to get social services or you know to kind of help, an advocate there for the people. I never ran out of problems. But then when I brought that up, then, luckily then there was some of the sisters there from the old St. John's Hospital, they had a empty building that had been the nurse's training school when they had the nurse's training and they discontinued the program so they had this big empty building and offered it to us for free. There was office space, there was meeting space, there was cupboards and a kitchen, you know just exactly what we needed for our social gatherings. The Indian people are very social people. And we had a lot of fun even though we didn't have any money to work with. But I think that was an important accomplishment, was to establish an Indian Center in this community and there's been an Indian Center in the community ever since then in one form or the other.

And then besides the Indian Center, I also organized an organization called Project Bridge. It lasted for awhile, it was, and the bridge concept was to bridge the gaps between the white community and the Indian community. They were a helpful group in the development of the Indian Center and other programs that followed. We divided into three priorities; there was education, employment, and housing. And there was non-Indian people and Indian people on each committee that co-chaired everything. So, and it had to be Indian ideas and the non-Indian people helped and we had people that, at all levels of expertise, that volunteered to be on that group. And one of the things that came out of one of those committees—and I ended up on the Education Committee—is that we wanted to do something in the area of education. We thought that we would write curriculum for social studies, but then United Tribes was doing that, so then we decided to take on a more monumental project of reviewing history text books in the public schools of Fargo and Moorhead. Looking for stereotypes, negative images and trying to correct some of those, you know those negative stereotypes and images. And find a way

and set up a format kind of that would be a training tool for the teachers and it worked very well. It was a big job. Most of the readers were non-Indian and I reread everything they turned in and then we turned our final report into the schools and they made better copies of everything we did. Fargo schools were very cooperative in that project. And then since then I think teachers, most teachers kind of caught on to what we were doing and felt it was helpful and they just never thought about it. They never thought about what was in the history books and how damaging it was.

And then one particular thing that I noticed also, was that we reviewed... a show that was on the Prairie Public Television that was called Red River Land, and it was written by an author that claimed to be a historian named Erling Rolfsrud and he had a terrible series that was shown as part of the curriculum in all of the schools going up and down the Red River Valley. A very, you know, just really a lot of stereotypical images very damaging. And we pointed those out, but it took us three years to get that show off the air. First... we met with administrators, the Fargo schools pretty much stayed on our side. Some of the other schools with less Native population liked the program. And sometimes they showed it in Indian country and it was an Indian show so therefore they thought it was good. But wasn't. They just didn't recognize the stereotypes. I suppose you get just so accustomed to people stereotyping, and then they took that from their building their case against what we were doing at the... Some of the people thought it was okay.

And then, after that, then the Indian Education Act was signed into law. I think by President Nixon during the seventies. And so we found out about that and then we went to Fargo Public Schools and got a grant written so that we organized to have an Indian Parent Committee in order to get the federal funding. And so I organized the Indian Parent Committee and we applied for the funds and we got them. Those programs are in operation in both the Fargo and later on started by the Moorhead area. And they are still you know, that act is still law now. We have programs on both sides of the river and coordinators on both sides and I try to help them out whenever I can, because I had a lot of previous experience with the school system. We did a lot of in-service of teachers too so and I think those stand out as important.

I think education to me has a real meaningful thing, is real meaningful as far as solving the problems that exist for the American Indian people. I guess after finding the negative things that I have found, not only history but a lot of material, that I think that in education, that it is education that is going to turn it around. If the colleges get serious about correcting the wrongs that were done by education, you know education did those wrongs. As far back as the Indian boarding schools and the Catholic boarding schools where they took our culture away from us and made us forget our culture and our language, which they didn't succeed with me. Because I am still fluent in my own language. But I think the damage that happened to the people happened way back then. And the problems that we're having today still stem from the that. Two things that I feel were the most devastating are organized religion and the boarding school era.

K: Should we take a little break?

GR: Yeah.

[pause in tape]

K: I was just going to ask you about the *Women of White Earth*. It was published in 1999 and I asked about your volunteer work again. Are you still as active as you always were?

GR: I am as active as I can be. I don't think... I had to slow down for awhile when my husband was sick. He died of cancer. And sometimes my own health can, you know, bother me. But now I still do as much as I can. Sometimes my calendar looks like I have a job.

K: Another thing we were going to talk about is that you were in the Women's Army Corps.

GR: Yeah

K: What was that like? What did you experience?

GR: I think that it was interesting for me because I had grown up on the reservation. And I went to an Indian boarding school when I went to high school. And the reason I went to boarding school, I was not pulled away from home, I had already started going into the ninth grade so I think a lot of my culture, a lot of my values, my language all that was already, I already had that. And you know nothing could ever take that away. When a child is brought up with these things, you can't take them away from them. But the school, then I would have to change from the one-room school into Mahnomen School and there was so much prejudice and so much discrimination and so much racism that they didn't want us in that school system. When we went to school in town, and those towns, you know, Mahnomen, Detroit Lakes, all of them pretty much were anti-Indian. You couldn't feel that good about yourself being there. And so then my dad went to talk to the county superintendent and had us see if we could get into Flandreau Indian Vocational High School, they used to call it then. Then I got to go there in the ninth grade and my brother went with me, he stayed one year and then he went into the Army. He made a career out of the military.

But anyway, after high school...I wanted to be a nurse after I finished high school in Flandreau. But I couldn't find the money. My dad was an activist. Involved in politics and lots of times advocated for students. And the Bureau of Indian Affairs was run by non-Indian people and he was always kind of stepping on their (toes). So when it came time for me to look for money there wasn't any. And my parents didn't have money. And the other glitch was, they said, "Well, you can apply for church money." You know, there was the church organizations that have scholarship monies available for American Indian students. But the catch was that you had to join the church. And we were traditional belief. And I couldn't give that up. I think of how glad I am that I didn't, now, today. Then I got out of high school and I couldn't continue my education. And I worked hard to get good grades and you know my math and science and keep that end of it up and chemistry. But I just couldn't find the money to go so I joined the Army. I was out picking potatoes in Grand Forks and I seen that recruiting poster and I signed up.

Unbeknownst to me, my Indian school training would be an asset to me in the Women's Army Corps. (Laughter) They trained me well in the very militarily run school. (More laughter) I did really good when I was a... In basic training it was a good experience because I met people there from many ethnic backgrounds. The barracks were integrated by that time. They had been segregated; I don't think the women ever were segregated. The Army used to be segregated and I never knew about you know the segregation in the south I went to Virginia for my basic training and where they had signs still up you know that said that bathrooms were either black or white. On the buses the blacks sat in the back and the whites sat in the front. But the Army was integrated and we had black people, Oriental people from the West coast, and Hawaiians sometimes, Filipino, Latino, and myself. I was almost always the only American Indian in the group. The Women's Army Corps were smaller groups anyway and I was definitely always the one and only. And it appeared an advantage for me, I think for minority people it's found that if you're not a threat to anybody you can get along pretty good. But if you are a larger group of people then you become a threat. I got good training I can say I fit into the Women's Army Corps very good because the Indian Boarding school we had to learn... I think we got a lot of discipline which I think, you know, is good. Discipline never hurt anybody and I found I have nothing really bad to say about the Indian school. I wouldn't have got through school in Mahnommen.

When I was in basic training early on they start picking me out a leader. I think because I had that background and I usually, I knew how to take care of myself, I knew how to do my own laundry and I knew personal hygiene, some kids didn't even know that, that were with us from places where they had been in a very protected environment. And a lot of white kids. But I got along fine and that was early on that I was picked out to be a leader. When I finished basic training I was selected to go on to leadership training school which was a noncommissioned officers school. That was good training for me too. It's like my life just happened to float into the right places. (Laughter from interviewer and interviewee)

So I got good training, we had to learn, learn public speaking, because we had to train other troops and we had to learn how to make speeches, we had to learn how to teach the things we had to learn in the Army. And then other times I was asked to make a speech, it was a long speech for forty-five minutes. And so then I decided, I came up with the idea that I would compare the Army with the Indian boarding school. I made it kind of humorous and even though I wasn't talking to an American Indian audience I thought, well, it just appealed to me to do it like this. So I planned my speech, they taught us how to plan so that it would come out on time and all that. And then they would critique us, our classmates had to critique. That was very stressful. You taped it and then people critiqued you and they could be pretty bad. I made my talk about the Indian school—it was totally something that was totally foreign to everybody. I told them that the Army was duck soup to me after getting out of that Indian boarding school. And then, as it happened, the commanding officer happened to stop in for that day to visit. (Laughter) And that made me very nervous. But I thought, I've got, I've got here, it's wrote down, I'm going to do it, I'll pull it off. And I had everybody laughing. And that was good cause then my critique was not too bad and I educated a bunch of people along the way, too. I kind of have fun in my life and ...I'm really good at making lemonade out of lemons, I guess. (Waitress comes in and talks to Ms. Ray.)

And I told you, just like when I answered several questions there about the Women's Army Corp that I appreciate the experience I got there. I got to see more country and after leadership training then I went into the medics. Um. Now there I made a mistake, I could have took anything I wanted to do but I wanted to work in a hospital so bad. But they didn't have nurse's training, and so I went to the medics and that is basically hospital work. And they had good training, and we worked mostly the wives and families of military personnel. And we had, you know, an o.b. and a maternity, and then we had surgical and medical wards. We had the nursery and pediatrics and psychiatry—we had a good round of education of working around hospitals. You know, we were basically trained like the men, so that we could use that in the field. Use that training in the field.

But I learned a lot of good things and I learned how to get along with a lot of different people, from a lot of different backgrounds. And I used my ethnicity sometimes. My ethnicity was used by the Army because the blacks and the whites did not get along. And so, you know the blacks didn't like the whites and the whites didn't like the blacks and there's, it was hard to control, if they put a black sergeant in charge the white ones wouldn't listen, if they put a white person in charge then black ones would not listen. So they put me in charge and then I was neither, so. Everybody, I was kind of neutral, so it worked out ok. I enjoyed people, I had very good friends that were black and very good friends that were white. But I learned how to get along, you know, the whole 'nother world than I grew up in on the reservation.

K: Can, ah, well kind of change stride here a little bit. How has your role in the tribe and the community changed since you first became so involved?

GR: I'm older. (Laughter) And wiser. (Laughter) Maybe I don't take as many chances as I used to. (Laughter) Now, what did you say? How's my role changed as I, will you repeat your question?

K: Sure, How has your role changed with in the tribal community and the Fargo-Moorhead community?

GR: I think most of all of my involvement is in the Fargo community, I'm not so involved with the tribal issues. But...in the Fargo area I started out pretty green, I had no idea. And when I first got asked to, ah, I was a housewife; I stayed home with my children. I had six of 'em, and my husband worked and we didn't have much, but I chose to stay home with my children. Because I wouldn't make enough money to pay, to have them taken care of anyway. When they were little, I involved myself in their education through PTA. Which is probably unusual for an American Indian person, but I wanted, I was interested in what my children were learning. And soon the teachers found that I... was American Indian...I knew a lot of things that, that could be helpful to the teachers. And they would ask me to come in periodically to the classroom and talk to students. That's why I kind of liked it, and then later on the YWCA, somehow heard about me somewhere. And they contacted me to be a panelist on a, Indians, let's see... on Immigrants, Indians and Migrants, was their topic.

This is activist days, and that's...[unclear] why all that happened. And I found out that, you know, I don't know, I don't think I know if I want to say anything else. (Laughter) You know, I bet I would be embarrassed today if I heard myself talking, you know, that I just wasn't with it. They gave me a lot of material to read so, I knew it, and I did a lot of research and I did agree to be on that panel at that time. I think it was a good learning experience 'cause there I read some of the statistics that were pretty earth-shaking to me, at the condition that the American Indian people were in. You know, the poverty, although I lived in poverty all my life, I didn't know anything else existed. You know, I guess, how much more poverty there was. The high infant mortality rate for the Indian people compared to the rest of the people. The high incidence of suicide, especially among the young people, the high unemployment rate... We were high on all the wrong things. And they were low on all, and there was a high drop out rate. There was a low life expectancy, among the American Indian, then all the rest of them. All these statistics put together really made me think, you know, there must be, it made you feel like you had to do something about it.

And I think that's where my work really started and then there was someone at that, at that particular meeting from Community Action. That kind of followed up what I was doing, and that's how I got asked to do the survey. And it kind of just went from there, it was like, I just now, it just seems like I was where... I just kind of feel like people are where they are supposed to be sometimes. You know, our destiny is kind of all laid out for us, I just feel like I followed my nose and I got to where I had to be. And sometimes... things just kept turning out good and it was hard, it was hard to do what I was doing. But I think that is what got me interested was, you know, the condition that the people were in, in the whole country. And it was the same thing that was happening here, so when I did do my outreach and visited the homes of these people, these are the conditions I found, and then I felt, then I guess I really knew what I knew. I didn't think I knew, but when I, having seen it on paper helped me to realize that we were brought up poor. We didn't have running water, we didn't have...we had poor housing, we didn't have electricity, lived out in the woods, but we didn't think we were poor. And I think in a lot of ways we weren't, but material, in a material world we were poor. But I think culturally we were rich. You know, we had all the things we really needed, we had wood, we didn't have to buy that, the things we got, we lived off the land. My dad was a hunter and trapper, and sold furs for the things we needed from town. We had our own gardens, and canned our own stuff...berries and wild rice and maple sugar. You know we lived seasonally and everything all came together. We lived a fairly good life out there and were kind of away from the rest of the Indian people. We were kind of isolated, farther, you know miles away from our closest neighbors.

K: Did you have role models when you were growing up?

GR: Absolutely! And I have to say probably the real role models in my life was my Grandma and my Grandpa. They were my two most important role models. My parents were so busy trying to keep things together that my Grandpa and Grandma took care of us all. Took care of a lot of our, I think, values and teaching and stuff. It was the old people. And by watching them and how they did things and how lovingly they took care of us. And the...respect that they gave to everything...they respected all. They are the



ones who taught me how to respect the creation. All of their life, when they gathered medicine, to put down tobacco. That was their offering. They respected animals, and when my dad would kill a deer you know, we'd use tobacco, and we'd cook the first meat and we'd have a feast. The same thing as the wild rice, the first rice harvest was cooked up and they'd have a Thank You feast. They were always saying, "Thank you," and never really taking more than how much they needed. But, you know, [unclear] they lived their life everyday in a way that was respectful. And I think that was an important value, was the value of respect that I learned from those old people. And the value of learning of how to deal with things. We learned a lot from legends, too. You know, there's a lot of psychology in the legends, it sounded like foolish little animal stories, but in those stories were a lot of lessons. I'm not a story teller, but sometimes some of them come back to me when a situation comes up. So, you know it really is psychology. But they were definitely my role models, and I wanted to be...(the grandparent that they were to me.)

[End of side one—Tape]

...And I involved myself in a lot of; I was on too many committees a lot of times. But it always felt like everything was really so important. To help the American Indian people that, I felt, have had to go through, now these other people... And I learned some leadership skills along the way and organizational skills as I was involved in a lot of organizations that I was in. And I also got a lot of training, a lot in the government programs, like Community Action, Model Cities Programs. A lot of community leadership training that I was able to transfer to the organizations the skills that I needed organizing in the community.

K: I guess I was going to ask you now about, how have ethnic relations changed in Fargo-Moorhead in your time here?

GR: When I first started the only ethnic groups here, were, you know, the different white people. The large Scandinavian population, different kinds of people, Irish, and the only people of color that were here of any number was American Indian and the Latino community. And I worked with them too, at one time or another with Community Action, the Latinos. And there weren't very many American Indian people sticking in this community. For one thing I found out that when I was doing referrals, that they were being sent back to the reservations. And they'd go into the Welfare to get help, then the Welfare would send them back to the reservation. They'd give them enough help to, for them to, they used to have to establish residence in order to get Welfare, and they'd give them probably two months, so systematically they were keeping them out of the community. And then I said, well you can't do that. You know, that's discrimination, so you just have to mention discrimination...

I think when I did my first outreach, I found that there was only seven families that were on Cass County Welfare, because they were systematically... There were many white people, you know, they were very underrepresented, but the American Indian people, it wasn't because they didn't need it. They probably needed it the worst and on the reservation, the reservations were being...but didn't have enough Welfare to go

around either. They always say...a lot of people think that the government takes care of us; you know that they send us a check every month or something. Which is not the case and so I think that those kind of stereotypes that people really believed, you know. That Indian people got a check every month, just for being Indians. And the same thing with the health...the county health when we referred, took people over to there, they were trying to send them back to the reservations to get health care. You know, there wasn't much they gave anyway, you know, probably vaccinations or probably for school they had physicals and stuff, and some care for women and stuff. Even if people got sick and if they didn't have any money, there was no one would take them—they'd send them back to the reservation. I knew one woman was having a gallbladder attack and they sent her back to the reservation. And she was married to a white man, well the reservation didn't want to serve her either, cause he was white. And they'd send them back here and I think they finally took care of her when her case became severe enough. And a lot of students were dropping out of school, when my son graduated in '71, I think he was the only name I could recognize on the list that was American Indian. So we had a very high drop out rate, I think a lot of that had to do with the attitudes in the school.

K: One of the questions we talked about earlier...

GR: I didn't finish that one either. (Pointing to the list of questions in front of her)

K: Well, we've kind of been moving around here a little bit.

GR: That one was about how the changes happened here.

K: Yeah, do you think ethnic relations have improved or regressed in this area?

GR: I don't think they've really improved; we still have a lot of problems. I've done this work for probably thirty-five years. We have more American Indian people coming here, for one thing. One good thing, is we had more American Indian people in all three of our colleges. I can remember the day where I could count maybe five in some of the colleges, no more than ten, in many of the colleges in this community that were American Indian. And they weren't so sticking about the confidentiality and I could go and find out who the students were, and we had a number of vocational schools here. We had a mechanic's school, so a lot of, that was almost all Indian students, and there were some that were in barber school, some in business colleges, there was two business colleges. But that's how I went and found some of the Indian people, you know, approaching the schools to find out who was here. But I think that, that part is good that we have more in the colleges now and more people are getting an education. But now we have more refugee people moving into the community.

And there's one thing that I am opposed to, is lumping the American Indian people in "multiculturalism" because they seem to drop to the bottom. And you know, their issues are less, other ethnic groups have other issues that are different than American Indian people. I think a lot of the refugee people are trying to integrate and assimilate into white culture. The native people, I think we are trying to hang onto what we have left, what little we have left. You know, we are in a different direction. I always

feel that the community can address the issues that face the American Indians whether it's in the education system or in the community at large, that they would have a better handle on handling other ethnic issues. I think that there will be a time when these other people will end up where we are. You know if they lose their culture and their ways. I think their culture, in spite of all the things that have happened to us, there is, we are so resilient we've never really totally lost it. We're just real resilient people, there was so much...there was suppression of our beliefs, and we have faced so much oppression as Indian people. But yet we still remain true to being American Indian.

K: Do you, last question here, I guess. What should be the goals of this community in respect to ethnic relations? You've talked about that a little bit.

GR: I think the colleges could do a whole lot. I think that they need to have more Indian Studies in the colleges and I think should be a requirement for all the disciplines. You know that they take the Indian studies and understand, 'cause I'm sure that most of the students that come here have no knowledge of the American Indian: the history, the culture, the values, just what the American Indian person is really like as a person. I think there's just a whole lot to learn. And I think now they have a few classes but they are not enough to go around. My grandkids can't even get into that class. You know, one of those classes. One of them got into Helen's [MSUM professor Helen Klassen] class last semester; the other one couldn't get in. They are twins that I have in school. And I think that, I belong to another organization that I am proud to belong to and that is Northern Plains Voices, and that purpose is education. Educating the community about Indian issues, it is from Project Bridge that we are in that film festival. I mean, not Project Bridge, but Northern Plains Voices, it's kind of similar to what we used to have in Project Bridge, too. It's Indian and non-Indian people working together and a lot of it is educating the community about the issues that affect the American Indian. And I try to fan out into other organizations, like now I am working on the Racial Justice team at the YWCA and there being a lot of anti-racism but I think that's not doing much good. You know, until I start seeing that, that American Indian people showing up on the power structures of these organizations or on, or in the top levels in the jobs. They talk about it, but that's just giving, um, you know...talking it is not like walking it. You know, until there are Indian people get to the top levels where they have any power, we aren't having anti-racism.

K: In the colleges, then, as far as, should Native people being teaching the classes?

GR: Yes. I think that even if they aren't, if they aren't teaching it, it's still important to get Native teachers in the colleges. And I think we need to educate more of our American Indian people so that they can be teaching. We have some teachers at MSUM. We have the Social Work teacher Tracy Clarke, from Mahnomon, that teaches Social Work and that's good. We have Helen [Klassen] and then we have Dr. Cole, Dr. Cole is very good. I think that, well, Helen's leaving now again, but I think that they should try and keep replacing them with American Indian teachers and if they can't, then they shouldn't—if they can't find teachers they should still try and teach, I think it's important to teach Indian Studies into whatever they are teaching. Because if you go out into the

world you're going to bump into people that come from a different culture, and if you get a handle on working with American Indians you're going to be able to take that skill and transfer it to whatever ethnic group you are working with.

K: Well, do you have any final comments?

GR: No, I'm glad you interviewed me and I hope that I have been helpful to you. And I'm always...I usually go whenever people ask me, I work a lot with the education programs in the Fargo and Moorhead Public Schools. I try to help the coordinators with whatever I can, I go to the conferences yet, that are offered in Minnesota: the Indian Education Conference, and I go to the Johnson O'Malley Conference and that's the title conference too, that's at Fond du Lac. And just kind of keep in touch with what's happening in the field of education for Indian people. And then I...do as much as I can, like when the colleges ask me I've spoke at some of their classes. And every once in a while, teachers ask me to come in and I talk to the Seeds Program in Fargo, I've been doing that for three years. And I bring my granddaughters along with me. They're dancers and I do my little thing and they do their little talking about their experiences when they were in school. But they don't look Indian, they're like you but they are really proud of their ethnic background. They love to dance, one is a shawl dancer and the other one is a jingle dancer. They got both kinds of outfits, they dance and they learn a little bit here and there. I think the hard part of trying to teach the kids language at home [noise in background]. They take them away from us so soon, you know, when they start Head-Start at four years old. I think in order, this is probably pushing it too far, but I really think that what should happen to Indian kids is they should be put into a total Ojibwe (immersion)... They took my dad's generation and put them in the schools where they were only aloud to talk English. I think we need to turn that around and put these little Indian kids back where they don't hear English. Just immerse them totally in Ojibwe language, with native speakers and the only thing they are hearing is Ojibwe and they are just starting to listen. You know, total immersion, just immersing people in it, to, because it's hard to learn to be fluent from books...because you tend to teach it in English.

The same thing goes—another comment that I would like to make about education, is that, like I said, I believe that Indian Studies should be put into all of the disciplines, like Social Work. And be put into the classes you have now and you come up with white Social Workers. Even if you are Indian, they are not familiar with their culture and they learn to do white social work. You know, you get them into the Indian community then they, have to learn, they have some classes, now, out at Duluth, where they teach Indian Social Workers in the Master's Program, and I think Indian people can get into there... They get money to go to, scholarship, they got a scholarship; I think they get pretty much a free ride. But it's taught with Indian...you know, with an emphasis on Indian Social Work.

K: Very good. Well, thank you very much.

GR: I hope what I said made any sense.

K: It was very interesting, very interesting.

[Turned tape off and then Gladys began to talk again]

GR...I was trying to start...But there's a lot of homeless people that come into town, and we have a...a high number that are American Indian people...an overrepresentation. And of the people who live in poverty, there's an overrepresentation of American Indian people, too. And that's kind of what I spend my life doing. I guess I just...I have a meeting tonight...

[Tape turned off]