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Interview with DeeDee Bergs and Anette King

DeeDee Bergs

Anette King

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S -- This is Suzanne Nienaber and Kate Hitchcock, and we are interviewing DeeDee Bergs and Annette King at their home, 18 Aimes St., and it is November 19th at about 9:30pm.

K -- Um, just to start off real easy, some basic biographical information like how you came to the area, where you're from and stuff.

D -- I was born in..

K -- oh, actually can you identify your voices, just so that

A -- ok, I'm Annette

D -- I'm DeeDee. We came here, I came when I was four, I wasn't born here. My dad was from here and somehow, I don't know, he met my mom who was from somewhere else, then we went to...I was born in Mansfield.

K -- you were born in Mansfield? Um, so what do you guys do then?

D -- I'm a nurse

A -- and I work in a nursing home, as a um, not really an aid but I do that work

K -- um, a little bit harder question...your coming out experience? Who you're out to...

A -- I've been married twice. And um, so, and I came out to my parents. I lived in Kentucky, and I told them, and it was pretty cool.

S -- How old were you?

A -- I don't know why, it was a long time ago, and it was the way I was supposed to. I was supposed to get married. So I tried it twice and it didn't work.

S -- How old were you when you ended your second marriage and.....

A -- when I ended my second marriage? Um...25

K -- was the reason for that being gay?

A -yeah

K -- how did your husband deal with that?

A -- not very good. He didn't go with it very good. Whatever, he's not in my life anymore, so....

K-- How about you DeeDee?

D -- Oh, I've never been married. I knew when I was little, but I didn't talk about it. I told one person when I was 18, right after I graduated from high school. It was my friend, and she wouldn't have anything to do with me after that so, I decided to not tell anybody else, so I waited until I was about 25. The people I work with know.

A -- We work at the same place so everybody knows

S-- oh, ok

A -- I mean everybody, everybody at work is normally accepted

S -- How did you family take the news?

D -- well, my mom was a little upset but she got over it.

K -- what about your sisters?

D -- I don't know. There's three of us girls and two of are gay. My younger sister, well the youngest one's gay, actually.

K -- Were you the first to come out in your family?

D -- yeah. Well, I'm the oldest. And then, not long after I came out my younger sister did. So that my mom blamed me for her. It was all my fault.

K -- How did your family deal with it?

A -- um, my dad said he knew. He said 'do you think I'm stupid?' He knew. But my mom, I didn't tell her, he did, because she didn't take it too good at first, and then she was ok with it. She didn't understand, but she was ok. And when I moved back up here, back up to Ohio from Kentucky, she asked me to try one more time, just to date, you know, men. So I did. I dated our neighbor, and we only went out like three times. And she knew that I wasn't, she knew I wasn't happy because I wasn't like, waiting by the phone for him to call like I you know, normally would. And uh, so then she finally told me, she says 'ok, I understand, just let it go'. So I had to go tell this guy.

K -- how was that?

A -- he um, he thought it was pretty cool, and he was glad that I was honest with him.

K -- um, how about your impressions of Mt. Vernon, just, their impressions of you....

D -- I don't know...Everybody I work with's alright, but the majority of the gay people here are

all very much in the closet. They're all so afraid, and I guess from my experience I don't understand why. I don't know, I think that if everybody's gonna be so narrow-minded, they don't think it really goes on, or what. But, I haven't had problems so...so far anyways.

A -- I haven't had any problems either

K -- You guys haven't experienced any forms of discrimination? In the area or in Columbus or anything?

A -- a little bit, at work.

K -- really?

A -- when I first started there, um... I can't work under her, because they recognize the fact we're together. It's not like discrimination, but their policy is husband, wife, or sisters or brothers, whatever cannot work under each other or with each other on the same unit. So I thought, you know, they uh, recognize the fact that we're together, so then that should be put on the insurance.

K -- Do they accept it?

D-- uh-uh. 'Cause the insurance cut me off. It's up to the insurance company.

K -- Well that's good that they recognize it within your job...

S -- How long have you been together?

A -- three years. Three years and three months.

K -- How did you meet?

A -- We met through school together.

D -- Well I didn't know she was then. That she was gay.

K -- Were you surprised when she told you?

D -- Yeah, I was shocked, to say the least

K -- Um, I guess we discussed this last night a little bit, but uh, do you find that there's a gay community in the area?

D -- I think they're here, it's just they're not real social. Most of them are game players.

K -- game players?

D -- They play games with each other and they've all slept with each other, and their just a loud bunch of people. There's some that we associate with, but not many...

K -- Do you guys both belong to the Danville church? No? Do you have any religious affiliations, or anything, or did you used to?

D -- we used to go to a Catholic church

K -- Oh really? Were you out to your church?

D -- no.

K -- is that why you're not anymore then?

D -- no.

S -- there's other reasons to stop going to church....

D -- No, I mean well, it says in the Bible you can't be gay, you know. Well that's what they say

[phone call]

K -- Do you find that there's a different experience um, for gay men versus lesbian women?

D -- I think it's harder for men than it is women. Women are more accepted

A -- and I have a, we have a gay man that we keep in contact with that lives in Gambier.

K -- We've actually met a couple.

S -- Mmhhh. We talked to Bill Prusak, um, and then everyone else was affiliated with Kenyon, who, in the Gambier area.

K -- He's a older person..

A-- Oh really?

K -- he's in his forties...

A -- yeah, she's Megan's friend

K -- who is?

A -- her daughter's

D -- he adopted her.

K -- oh.

S -- wow...

K -- so wait, I'm confused.

S -- could you explain?

K -- yeah...

D-- well, I had her, with his best friend. Only I was really kinda with this guy on a dare. It was like a 'I could prove to you if you're with me you won't ever want to be with another woman'. And I was like, well I can prove that I can get in bed with you and then get up and go get a woman. So, I end up getting pregnant. But Mike was the one that went through everything with me. Her dad didn't.

K -- and he's adopted her..

D -- Mike adopted her 'cause he's helped me raise her, so..

K -- Does she know, that you....

A -- this is the only life she knows

D-- we're all she's ever seen

K -- has she ever um, experienced any problems at the school?

S -- how old is she?

D -- six. I mean she knows. She knows when she goes to her aunt Rose's that she's got a husband Mark.... I don't know....

K -- yeah....so she hasn't had any problems?...maybe when she gets older

D -- probably when she gets a bit older. Probably when she's in first grade. Probably when she gets just a little bit older.

K -- Are you worried about that?

D -- well, I try not to worry about it, but I think about it. And I'm gonna have to explain it to her. Soon probably like, probably next year. I'll try to start explaining it to her next year. I wanna wait until she's old enough to comprehend it.

A -- Well she tells people she has two moms, and a dad.

S -- How often does she see her dad?

D -- Well he was here Sunday. It just kinda depends 'cause he drive for Mota, and sometimes he'll work like split days and sometimes he'll work second shift, some days he'll work first shift. His schedule's never the same so it just depends. But for the most part she just stays with him about two days every other week. He comes over -- he'll stop by just to come in and say hi, even if he can only stay 15, 20 minutes, so..it just depends.

K -- Do you find that there's a different perception agewise, or age gap in who's out, like whether the younger generation is more likely to be out versus the older?

A -- I'd say there's a lot of older ones out than younger. That live here. [...mentioning some names] that's it.

A -- We only know two other couples who are out.

S -- you [the dog] are such a cutie.

K-- have you noticed a change in coming out, the general acceptance?

D -- They don't accept -- I don't think they're accepting. I mean but it's like, I don't know, you can prove it...You just hear people talk and hear comments when you're in the stores and stuff. I mean I don't know. I don't know I just think it would be just small-minded...

A -- small town

K -- You think it's the religious aspect of it?

D -- I don't know, there are an awful lot of churches around here, aren't there.

K -- But you said that in your job here you're pretty much accepted.

D -- Everybody knows. I mean the residents know. Families don't know, but everybody knows. All the people I work with know.

K -- Do you get the feeling that behind doors they're kinda like...

D -- Some of them do

K -- yeah... you just kinda get used to it? Um, have you found there's a change in your family or friends once your out to them? One of those things...

D -- I only lost one.

A -- um, I haven't lost any friends, but like, it was when, 'cause I moved...I haven't lived here for nine years, and then when I moved back everybody's gone or married so, you know. The friends that I had, they don't really know, because I don't go to see them. So I can't say I've lost any friends.

K -- Um, you talked about that a lot of people are just fooling around, being pretty wild. Is there a tendency toward monogamous relationships or no, not-monogamous.

D -- I think so. I mean because, the three other couples we know, they've all been together a long time. I mean, there's one couple's been together 15 years. The other one's probably gonna get at least 10. So they've all been together for a long time. Well, and some of the ones in that group that have all like, slept with each other, some of them are finally now in relationships. But see they all drink, they're all you know, I mean they're all real that...type of drinkin' thing.

S -- Do people um, do a lot of people go to Columbus to meet people?

D -- When we go out that's where we go.

S -- Do you feel so comfortable going out in Mt. Vernon together?

A -- We have.

K -- The thing is, I mean, we've found that most people say Columbus is the main scene, the bars or whatever, and you can be more open out there. Um, how do you view homosexuality, the origins of it -- genetic or....

D -- I think it's genetic. You're born that way.

A -- I feel that way too.

K -- Do you um, do you guys have any personal symbols for yourself? Some people say the rainbow flag or..

D -- The flag and the ?, double-blade axe

A -- The double-blade axe. She has a tattoo that has a double blade axe, big triangle on it.

K -- What, what does it symbolize?

A -- Tell her about the double-blade axe.

D -- It was, I can't remember her name. It was from this, I don't know if it was back when they had like the gods and goddesses, and there was a war, and it was all women after I can't remember her name. And the all fought with double-bladed axes. I don't know, somehow it became a lesbian symbol. Somehow over the years...

S -- In my religion class I'm studying um, the ancient worship of the goddess, back in the times when people worshipped the goddess, and that was a symbol for the goddess, was the double-bladed axe.

D -- Yeah, it was from her. But from the war, whatever war....I mean I know a little about...but I don't read that much on it.

K -- Where do you guys see yourself in the future? Do you think you're gonna leave Mt. Vernon?

A&D -- probably not

D -- It's a good place for a kid to grow up. There's not a lot of violence here. I mean there's some, but not like.....

S -- Do you ever wish that um, or do you ever think about moving to a community that would be more gay-friendly?

A -- yeah, we thought about it.

D -- we thought about it.

K -- Do you know of any in the, like area?

D -- there's not many

K --Yeah, more east coast

S -- and west coast

D -- Northampton, Massachusetts, New York City, or San Francisco, you'd have to...

K -- Furrow (?) Massachusetts is another one on Cape Cod. My sister lives there...Um, is there anything you think would help to ease the acceptance, like the education in schools, or...

D -- They need to be educated, yeah. A lot of people do, I mean, it's just their fear. I don't know, they think we're so different from them and we're not. They think we're all like perverts runnin' around, harassing children

A -- hanging from the chandeliers or somethin'

D -- We don't any different than they do.

K -- Do you wanna talk a little bit more about the stereotypes you think you face?

D -- Well, I guess it's probably more men and male, and men get that way.....

A -- Men love it

D -- Men are different. I think gay men are different.

A -- They, they....men, they can accept

D -- well, straight men

A -- straight men, they can accept the fact that two women are together because that's kinda like their fantasy

D -- their fantasy. So it's like 'oh well can I watch'. You get that a lot.

A -- or you know, something like that, but...It's just like I've talked to a few people on the computer and they're not from this area, you know, but I've talked to them and it's like, I tell 'em. There's a few of them I've told....

D -- A few...I tell everybody.

A -- And it's like, um, it's like they're like 'that's cool. I think that's really cool' and that, you know. And so then I asked them their opinion of what two men..., and they can't see it. They're like, no way. No way, that is disgusting. So I think the men are more acceptive of the women and straight women are like, some of them are ok with it because, um

D -- they're comfortable enough in their own sexuality

A -- right

D -- If they're not intimidated

A -- if they're comfortable enough with their own sexuality that they're ok with it, they're not really intimidated. But if they have that little bit of, oh what's the word I'm...

D -- Insecurity or doubt, or in they're curious

A -- If they're curious, you know 'I wonder if being with a woman is what I want'. Then they're kinda like leary of you because it scares 'em.

K -- right. They're own sexuality would be.....Um

S -- Has the support group been helpful to you?

A -- mmhmm. See I'll, I have problems goin' out and meeting people. And uh, especially other

women, and so it's like...She has friends that are gay and you know and stuff, and so I know these people through her. But I've always been one to want my own friends, you know. So like, goin' to that support group out there, it's like I'm meetin' different people. And we're doing things. It's not like, you know, I just see them that one time. Or that once a week -- because we do do things. It's nice.

K -- Did you guys go out to coffee after last night?

A -- Yeah.

K -- Um, how did you enter into the community once you decided to be out? How did you find your way in?

D -- Well, this is odd. Well, she got there through me. I've been here all my life. I mean, most of the people that I knew that I went to school with that were gay, they moved away, they all left right after high school. And um, I was working where I worked now, and this couple had moved here from Florida. And she kept tellin' me they were sisters and, she'd like call her and I'd hear bits and peices of their conversation. I'm thinkin' these guys aren't sisters. So after a couple weeks I just couldn't stand it anymore, I'm like 'you're gay'. And she like 'no'. I'm like 'you are'. And she says 'I am not'. I said 'well I am so just tell me the truth'. And she's like 'ok, I am'. And it was through them, that couple that moved here from Columbus that I met everybody here. Which is odd. But, then I start goin' to parties with them, well I knew a lot of them already because....so, but it was really, it was kinda ironic.

K -- Was it scary for you to come, to switch roles when you

A -- No, because I lived in Kentucky. And I didn't really know anybody down there. Because I lived here all my life and then I moved to Florida, and I met this guy. And we got married, and he decided to move, you know, to move. So we moved to Kentucky, and I had a job, and it just so happened that the girl that I made best friends with um, she was married but yet she was gay. So she was like goin' through a divorce, and was with this other woman. And so like seein' them together, it just like clicked, you know, and I thought well this, this...I have to try, you know. Because I'm not happy in my marriage. So at least, I separated from my husband, so like everybody I knew in Kentucky were all lesbians. And there was a few gay men that I knew, so it was no big deal. But coming back up here to my home town was scary. It was really scary because I didn't know anybody, you know.

D -- You said you knew I was in high school

A -- Yeah, but I didn't know where you were, if you were still here or what. You know what I mean? 'Cause I'd been gone for nine years.

K -- Yeah, when did you find her?

A -- Actually, what happened was I lived her for like, six months and um, I was really

considering on moving back to Kentucky. 'Cause I wasn't happy 'cause I didn't know anybody to run around with. And I did have a couple of my friends before that are totally against it, you know. And so, it's like I didn't wanna say anything to them and ruin our friendships so I just left it. And uh, so, when I would go out with them I had to act straight. I had to not be myself. An um, so, um my cousin she told me, she said um, she said 'I know', 'cause like she knew. And I had a girl, there was a girl that I knew that lived in Kentucky moved up here with me and we lived together. We we're together, but we were just roommates for like three months. And she got homesick and went back. But in that three months I met this couple that, that um.. I met this couple and got really close with them and they said um, I kept tellin' 'em you know, I'm movin' back. 'Cause you guys are the only ones I know, and they don't do anything, they're homebodies, you know. So um, she's like 'no let's', they were like 'no let's just, let's take you around and introduce you to people', you know. And I was like, 'well, you got two weeks'. So, the next day they called me and invited me over for supper and then after supper they told me they was takin' me to meet somebody so they brought me over here, and I've been here since.

K -- Wow. Hit it off right away?

D -- I just saw her and like

K -- yeah?

D -- yeah. I was with somebody else.

K -- oh were you? ah ha, trouble.

D -- No, actually it wasn't.

A -- Worked out good though, didn't it?

D -- Everybody knew though. Everybody that night said they knew, they could tell.

A -- There was a bunch of people here.

S -- Do you feel like you just um, that you connected better with gay people than straight people?

D -- No, I have more straight friends that I'm around on a regular basis. 'Cause we're all home -- well, I'm a homebody. And that's how much of them are. Except for ? she like to go places and stuff.....

A -- That's kinda the way I was....Once in a while she'll go with me. You know, but usually she stays home and I go...just like going out last night and having coffee. All of us ate except for one, we ate some, something.

K -- it's good that there is a group like that. We didn't find out about that until like, a couple of

interviews into the project, and somebody mentioned it and I was like, 'no way, I've been to Moundbuilders, never, you know never heard of it'. And then when I got in touch with Sheri, wow, she helped me out so much.

A -- mmhmm, she's pretty smart

S --I think in our article we're gonna try to do a little bit of advertising for the group just to make more people aware of it. Especially um, because there are certain, it does seem like there's a certain amount of isolation among certain gay people. Maybe they just need to know that there's like, places for them to go, and a community available.

D -- Yeah because if you don't get, if you don't meet somebody that knows about...See a lot of these, they, they have, they're not really parties... they have get togethers in the summer. They're really in the summer and then, you know, end of the early fall. And they'll have big cookouts, big bonfires and...and uh, if you don't know anybody that knows about those, then you don't get to go. Because there was somebody else that had moved here from Columbus, and right, any time I tried to take her to one of the get togethers, she like, had to work or, it never worked out. So she never met anybody in Mt. Vernon and she eventually moved. But you have to know somebody in that group and if you don't know somebody in that group then you kinda, you kinda are removed. It took me some years, you know, I didn't know anybody else either. There were people that I suspected that were gay, but....

K -- Do you have any ability to tell who is?

A&D -- yeah.

S-- yeah?

K -- just by the way the walk or just their attitude or...

D -- how they carry themselves. Only ones I have -- real feminine women I have a real hard time telling. Sometimes I can tell but not always. Men are the easiest I think. For men I think that it's easier for them to tell about women. That's what Mike says.

K -- See, I though you were very feminine

A -- I am.

K -- I love your nails.

A -- it's, yeah I'm very femme. Just like when Sheri first seen me when I first went to group, she thought that I was a straight woman or maybe even a bisexual, but she didn't know I was gay, you know? And it kinda threw her, 'cause usually you can tell, and it's hard to tell....so I wear a lot of rainbow stuff. I guess it's hard to tell with me, but, more the ones that like, don't wear makeup and don't wear much jewelry and they just wear jeans and flannel shirts and stuff like

that, you know, those are the ones that you can pick out, sometimes.

D -- sometimes they're straight, though

A -- sometimes they're straight though.

K -- It was funny, at the interview I had with Sheri, she thought that I was a lesbian, 'cause, I made a reference to my partner

S -- a partner in the class

K -- so later on in the interview she asked me, 'Are you out to your mom?'

S -- that's so funny.

K -- I wanna go back to that support group, I think it was really neat. I hope we didn't stifle your conversation.

A -- No, what you heard is usually what happens.

K -- Rainy really liked it too. She didn't have anything to do with the project, she's like 'I think I'll go'. Do you feel comfortable meeting there, that's it's a good meeting place...

A -- yeah.

S -- where is it?

K -- It's at Moundbuilders.

S -- ok. I haven't ever been there.

K -- it's on.....

D -- you go out, keep goin' ...

A -- it's um, it's ok to meet there, but a lot of times..

tape 1, side two

A -- we're goin' out, to have coffee or somethin', to see my friends, you know, in just a group. And uh, you know, we're all just like, last night we talked about going to Columbus all of us, you know.

K -- So you have found a community.

A -- In a way yeah, yeah, but I think there needs to be more. We need more people there.

K -- Do you think there are certain issues you have to deal with that are different from other people?

D -- I think it's harder. I mean, I don't want my daughter to grow up to be gay. I want her to be straight. But I, and I think she will, so far. She's a very feminine little girl.

A -- And it's not, it's not an easy life.

D -- It's not easy because you know you're different. I mean when you first know, you know you're different, but you don't know what it is, you know. You, I mean it was for me anyways, 'cause I was probably....9 or 10, I knew I wanted to be around little girls and not little boys. But then most of my friends were guys as I got older, when I knew. And then, you know, when you hit your teenage years and then you gotta deal with puberty and you're tryin' to deal with knowin', knowin' now that it's girls you wanna be with and not guys. I think it's harder. I think that's why suicide's so high among teenagers. I think that's probably why a lot of them commit suicide. Is because they're gay and they don't know how to deal with it. And you know, when I was in school there wasn't any role models, there wasn't Ellens, there wasn't any Martinas, well, Martina was there, but she'd just started playing tennis.

S -- how old were you when you had your first relationship with a woman?

D -- uh, 13.

A -- relationship

D -- oh relationship, 18. I was 18.

S -- how long did it last?

D -- Let's see, I lived there for two years, and then I moved out 'cause she was married. I moved out 'cause she was married but I still had sex with her for probably 3 or 4 years after that.

S -- so you lived with her and her husband, or...

D -- yeah

S -- wow.

D -- It was quite interesting. It was an event

S -- wow.

K -- do you find....

D -- but, no, go ahead.

K -- Do you find that a lot of people try to get married, fall into the role they're supposed to?

D -- I think it's about even. I would say it's about even, because not everyone's been married.

A -- ? has

D -- and Cindy hasn't

A -- ? has

D -- and Lisa hasn't. Kimberly and ?. You did and I didn't. I'd say it's about even. But you'll find very few that's never been with a man. I think that's real, a real low number. In the people that I know anyways. 'Cause even some of the ones that didn't get married, were with a man.....?, she was married 23 years. Well, she knew she was, she stayed in the marriage until her kids older, 18 and graduated from high school, then she left.

S -- Do you know of anyone who was gay and got married um, and ended up being satisfied with the heterosexual lifestyle?

A -- no

D -- no, but everybody gets comfortable with their sexuality at their own, you know, everybody's different, everybody has sex at a different age. And then you're like, well geez, why did I waste so much time?

K -- Do you find a lot more anger in the repression of it? Even more people unhappy, who thought for a time that it could possibly work?

A -- I was determined to make it work, you know, for a year. I had a son, and he um, for like a year I slept with my son. I stayed with him, my husband, and I slept with, I slept with my son for a year. I didn't sleep with him. I was determined to make it work, and then, I was told that you know, that all my friends knew, and they knew I wasn't happy, so they were like 'you only live once'. And then, you know, so...

K -- Where's your son now?

A -- In West Virginia.

K -- How'd he take it?

A -- He doesn't know.

S -- How old is he?

A -- He's nine. I don't get to see him.

D -- They got divorced in Kentucky

A -- My divorce was in Kentucky, and that's why I made that statement last night that Kentucky's not an open state, you know. So it came out, he told me, I told him I was movin', my husband at the time, that I was movin' back to Ohio, and um, he begged me not to move 'cause then he wouldn't see his son. And he asked me to find a roommate, something, somebody to share the rent with. And so, I did, and it just happened to be a gay woman. And we ended up together, you know, so um, and he found out. So I lost custody, and I'm supposed to have visitation rights but he won't let me. Because of the fact that I'm living with a woman.

D -- He can't stand it.

A -- He can't stand it.

S -- Is there any legal action you can take?

A -- If I go back to Kentucky. I've called um, lawyers in Columbus that, I've called two gay women that are lawyers, and I've called a couple other lawyers that know the gay rights and um, they've all told me the same thing. You gotta jurisdiction -- there's a jurisdiction problem here because everything was final in Kentucky, and I live in Ohio, and he lives in West Virginia, so if I wanna make things done I have to go back to Kentucky. It's um, really a person can't, I can't afford to be traveling back and forth to pay a lawyer down there. It's too much.

S -- Do you write to your son, or?

A -- We email

S -- email?

A -- whether he gets it or not, you know, but I do try. And he's nine, so I figure, you know, he gets twelves, thirteen years old or whatever, he can, or even probably when he's sixteen and gets his liscense, 'cause he always wants to come see me. So I figure one of these days, you know, he's gonna come knockin' at my door. He's gonna come. 'Cause he knows my parents' phone number and he knows my parents address and all of that so, we figure he's gonna come. He knows I'm in Ohio.

K -- are you glad you both had a kid? In terms of...

D -- sometimes. It's gonna be harder on her than it is on me, you know. She's the one's gonna -- have to decide who's she's gonna tell, who she's not gonna tell. 'Cause I'm sure there are gonna be some who give her a hard time when she tells 'em. I mean, you teach them not to lie, and then...you know...It's gonna be hard on her.

S -- Do you think you guys have it easier because you work someplace where everyone knows? I

mean, a lot of people we've talked to are kind of concerned because they're not out at their job, and they don't know what would happen, like if they did come out.

D -- I mean everybody talked about it; it was just a big rumor. Everybody always thought I was, but nobody knew for sure. I mean, I been there...don't mind me, I have to go to the computer now, I have some people to meet -- but I can do this. I've been there for seven years. I've already worked there for seven years. And I figured oh well, I was lookin' for a job when I came here -- leave and find another one.

A -- I didn't have to tell anyone

D -- well, they all knew

A -- because of her.

D -- So that decision was kinda taken out of her hands. She didn't have a choice.

K -- Do you find that there's a difference between rural -- this is a switch of topic -- um, rural versus city acceptance? Would you feel more comfortable in a city you think, where your not as...

A -- Uh, it just depends, 'cause I've been over on campus, and over in Columbus, and it's pretty cool over there now, but if you go to any other part of the city

D -- It's just like being anywhere else.

A -- It just depends on where you're at in the big city. I don't know, you know. You can get problems.

S -- You guys feel any connection to Kenyon at all, as far as anything that's been done at Kenyon to raise awareness?

A -- Well let me tell you somethin'. Um, now I've heard, and I always heard, like after the fact, but I've heard that they've had some um, gay and lesbian things going on up there, but I've heard like at, like a day after or two days after or whatever. They don't advertise it enough. You know, they don't advertise sayin', you know, in the paper, or anything, they're having a...

S -- Right there was a gay pride march, like last month.

A -- Yeah, and I, and see.. I didn't know nothin' about it until now. You know, so if, if they would put -- it's kinda hard in this town to advertise somethin' like that, because then you got these parents that um, send their kids there that are totally against it, but then the college is having this gay march, you know, and then they're gonna pull their kids. So the college has gotta protect themselves you know. So it just goes by word of mouth, and if you don't know anybody that goes there, or

D -- who works there

A -- or works there or anything to let you know, then you don't know.

S&K -- mmhmm

A -- Makes sense?

S -- yeah, that makes a lotta sense. I'm really surprised, I mean, because there's a very active organization on campus, ALSO, and they advertise all the time on campus and I would think that they would work more to bring more of the community in.

K -- They probably don't know how to reach the community though.

S -- that's true

D -- Probably not, since everybody's so, well hidden, for the most part.

K -- We, and I was telling last night, we had trouble breaking into the lesbian community, moreso than the gay men. A lot more people are, we even had an interview set up with somebody we had gotten a contact through Kenyon, and uh, the last minute she backed out, the day of the interview, she felt too uncomfortable. Event though she was out, she just didn't want her...

D -- We were surprised you're gonna be allowed to print this in the paper.

A -- yeah. It really struck me when Sheri said it's gonna be in the paper in February. I'm like "what?" You've got to be kidding me, they're gonna print something like this?

K -- The assistant editor, we've been working with him, and he's really open to...he actually wrote an article, um, in the paper -- if you wanna look at it, I actually have it -- um, which is hate crimes, and he's talking about gays and he's very open to it and very positive about it all. People need to know, and uh, we're lucky that we have him, you know, that he's gonna help us do this.

S -- mmhmm, definitely

K -- It's also one of many different aspects of diversity..

S -- Right, it's gonna be in the um, the Looking Glass section in February, and I think if that was the only aspect of it, it probably, wouldn't go in there at all...

D -- That probably wouldn't go in there.

S -- But because there's seven other aspects of diversity that we're looking at...other groups

we're working on, so...

K --Well who knows when it comes down to it, when they look it over...

S -- yeah, I'm not really sure who has like, final editing rights. I don't know what's gonna happen.

K -- That hasn't even been an issue we've talked about in class.

S -- Right.

K -- 'Cause he knows this is one of the topics. And we got acceptance from the editor, so..

A -- So it's just you two on this?

K&S-- right..

S -- I hope everything works out.

K -- Are there any questions you have left?

S -- um, not off-hand..

K -- Is there anything you, um, you think we've missed or you'd like to talk about..

D -- oh, I don't know..

K -- something you've always wanted to say?

A -- No, not really.

K -- Is there anyone else you think we should talk to, you mentioned...

D -- Mike

A -- definitely. B-e-c-k-w-i-t-h

K -- how would we reach him

A -- what's his number?

A&D -- 427-4326

K -- Um, does he know about this project?

A -- No, but I'll tell him

K -- Ok, so we'll probably -- we'll try to give him a call over our break, at home.

A -- Yeah, so I'll see him, and I'll talk to him before then. And uh, let him know that you guys are gonna call him. And that, it's not really scary, it's just an interview

S -- He lives in Gambier?

A -- He lives in them apartment -- on 308

S -- No no no, 308 is um, oh wait...

A -- It's the main road, where the post office is and stuff

S --right

A -- you go on down

D -- right across the street from the bed and breakfast.

S -- right, ok.

A -- yeah, you know where the bed and breakfast is? Ok, it's...

D -- Hey, lesbians own that bed and breakfast.

S -- Really? Wait, which bed and breakfast is it? Do you know what it's called?

K -- Not the one in Gambier

D -- Yeah.

K -- 'Cause I though a couple owned that.

S -- Oh are you thinking of Prof. Rogan's bed and breakfast?

K -- Yeah, I guess so.

D -- Well there might be two bed and breakfasts. One is right across from the apartments on 308.

A -- They're called Gambier homes. It's where Mike lives. But then right catty-corner is a big white house and it's a bed and breakfast, and they got a um, they've got a greenery thing in the back of their house.

K -- A greenhouse?

A -- You know what I'm talking about?

S -- I thought that was Prof. Rogan's bed & breakfast, but maybe I'm thinking of a different one. There could be more than one there.

D -- She's a probation officer. I don't know what the other one does.

A -- They're lesbians. They run that bed and breakfast.

S -- that's so interesting. We also -- Didn't someone tell us story about there was another little bed and breakfast nearby, where, um, that seemed to harbor like, anti-gay attitudes.. Do you remember that story?

K -- Who told it?

S -- It was someone in class, or maybe it wasn't; maybe they were just talking to me. But I think it had to do with the fact that ALSO was there, or someone from ALSO was there, and they were just very very not accepting at all.

D -- I wouldn't doubt it. I think if, I mean if people knew for sure about us when we go out, 'cause there's times I feel uncomfortable when we go out to eat or somethin'....there's times that I've felt everybody staring at us, and um,

S -- Are there any particular places where you go where you feel the most comfortable?

D -- Probably the Office.

K -- Really?

A -- that's a bar.,

D -- Yeah, that's a bar.

A -- I feel pretty safe at um, Southside Diner, a restaurant.

D -- Well, yeah.

A -- I felt pretty comfortable there.

K -- I take it the majority of the people aren't out to everybody, it's only 'cause they know you..

D -- yeah, the majority aren't out.

K -- um, is there anything else you'd like to ask us?

A -- You've told me....

K -- uh, if something occurs later do you mind if we call you back again?

A&D -- mmhmm

K -- Well, I guess that about wraps it up. I wanna thank you guys so much.

S -- Yeah, thank you so much. We really appreciate this.

K -- Another aspect which is good. It's the first couple. But I hope to get interviews with.....Get as many interviews as we can before the end.