

DIANA S. TAYLOR

An Interview by Wanda McDonough

Wanda McDonough Oral History Project

Tape # 14

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Salt Lake City, Utah

Archives
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27 C Street
Salt Lake City, UT 84103

ORAL/TAPED HISTORY INTERVIEW

Interviewee: DIANA Taylor
Name Address Tel

Interviewer: Wanda McDonough
Name

Interview: 9-9-92 Chapman Library-SLC
Date Place

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The sound recording and transcript of my interview with W. McDonough on the date of 9-9-92 may be used by the diocesan Archives for such purposes as it sees fit, including publication or deposit for public inspection in the oral history collection of the Archives.

Diana Taylor 9/9/92
Signature Date

Brief abstract of Interview:

SUGGESTED SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION;

Locale
Family genealogy, history
Personal history; personality
Experiences--civic, religious
Recollections of Catholic clergy, people, events

WM: This is an interview with Diana Taylor, about Diana and about her husband, Robert. It was taken at the Chapman Library, September 9, 1992. The interviewer is Wanda McDonough. Diana, tell about yourself.

DST: My name is Diana S. Taylor. I was born in Santa Clara Pueblo, two miles north of Espanola, New Mexico. My mother is Santa Clara Pueblo; my father was a Navajo. I was raised in Rock Point, Arizona, until I went to school in Farmington.

WM: New Mexico?

DST: Farmington, New Mexico. My father passed away when I was eight years old, and my mother took a job at Intermountain Indian School in Brigham City, Utah, in 1952. She moved all of us up here. It was five brothers and three sisters. In between Brigham City and Santa Clara Pueblo, I graduated from Espanola High School in New Mexico. Met my husband, Wayne Robert Taylor, in Brigham City, and we were married in 1961.

WM: You met at the school, at the Intermountain School?

DST: No. His sister worked at the school. My mother worked there, so we, as children of people that worked there, had to go to public school. We could not go to the Indian School.

WM: It seems to me there was a group of Indians who met off campus for religious instruction.

DST: Well, Sister Lorraine Masters was in Brigham City, and she did work with the students at the school there.

WM: She taught catechism there in the school?

DST: I think so. All I know is she worked in Brigham City at Intermountain. She told me she did.

WM: So you went to public school in Brigham City?

DST: Yes. And to Box Elder High School.

WM: Now about your church affiliation. Were you born Catholic?

DST: I'm a cradle Catholic. My mother was Catholic. My father was Methodist.

WM: Do you remember the Christmas parties that the Catholic Women's League put on in Brigham, Intermountain School? Or weren't you allowed to go to them either?

DST: When I was in Brigham City I went to St. Henry's Church. When they had church services at the Indian School, I went to some of those. But not very many. During those teenage years it was, you know, I went when I wanted to go, otherwise I didn't go. I didn't feel the calling to be there all the time.

WM: Do you remember any sisters? They were working in Brigham City. Well, the same order of sisters as Lorraine Masters' Missionary Sisters. Do you remember any of them?

DST: I don't.

WM: Now what about your husband? Where was he born, and who were his parents?

DST: My husband's name is Wayne Robert Taylor, and he was born at Fort Duchesne, Utah. His parents were William Henry Taylor, Jr., and Della Marie Nelson. My husband is part Northern Ute. He gets some from his mother and some from his dad. They were not full-blooded Indians.

WM: Fort Duchesne, is that on the Ute Reservation?

DST: Yes, that's on the Ute Reservation.

WM: Did you ever live on the reservation?

DST: Santa Clara Pueblo. And then we lived in Arizona on the Navajo Reservation.

WM: Do you ever go down there to visit?

DST: Yes.

WM: Do you have any connections still on the reservation?

DST: On the Santa Clara Pueblo, I have sisters that live there, and a brother that lives there. And we went down this past summer. I took my two youngest daughters down. And we spent about six weeks down there.

WM: What about your husband? Does he go back?

DST: We go up to Fort Duchesne. My husband likes to fish and hunt, and he likes to go out there to do that. And we attend the powwows there.

WM: They have a powwow Fourth of July?

DST: The Fourth of July Powwow is one of the biggest ones.

WM: I went one year with the group. Did you happen to know Monsignor (Jerome C.) Stoffle?

DST: I know his name.

WM: He took a group of Catholic women from the cathedral out there one year to the powwow. That was the best fry bread I ever had in my life. After you left Brigham City, what did you do?

DST: I met my husband in Brigham City, and he moved to Salt Lake City. He got a job at United Fence Company as a fence installer. And so we moved out here. We lived Sixth South and Eighth West, but which now is Eighth West. So we just lived about a block from where we are now.

And we went to St. Patrick's off and on at that time.

DST: We're at the Chapman Library and kitty-corner from here is an apartment complex, and that used to be Riverside School. And in 1967, '68, we just lived down the street from here, and that's the elementary school that my youngest boys went to.

WM: And what did you do? You worked?

DST: No, I didn't. I stayed home. When we bought us a house Taylorsville, that's when we decided to become more involved and to go back to church as a family. I put my children in religion classes and volunteered to help with the CCD program.

WM: So you haven't actually worked outside the home at all?

DST: I did off and on things. I worked at a floral shop, and things.

WM: But you haven't made a career of any one thing.

DST: No.

WM: Raising children.

DST: Just raising my children.

WM: Do you remember any of the priests who were at St. Patrick's at the time?

DST: No, I don't.

WM: What about the priests at the parish you live in now?

DST: I go to St. Francis Xavier Parish. That's in Kearns. Where I live is like across the street from Kearns. We go to St. Francis Xavier. When we started going to church there, Father Meersman, Thomas Meersman, was the pastor. And Father (Richard) Blenner was there. He wasn't the associate pastor, but he was one that would come and say Mass on occasion, or take turns on the weekends. Father (John B.) Hart, Father (Robert B.) Head.

WM: They change frequently out there.

DST: Yes. And Father Fisher, Louis Fisher, was there.

WM: Father Hart was in Ireland for a while.

DST: Yes.

WM: Are you still in touch with him by any chance?

DST: He's at St. Joseph the Worker. So only when he comes to St. Francis. You know they have the school there now, so there are occasions when he does come.

WM: Now I'm particularly interested in CCD. What did you start doing, and what do you do now? Tell what you've done in CCD.

DST: Well, when I put my boys in CCD, they must have been like in first grade, third and fourth grade. The older ones were in a catch-up program because they hadn't made First Communion or anything.

WM: But they had been baptized?

DST: They were baptized when they were older, too. They weren't baptized when they were babies. And my youngest boy needed extra help, and so the teacher called me and asked me if I would come to class and be with him to help him along so he wouldn't get behind when he got into second grade. And that's when they prepared him for First Communion. And that's where I started coming as a helper.

WM: Now who were the teachers up there? Were they sisters or were they lay people?

DST: At that time Sister Judith Ann was the sister that was there. That was when Father Meersman was there.

WM: Who are some of the lay people you've worked with?

DST: Iris Hayman. Iris Hayman has been there for at least 30

years. She doesn't do too much now. Teachers from back at the very beginning that I can remember were Helen Howard. Her husband is Bill Howard. So that was a nice way to get started with somebody that people knew. After that I started attending basic formation classes with Sister Judith Ann, and then later on with Sister Priscilla Wilke.

WM: They were Missionary Sisters? Like Sister Lorraine Masters? Same order?

DST: I'm not sure what order they were. And as my children grew older, then I just became more involved. I had two more babies after that. When it came for CCD, I put them in the classes and ended up teaching kindergarten, first grade. I did kindergarten and first grade for ten years. Did that for ten years, and then the elementary coordinator left, and there was an opening. By then Sister Rose Frances was the sister that was the DRE there. And I was involved with the Commission of the Needy and the Food Bank then, and I one evening had gotten food for a family, and I was leaving, and she was still in her office, and I went in and talked to her. And I asked her, you know, if they'd found anybody to take that place yet. And she said, no. They had somebody in mind, but they were still looking. And I told her, you know, maybe I would be interested enough to do something a little bit different now that the kids were all in school, and I had more time. And I really did not want to go out and get a job. And so a couple of months later she called me and told me that if I still wanted the job, that I had it. So I started doing that.

WM: So how long have you been in CCD all together then?

DST: All together, around 17 years, going on 18 now. I'm a master catechist. I completed the course with Ken Doran, and I went through the course with Jenny, both of those.

WM: Jenny's gone now.

DST: And I've learned a lot. I don't think one ever stops learning about your religion. And I don't know everything. I keep saying, oh, here's another class. Do I want to go to that one?

WM: Now what about your social life at Kearns?

DST: My social life at Kearns?

WM: Do you take part in anything in the church down there? Do they have an Altar Society? What do they have?

DST: Because I'm involved in religious education at St. Francis, we have like total 450 students. So that takes up a lot of my time. I still work with Sandy Wilde with the Commission of the Needy, and we do Thanksgiving baskets and Christmas baskets now. If anybody comes by and needs food, we have a Food Pantry that we have developed. I'm usually there, so I'm usually the one who fixes up a box of food for them.

WM: Now I know, because Sister told me, that your husband takes part in all these powwows and dances. Do you?

DST: I take part in the fact that I am there. My husband is a traditional dancer. I have a boy that is now 29, and he's a traditional dancer. And a son that just turned 26, and he is a fancy dancer.

WM: A what?

DST: Fancy dancer.

WM: What's the difference?

DST: What's different is their style of dancing, in the costumes that they wear.

DST: A fancy dancer has two bustles, you know, two--the feathers that they wear. They wear two of them. They wear one up in the back, and one on the lower back side. And they do a more--faster step in their style of dancing.

WM: How did that develop?

DST: That's just a more modern type thing.

WM: It's gradually developed.

DST: Yes. Then my girls, they are both fancy shawl dancers. It's a faster-paced dance, and it's a lot of beadwork and fringe on their shawls and ribbons on their shawls. They do compete.

WM: Speaking of beadwork now, your people seem to be very gifted in doing things with their hands. Do you do beadwork?

DST: No. I do not do beadwork. My husband does make the dance bustles for himself and our sons. I work with the girls with theirs. What they wear is like a yoke which goes down their back, and its either in sequins or in beads. Beads is what it should be, but we're getting modern, and you see sequins coming in. That's what we've been using lately.

WM: They just recently had a big Indian gathering up at Salt Lake. Was your family involved in that?

DST: Yes, we were. Yes. My husband and I belong to the Salt Lake Walk-in Center Powwow Committee. With that committee we were involved in as far as what went on at the powwow, and made sure that things went according to tradition. And it was interesting. We worked with a lot of people there.

WM: Were they all Western Indians? Or did you get some tribes from back East?

DST: We had some that came from New York. There were some people there that had signed up from New York. Also Canada.

WM: What tribes up in Canada?

DST: I don't know the names. But when it comes to the Indian Walk-in Center, we are involved in the powwows that go on there. We usually make sure that there is at least one a month in the wintertime. It's more of a social gathering.

Thanksgiving and Christmas we usually have a feast where parts of the community get together, and we cook turkeys, and we have all the traditional Christmas dinners, and we feed 2,000 people.

At the Walk-in Center there's also a youth program that I am involved in. It is for children from 12 to 17, normally like seventh grade to twelfth grade. And it is a substance-abuse-prevention program. My two daughters belong to it. It is a leadership program in that they are being trained so they can go out and help other children. More like more Native American children to show them that there are alternatives to using drugs.

WM: Is alcoholism still a real problem?

DST: It is a real problem. The way somebody explained it to me one time was, like the people in the European countries, they grew up with wine for years and years. And so through the generations, it doesn't seem to affect them like it does the Native Americans. But the Native Americans have only for the last couple hundred years had that, and that's why it's such a problem.

WM: And that reminds me of something. Right now there's quite a controversy about Columbus's discovery of America, was it good or bad. How do the Indians feel about it around here? Or aren't they interested?

DST: We've tried to stress--well, I have with my family and with anybody that I've talked to--that people say he discovered America. But we know he didn't. We were here; we know that.

WM: That's generally accepted.

DST: But we just need to learn to accept that there were wrong doings that happened, like the diseases. And everybody talks about, well, he brought all these diseases to us which we didn't have before. But we just need to learn how to forgive, to be able to go on, and not hold grudges forever. I mean you can't do that.

WM: And are you succeeding? Do you feel you are succeeding with your youth program?

DST: The youth program has gone into its second year. We lose students and we get new ones off and on, mainly because we take in the whole Salt Lake Valley, and we have students from like West Jordan and the Kearns area. And we have to all come down and meet at the Walk-in Center. Sometimes transportation is a problem. But we've had good speakers come, and they've always been Native American speakers that have come and talked with the children and give them the workshops.

WM: Now let's go to your husband's activities. You told me what his job was, but has he done anything in civic activities or church activities? Let's talk about him for a minute.

DST: We both belong to Sister Lorraine Masters's group, the Native American Commission. Twice a year we have a Mass at a different church, and we bring all the Catholic Native Americans to come, and we do a procession. We bless the church. My husband usually blesses the church with the sweet grass. And they bless the Four Directions. We've done churches like St. Francis Xavier, St. Martin de Porres, St. Marguerite's Parish, and St. Theresa's, Thanksgiving last year. Usually we do one in the spring, and then we usually do one around Thanksgiving time. We have been to St. Pat's.

WM: What is your husband's particular part in this? Just attend?

DST: My husband does the blessing of the Four Directions and blesses the church, is what he does. And I just attend.

WM: And is this done in your native costume?

DST: Yes. Indian dress.

WM: I've seen his picture. Was he with the bishop for it?

DST: Yes. They did the Bicentennial.

WM: Where did he get his native costume?

DST: It was made. His vest that has the white buffalo on the back of it was made by his sister. But the feathers and that, he has made those.

WM: Do you have one?

DST: A costume?

WM: Yes.

DST: No, I don't.

WM: You just attend.

DST: It's a very difficult thing for me to explain or to do. But my children do.

DST: My husband, Bob, has always taught our children. We've showed them our culture of all the tribes: the Santa Clara Pueblo, the Navajo (as much as we know about it), and the Northern Ute. And we've tried to continue showing them as much of the reasons why we do the different activities, the different prayers, and the different dances. As they grow up it's up to them as to whether they will continue. This past summer we were down in New Mexico, as an example. My children all performed the Harvest Dance, which is done during Santa Clara Feast Day, which is August 12th. And that is a traditional dance. It is not one that is social or that anybody can do. You have to be a member of Santa Clara Pueblo to dance at it. It was a very interesting experience for my children because for one of them it was the first time they'd danced, and the other two, it had been at least five years since they had danced the dance. And it's something that I want them to know and to be able to pass on to their families and to their children. Because we don't live in New Mexico, there's something that we have to make sure that we go down there and participate in, or it will be something that would be lost.

WM: What about the Navajo part?

DST: Well, as I said, my dad died when I was eight years old.

WM: And he was--?

DST: And he was a Navajo.

WM: Where was he from, the Navajo Reservation?

DST: Tyrone, New Mexico. He worked for the Bureau of Indian Affairs in Arizona. And he was a teacher at the boarding school they had at Rock Point, Arizona. Like I said, he died when I was eight years old. We moved back to Santa Clara Pueblo, and then eventually moved to Brigham City. And so what very little I know about the Navajo Tribe is just from my friends that I associated with.

WM: I don't know how old he is--but how long does he figure he's going to go on dancing?

DST: He'll probably go on dancing for as long as he can. He's 57 now. I imagine he'll probably be able to dance for another ten years. He gets his aches and pains, but he still does it.

WM: This picture with the bishop--how was he brought into it? Who invited him? Go over the details that he enjoyed.

DST: I'm assuming that in the planning for the Mass that they had at Huntsman Center that year, that part of the planning committee, when they got together, remembered this blessing ceremony being done somewhere in Idaho, I think. And they wanted somebody around here that could do it. And Sister Lorraine Masters volunteered to get it put together. And it was through her--she contacted my husband.

[End of Interview]

