Sophia Smith Collection, Smith College
Northampton, MA

Frances Crowe

Interviewed by

Sarah Hunter

November 6 and 13, 2008
Northampton, Massachusetts

Narrator

Frances Crowe (b. 1919) grew up in Carthage, Missouri, and has worked in various places around the country doing anti-war and anti-nuclear work, including New Orleans, New York City, Rochester, and Northampton, Massachusetts. She was instrumental in the draft-resistance movement in Northampton and has done various other anti-war actions in the area.

Interviewer

Sarah Hunter is currently an undergraduate student at Hampshire College, writing her Division III project titled War and Peace in the Pioneer Valley, focusing on the local anti-war movement.

Abstract

In her oral history, Frances Crowe describes the ways that her faith has influenced her activism, at first her connections to the teachings of nonviolence within Catholicism, and then throughout her more recent life as a Quaker. She describes her relationship to feminism during the Vietnam War, and discusses the various direct actions she took against the war with other women's groups. She also describes why she feels it was important to bring the radio program Democracy Now! to the Pioneer Valley. She also spends a little bit of time on the second and third tapes talking about her earlier years in Carthage, Missouri.

Restrictions

None

Format

Interview recorded on miniDV using Sony Digital Camcorder. Three tapes, first two approximately an hour each, the last one 44 minutes.

Transcript

Transcribed by Sarah Hunter.

Bibliography and Footnote Citation Forms

Video Recording

Bibliography: Crowe, Frances. Interview by Sarah Hunter.. Video recording, November 6 and 13, 2008. Voices of Feminism Oral History Project, Sophia Smith Collection. Footnote: Frances Crowe interview by Sarah Hunter, video recording, November 6 and 13, 2008, Voices of Feminism Oral History Project, Sophia Smith Collection, tape 2.

Transcript

Bibliography: Crowe, Frances. Interview by Sarah Hunter. Transcript of video recording, November 6 and 13, 2008. Voices of Feminism Oral History Project, Sophia Smith Collection.
Footnote: Frances Crowe, interview by Sarah Hunter, transcript of video recording, November 6 and 13, 2008, Voices of Feminism Oral History Project, Sophia Smith Collection, pp. 23–24.

Women's Activism and Oral History Project
History 372, Fall 2008
Smith College
Northampton, MA

Transcript of interview conducted November 6, 2008, and November 13, 2008, with:

FRANCES CROWE
Northampton, MA

by: SARAH HUNTER

CROWE: This records auditorially as well as pictorially.

HUNTER: Yeah, yeah. It's pretty nifty, actually.

CROWE: Oh yes.

HUNTER: (adjusting camera) I'm going to plug in some headphones to make sure I'm getting sound, because that would be a bad thing not to get. But yeah, so I figure the way we could do this is you know I would love to do more than one interview because, I don't, you know, it gets tiring after a while.

CROWE: Well one thing I want to be able to do today, I want to be sure to get over today is Artelia Crawford day at Smith.

HUNTER: Uh huh.

CROWE: And, um, there's a panel where two people are talking at 1:00 at Sage Hall.

HUNTER: Oh, OK

CROWE: On organizing today, and I want to get there and give everybody a Democracy Now! card as they're going in.

HUNTER: OK, yeah, that's no problem, because I was hoping to not go on longer than about noon. So,

CROWE: OK.

HUNTER: Or even shorter, if you want.

CROWE: Yeah, OK.

HUNTER: Yeah, that, yeah, that sounds great. I was actually just listening to Democracy Now! on the way over here.

CROWE: Oh good!

HUNTER: But I- actually I wanted to ask you about that, cause I know, I was reading, um, in a previous interview, you were talking about how you had, um, broadcast it from your backyard.

CROWE: Yes.

HUNTER: And, so I just wanted to hear more about that.

CROWE: Well, yes, you know, um, after, you know, organizing against war for twenty eight years, I finally came to the conclusion that the answer was in the culture, that uh the mass media was doing such a total job of making everyone believe that they couldn't do anything and that everything was all decided and that when I heard Democracy Now! I decided I had to get it here. And I tried to get it on WFCR and they wouldn't broadcast it, they said it wasn't their kind of broadcast-programming. And, we, so, I finally decided that I had to get people addicted to Democracy Now! and that meant airing it illegally. So I worked with a co-conspirator who knew all about the technical details, and we tried first to get a high building in Northampton to broadcast it from their roof, but nobody would do it. So, I finally decided that if we threw the antenna up in the tree, that we could do it here. And after that worked I put up a tower and bought a transmitter and broadcast every day. The only time I was on the air was 4:30 to 5:30 every afternoon, and it was 103.3. We discovered that was the best frequency, and that's what Valley Free Radio is now.

So, although, you know, it was against the law, there was a fourteen thousand dollar fine if you broadcast, but I think - the thing I kept thinking of is in El Salvador with uh, the people were struggling for their rights, they had, uh, small radio stations. And as they would flee the troops at night going over the hills, they would broadcast, and I thought, oh, I think the situation is similar here, and the airwaves belong to the people, and they should be able to use it. So, uh, I went ahead, and it gave me enormous pleasure, to every afternoon, put in the disc. My co-conspirator would download it from his computer and then I'd pick up the disc from him and put it in the transmitter and it would be on the air. I had little cards that I passed out and gave 'em to as many of people to try to get a lot of people listening. And we did, you know, people discovered Amy Goodman and what she was talking about and it was direct truth, um, about what was going on in this country, and what people were doing about it, and, um, so after that we still tried to get WFCR to broadcast it because National Public radio would go many more places, and uh, so we had an alternative pledge campaign, asking people not to pledge money not to WFCR but only after they broadcast Democracy Now! And in one week we got forty thousand dollar pledged. And then, you know, WFCR got in touch with us and wanted to talk to us. They said they would download it and stream it over to the college- the UMASS, WMUA station. But I would have to get WMUA to agree to this. So it took me another year and a half to get them to agree because they were interested in only polka and sports, it seemed, and, but, they finally agreed, and now they love it of course, they're doing their fundraising of course and they say it's been very successful. And it's upgraded the station a

lot. And they were the first university station in New England to broadcast Democracy Now! And Mike Burke, you know, who is Democracy Now!'s head of station in New York started the UMass station.

Uh, anyway, after a year and a half, they agreed to take it, and so now it's on about 5 times a day with UMass and uh, WXOJ, the Northampton radio station, that started then after my station closed down and some of the folks who worked on this one decided to start- to apply for a license to broadcast. And they got it! Right, they were in- it's a good time to get a license. And I think the station is wonderful, it's all volunteer and they do some very good programming. Then we got the Northampton Cable TV station to broadcast it, and they're doing wonderful broadcasting now. They did the extended broadcasting of the election-

HUNTER: Oh yeah, yeah.

CROWE: From 7 to 1. And the extra hour yesterday morning with Amy was analyzing the election. And they're doing all kinds of interesting Free Speech, uh, programming, like last night there was a program from Chiapas with Comendate Marcos on and- it's just so refreshing! It's not corporate radio!

HUNTER: Right. Yeah, I mean that's one of the things I really like about is that I feel like there's a lot of stories missing from the mainstream media.

CROWE: Yes!

HUNTER: Yeah. Um, I mean, that's really awesome.

CROWE: And the students now at Mt. Holyoke are broadcasting Democracy Now! every day at 6:00, in the evening, they download and set it up. Because we haven't been able to get anyone at South Hadley to get it on their cable TV station. It's available on cable TV stations if people would just ask for it.

[radio turns on in the kitchen]

Oh that's the radio that goes on, I have to turn it off.

HUNTER: Oh, OK, cool.

CROWE: I haven't figured out what I need to do to stop it.

HUNTER: [Laughs] Does it just go off at the same time very day?

[Turns camera off while Crowe is in the kitchen, then back on]

CROWE: But I personally think that we have to reclaim the airways, that- and I'm sorry that AFSC doesn't take a more serious attitude towards this. But I find that the national office doesn't have a commitment to this, or the local offices.

HUNTER: No.

CROWE: I think that getting the truth in the, on the radio every day is very important in addition to getting, using the good media we have, the films, and getting people to watch them and discuss them is the way you build a movement, instead of, you know, taking out the little bits.

HUNTER: The films is like the Media Education Foundation.

CROWE: They are there, but we do it. The Northampton Committee to Stop the War is entirely in charge. They have a community room there that they, um, make available for any progressive group that is organizing, and from the very beginning I asked for it every Friday night, and we got it, and we've done it for, it's been, it'll be five years in February that we started. And we do, you know, films that expose the truth about what's going on, and then, um, equally we try to find the good stories of what people are doing to bring about change. And we- people stay and we talk and we talk. [clears throat] And we don't do refreshments because I find if we do refreshments then they sort of stop and they socialize and they don't stay focused and serious. And I see the discussions as more of a discernment, that you come together to try to go a little deeper. [clears throat]

HUNTER: Is the turnout really good for those?

CROWE: Well, you know, we have forty, sometimes fewer, sometimes more. We've had almost a hundred, um, I think uh there are chairs for about fifty. We have people sometimes sitting on the floor or in the table on the back. But we crowd in, and, and it's just there and we try to get the word out and tell people what we've been doing.

HUNTER: How did, uh, Northampton Committee to Stop the War, how long has that been active?

CROWE: Well, I think we've been going over eight years since the beginning of the war.

HUNTER: Are you a founding member?

CROWE: I'm one of the founding members.

HUNTER: Cool. Did it come out of another group you were involved in?

CROWE: Other groups?

HUNTER: Yeah.

CROWE: Well I've been involved in, since, you know, formally since 1968, when I started the Northampton Draft Information Center. But, from about oh 54-68 I was in the New England Peace and Justice Committee, and that meant that I was a contact person and the AFSC then would bring people from abroad who were in, who were

involved in organizing and um maybe have been in prison and, um, fighting for justice. They would tour them and I would come and give them room and board and I would drive them around where they would speak and make arrangements for them to speak. The radio stations, the newspaper, high schools, colleges, and had them for two or three days and then go on. And then in '68 I decided to start the Northampton Draft Information Center to do group counseling for people who were objecting or questioning whether or not they wanted to go to war in Vietnam. And I went off and took training at the Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors and came back and set up this groups every Tuesday and Thursday afternoon and Friday nights in my basement. And people came, and, you know, we always had eight, ten, to seventy-nine one Friday night.

HUNTER: Wow.

CROWE: People coming to try to figure out kind of who they were and where they were going with their lives and why. And what their options were. I gave them information about the draft and we supported them and helped them. Nobody went in the Army.

HUNTER: Wow.

CROWE: Nobody went to Canada. One person went to jail, he was an unregistered, he really wanted to take that path. We went to his trial and, uh, I corresponded with him and met him when he got out of prison, drove him home. [clears throat] So, it was very [clears throat] um rewarding work, developing a community among that group. And then after the war was over the draft ended the war wasn't over and I decided to keep the peace center open, and I did it on my own, and then AFSC asked me if I'd be a regional office. And they gave, and I was a volunteer, and they gave, they reimbursed me for expenses, and which weren't very much, a couple hundred dollars a month at the most, for paper and whatever.

HUNTER: And was that out of your home too?

CROWE: What?

HUNTER: Was that out of your home, or was that somewhere else?

CROWE: It was downstairs.

HUNTER: Oh! Wow.

CROWE: [Laughs] Yes. And so, I had, you know, a back separate entrance, and people came in. I had lots of volunteers. And, uh, now that's an apartment that is, uh, I rent. But I continued, first we were the Mobilization for Survival Working Against Nuclear Weapons and, and Nuclear Power, and then we took on issues like apartheid in South Africa, trying to stop the funding of the war in Central America, we, you know, took on major weapons systems like the B-1 bomber, and uh, in the process there were lots of arrests, when, uh, you know we were putting our bodies in the machine to stop the war.

HUNTER: I was wondering, uh, how did you get started in the uh- it seems like your first kind of anti-war, that you mentioned, activity was the draft resistance, and I was wondering how you got started in that.

CROWE: Well, I have been opposed to war, I think, after Hiroshima, I decided war was no longer the answer, and I think I, in '68, my kids were, I had two boys in high school and it seemed as though they and their friends were talking about the draft a lot and didn't know much about it, so I said I would go and take a course in Philadelphia at the Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors and do draft counseling, so I was sort of forced into it. But it was good, because I wasn't dependant on anyone else to respond. I did it myself. So, and I find, the way I work I feel, if I'm really serious and I want to do something, if I get an idea, I have to do it because you know everybody's busy and has a different agenda. This way, I can do what I need to do.

HUNTER: So when you came back from that course did you find a lot of other parents who were worried about the same thing?

CROWE: Well, no. [Laughs]

HUNTER: [Laughs]

CROWE: And I thought that well, all the ministers in town and lawyers would be interested, but they weren't, people were a little afraid and cautious, and so-

HUNTER: Why do you think that was?

CROWE: What?

HUNTER: Why do you think that was?

CROWE: Well, nobody wanted to stick their necks out. They didn't want to cut off any possible funding. They didn't want to loose any members of their congregation.

HUNTER: Mmm-hmm.

CROWE: In fact, two ministers in town came to eventually support us and one at Amherst, and they all lost their jobs.

HUNTER: Mmm.

CROWE: You know. The church isn't as progressive as [laughs] it should be!

HUNTER: Right!

CROWE: And, so, but the way I got started we didn't have Xerox machines, and the newspaper didn't want to take an ad, and so I, then we picked up hitchhikers because we didn't have the 5 college bus and the students weren't allowed to have

cars, so I just mimeographed a lot of material with directions to my house and started on Monday morning, I went out, drove back between Northampton and Amherst, spent the day talking to my passengers saying well what are you going to do about the draft, and passing my flyers back from my front seat. And, you know, I drove slow and talked fast.

HUNTER: [Laughs]

CROWE: So I had a roomful the next day.

HUNTER: Awesome! Wow that's really cool. That's interesting, I didn't realize that the colleges didn't let students have cars. Um, do you think that was like an intentional move to keep them separate from the community?

CROWE: No, no, I, I think it was just a different culture that was before Hampshire was started, and students didn't have the money to have cars. And, um, where would you put them?

HUNTER: I see.

CROWE: They didn't need them.

HUNTER: I guess I take it for granted that there's tons of student parking on campus, and that wasn't the way it always was.

CROWE: Uh-huh.

HUNTER: Um, I think what you said about technology was really interesting because one of the things I really liked about the archives was going through the notes from the meetings that were all handwritten, and they were all written very nicely, and I don't know anyone with handwriting like that today, and I think uh, how has technology changed the way that people do activism today?

CROWE: Oh I think a lot. It, it in some ways, you know, I, I, marvel at how my grandson can keep in touch with so many people, and he's driving across the country now, and he, when he left here he had you know all of his possessions in his car with his bicycle on the back, skis on top, camping stuff, and uh his iPod filled with one hundred hours of books on tape. And he started off, you know, on his way to California, listening to *The Omnivores Dilemma.*

HUNTER: [laughs]

CROWE: And you know, I can call him on the phone every day, he called me yesterday, what did I think of the election? And, and then he does couch surfing.

HUNTER: Oh yeah.

CROWE: Where he has been staying with groups of wonderful young people as he goes across the country by arranging on the Internet, and he knows what's going on all over. But I feel they don't read enough or listen, they, that they people feel they listen to Democracy Now! they catch it on their e-mail, and don't think it permeates their head as deeply as if they heard it or watched it.

HUNTER: Mmm. That's interesting.

CROWE: I feel, you know, just like you could easily delete or move on to the next one and you can always think, you know I can go back if I'm really interested.

HUNTER: Oh, I see.

CROWE: So I think it doesn't have quite the imp, imprint on people.

HUNTER: Has it changed, uh, because I was thinking when you were talking about mimeographing the directions to your house and everything and now there's Xerox machines and e-mail, so do you think it's easier to organize people now than it used to be?

CROWE: Well, it can be. You can reach new people, and organize people online to get, you know, some of these MoveOn vigils that I've read about, I went down to the City Hall steps and I found the steps were filled with people which was great, but I'm not sure that you make the connections and there can be the follow up. There's something about, like we had working groups under AFSC. We had a Disarmament Group- Working Group, a South African Working Group, and a Central America Working Group, and they met once a week or every other week, and it was a group of people who came together they got to know one another, they interacted, they had ideas they carried them out. And I think that was very, very good.

HUNTER: Yeah.

CROWE: Uh, it's very different. You know, I, I see, like Doug Renick now, is sort of is in touch with all the groups to put them in touch with each other, but the people within the groups aren't really networking seriously with each other, whereas people if they have a special interested in disarmament or militarism, or the draft- [pauses]

HUNTER: I see what you mean.

CROWE: Its, its different.

HUNTER: Yeah, yeah, that's really interesting. Um, when, when did you come to the Pioneer Valley?

CROWE: In 1951.

HUNTER: Wow.

CROWE: We moved here because our second child was born profoundly deaf, and we moved so that he could attend the Clarke School for the Deaf as a day student, so we lived up across from the school, and my husband was a physician, he was just getting out of training in radiology so he came here, and he started, he was the first board certified radiologist at the time, so he was very involved in medicine, and I was a full time homemaker- mother. And, uh, deeply committed to seeing my son who was deaf get a good education, which he did, he is really, he is very oral now, he has wonderful speech, and he has cochlear implants, and he has just retired from his job as a marine biologist with the Fish and Wildlife Service. So, it was a really good place to be.

HUNTER: Yeah, that sounds like, I learned a little bit, I took a class on sign language and we were learning about the Clarke School for the Deaf

CROWE: Which they don't approve of.

HUNTER: Not, not so much, no, it's changing now.

CROWE: At Clarke?

HUNTER: I think that the movement is changing, not that there's, there's definitely some people who are very sign only, but the woman who was teaching me, she was profoundly deaf and knew sign language but she could also speak and that worked out well for her.

CROWE: Well, it's fine if you learn signs later, but if they don't, if they're given the choice when they're young, they don't get the language, and, that's, Clarke now has kids who are oralists now who come, and they mainstream at seven or eight or nine years of age, and then they have the kids who they are given total communication, and they don't get language or speech, so their parents send them here when they're seven, eight or nine. So they have two different groups.

HUNTER: Are you still involved in, at Clarke?

CROWE: A little bit.

HUNTER: Cool. Sorry, I didn't mean to cut you off there.

CROWE: No, no.

HUNTER: Um, so, before you moved here was your son in public schools somewhere else?

CROWE: No, no, he was only eighteen months old when we moved here, he was very young, and then he went to the Smith College campus preschool program, and then he started Clarke when he was four.

HUNTER: Cool. Where did you move from?

CROWE: We were living in Hartford and Tom had just finished his training in Rochester, and we went to Hartford, for, uh, he had a job at the St. Francis Hospital at Hartford, and it was during this time that we discovered that Jarlof was deaf. So

HUNTER: Does anybody know why, he, he-

CROWE: What?

HUNTER: Do they know why he became deaf?

CROWE: We now know that he, um, has a gene for deafness.

HUNTER: Oh OK.

CROWE: Much later, he finally was tested, when the DNA was made available. When the DNA testing was ma- so apparently my husband and I are both carrying recessive genes for deafness.

HUNTER: Oh, Ok. Um, but all your other kids are hearing, yes?

CROWE: Yes.

HUNTER: How many children did you have?

CROWE: Um…

HUNTER: Or do you have [Laughs].

CROWE: [Laughs] Three.

HUNTER: It's not really a past tense question. [Laughs]

CROWE: Caltha, our daughter, the oldest, graduated from Smith, and she's been an elementary school educator, and now she's deeply involved in the responsive classroom, which is kind of a nonviolent approach to the classroom, where you make a group of the kids in the classroom, they, it's a philosophy of having the children be responsible for one another's learning, and it's been very widely accepted and she's one of their chief trainers, and she's just written a book, it's about to be published about her work, and uh, and our youngest son is an orthopedic surgeon up in Maine.

HUNTER: Cool. Were they, were your kids really involved with you, in the Draft Resistance as well?

CROWE: Well, um, in, no, they weren't, I mean, Caltha was, did draft work. I don't' call it draft resistance, I think it's resistance to war, you know.

HUNTER: Oh, OK.

CROWE: And, um, Caltha was, after she graduated from Smith she was living in New Haven, and she did some anti-war, anti-draft work, but then she, you know, got very involved in being a public school teacher with a long commute, and she had no time.

HUNTER: Mmm.

CROWE: They're very supportive, but they have no time. And our son in Maine, he's also extremely busy, with three children. His son was the one who was just here, who was driving across the country, and they're great kids, and they're doing what they can, and he graduated from American University in cultural anthropology, and, then, went to work for a year in new Orleans for Americorp, and now he's going out west to try and figure out what he can do.

HUNTER: That's awesome. Um, I'm just gonna grab my, my list here, that I forgot to get out a second ago. Um….oh, here's something I was wondering about. So when you were doing the war resistance work which was in the late sixties, right, '68 was when you said you started?

CROWE: 68 was when we started.

HUNTER: Um, that was like the same time that second-wave feminism was getting to be really big.

CROWE: What?

HUNTER: Second wave feminism? I was looking, and I found a lot of groups around here, second wave feminist groups in particular and I was wondering, um, if that had an impact on how you thought about war and activism?

CROWE: Well, it, uhm, we had a lot of the people who were [clears throat] um later became very active in the feminist movement had worked with us. Before I had started the draft information center, I was very active in the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom here, and the SANE Nuclear Policy Groups, and most of us in those groups had small children, we didn't have jobs outside the home, we worked on these issues, we would bring our younger kids to the meetings in the morning and have projects like give them a paintbrush instead of a, of a gun, and we'd plan high school conferences for kids about war and peace issues. But then when the women's movement started, a lot of those women, you know, decided they had to go back to school or get a job, and they were lost to the peace movement in a sense.

HUNTER: Interesting. So did you see the women's movement then as limiting what women could do in the peace movement?

CROWE: Well, it certainly did. And, uh, it took them out so that they were more concerned about their future.

HUNTER: I see.

CROWE: And it was uh hard. I, but, I felt that- I was in a women's support group, I felt my work instead of going out and getting an advanced degree or getting a job that paid, my husband could support me and I was going to continue doing the anti-war work-

HUNTER: Right.

CROWE: -that for me was really important. But, and then, you know I was involved with the early days of the, um, feminist movement in Northampton. We had a free store it was down where Norman's Bakery is.

HUNTER: Oh, OK.

CROWE: And we had upstairs I would do slide-shows on the B-1 bomber or the arsenal of democracy, all the weapons we were using to, uh, promote the empire round the world. And we did actions, great actions, together against, there was one action that we did against Honeywell that was making napalm dropping in Vietnam and they were doing a dinner at the Hotel Northampton, and uh, because they were selling land in Florida and they had invited people to come and we, this was really great action, so it was the anti-Honeywell demonstration, we rented a room in the front of the Hotel Northampton right over the front door and I rented it under the name of Lucy Stone, and we moved in after noon and put all of our equipment in the room for the dress like Vietnamese women with our red paint, and so forth, and we had arranged with someone who was a waitress at the hotel to put by all of the plates our flyers about what Honeywell was really doing and they weren't trusted, and I remember we got two people to go in and play as if they were straight, a man and a woman, and they, they went to our free store together, all suited up so they would look like regular people. [Chuckles]

HUNTER: [Chuckles]

CROWE: At one point, during the dinner before we started the slideshow, we came out of the room upstairs moaning, with our conical hats and our black pajamas and our white paint on our faces and went through the room moaning and we disrupted it totally, totally, they had to to absolutely give up and leave.

HUNTER: Awesome.

CROWE: And we had also in front we had a vigil going on and lots of good signs and it was a fun event.

HUNTER: Yeah, that sounds so powerful.

CROWE: It was very powerful.

HUNTER: So, I just think it's interesting that you were dressed up as women, and the effect that war has on women is so-

CROWE: With Vietnam, yes, we always identified with the women, the victims of the war.

HUNTER: Do you think that was different, um, for your group in particular than the anti-war movement in general at that point? [pause] I mean, it just doesn't seem like something I saw, in studying the resistance to the war I don't see a lot of identification with the women, or the people in Vietnam in particular, but especially the women.

CROWE: Oh. That's interesting. I hadn't really thought about that, but that was- We had a really strong anti-war women's group here that I think kind of grew out of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, and we used to go down every Monday morning to the Westover Air Force Base to leaflet, to try to stop people who went there, it was the largest SAB base of this country. And do you know Jean Grossholtz, do you know her from-

HUNTER: Mmm-mm. [negative]

CROWE: She was a professor of political science and women's studies at Mt. Holyoke, and she would go with us, and we decided in 1973 that we would go down with our Women Against the War Group outfits and on International Women's Day we would be there reading the Vietnamese women's poetry, and at some point we decided to go out and blockade the gate, and we knelt down facing the gate, and I think many of us were crying, we were so into our roles, and um it was interesting because there was an airman from Budapell, Thailand, who was back on R and R at Westover, and he was told to go out and he was given a AK-47 I think in case we came over the line to shoot us. And, later he told me that seeing us dressed as Vietnamese was the first time he'd really thought about who he was bombing. When he bombed he was only watching the target as the lines were crossing each other. And it was after seeing us and how seriously we were into our role that that night he was watching *West Side Story* with his wife on television and he started crying. And he couldn't really stop and the next day as he flew back to Budapell, Thailand, and he couldn't really figure out what was wrong until he got to Thailand. And he discovered that he really couldn't fly again, bombing people, so he went in and applied, you know, he said I can't return to active duty and they said, well, they sent him to see the chaplain and the psychiatrist and then I heard on the radio later that Captain Donald Dawson had refused to fly in Budapell Thailand and he was being court martialed, and his mother from Danbury, Connecticut came on the radio and said, my son is not a CO, he would have fought in World War II. Well I couldn't get to the phone fast enough-

HUNTER: [laughs]

CROWE: I asked for all the names of the Dawsons in Danbury and I started dialing them. And the first one I got, I asked for a Lieutenant Donald Dawson, and the person who answered the phone, she said he's in Budapell, Thailand, and I said you're the person I want, I just heard on the radio that your son is not a conscientious objector because he would have fought in World War II. He would never know what he would have done in World War II. He wasn't alive then. And he has to answer only about the war facing him now, and I said if you would give me his APO address I want to send him some material. So she gave it to me. So I rushed downstairs to the office and I got a big package of information and I sent it to him airmail special delivery, which he got when he was getting on the plane to come home.

HUNTER: Wow.

CROWE: And so, you know, two days, three days later, he called me from Westover where he was in the brig.

HUNTER: Wow.

CROWE: And so I started working with him, and he was the first pilot to get a CO discharge.

HUNTER: That's really incredible.

CROWE: Isn't that incredible?

HUNTER: That really is.

CROWE: For the women. Because we personalized it.

HUNTER: Right, right You brought it home to him in a way that even fighting in it couldn't have brought it home to him.

CROWE: Yes.

HUNTER: But it's interesting, because I was reading in interviews with people in the Air Force, they talk particularly of feeling very detached from the whole experience because they're flying over these villages and bombing, and they don't know who gets killed and they don't see anybody, so it's really, it's really awesome that you could come up with a performance that would bring that- uh-

CROWE: That's right.

HUNTER: To his face, yeah.

CROWE: And-

HUNTER: Especially at the Air Force Base.

CROWE: And then, you know, they came back in body bags but they won't let us see those.

HUNTER: Yeah.

CROWE: And people had, like, all of these people in Afghanistan were bombed yesterday, a wedding party, sixty-eight people were killed.

HUNTER: I just heard that, yeah.

CROWE: And another- but people don't know what it looks like.

HUNTER: Yeah, and that's very engineered I think.

CROWE: Oh, yes.

HUNTER: And now we're back to Democracy Now!

CROWE: Yes.

HUNTER: Um, and it's all connected, that's, that's really- oh, I thing I was going to ask recently about that base around that time period, uh, and this is something I've been trying to figure out, there's a, there was the GI coffee house movement, and there was a coffee house down there called Off the Runway, and uh, and it was closed in 1971 for health code violations- were you familiar with that at all?

CROWE: Well we were aware that it was down there.

HUNTER: I would love to speak to somebody at some point who might know about that.

CROWE: Jean Grossholtz might a person. She's still around, she's over in South Hadley.

HUNTER: OK, how do you spell her last name, I'll see if I can look her up.

CROWE: G-R-O-S-S-H-O-L-T-Z. Jean.

HUNTER: Ok, yeah, I will, I will look her up. It would be really neat to speak to someone who remembers that because I think that's another part of the movement that people forget, or who are intentionally told to forget.

CROWE: I don't think it was open very long or very active.

HUNTER: It wasn't? Oh.

CROWE: And you know, some of us went down and we had little stickers we put in the toilets around, we got- men to do that.

HUNTER: [chuckles]

CROWE: But now you could go down, and we tried leafleting and we went to the grocery stores around, Big Y and Stop and Shop, and we put stickers around and, sure, people would talk to you and they're opposed to the war and their family will tell you all the things about their healthcare that they're not getting, but nobody will leave.

HUNTER: It seems like, um, from what I'm learning about and you can tell me if I'm wrong about this, but it seems like the resistance during the Vietnam war was a lot more centrally organized, you know, you could, it was a lot more visible, there were a lot more protests that were put on TV that you could see.

CROWE: Because everybody was involved, there was a draft. And there was a lottery. And, you know, people we had senators like Wayne Morse who were speaking out on the evening news, they carried it! The House Senate Hearings! And people knew. Now everything is hidden. And, uh, most people docily go on paying for it.

HUNTER: And it seems like, uh, a lot of people who are against it, especially the service personnel who are against it, think they're the only ones, you know, and they think they are the only ones having issues with it, so they don't try to organize, or when they do it's squelched.

CROWE: I think the Winter Soldier hearings have been very successful.

HUNTER: Yeah.

CROWE: And I don't think they can squelch it very much now, and I think that everybody's just trying to survive, and I know that in Iraq many of the people they go out and serve hide all day, or go out in their Humvees or their tanks and sit where they won't get any fire. They're not participating very much in the war, they're trying not to.

HUNTER: Yeah, yeah, that's really, I'm hoping we're coming to a place where that's going to be more spoken about, more publicized.

CROWE: Yes, well last night did you hear Camila Mejia-

HUNTER: Yes! Did you go to the thing at Holyoke, or at-

CROWE: No, I heard him last year when he was over in South Hadley, so I didn't go this time around. Was he good?

HUNTER: He was very good.

CROWE: He's excellent.

HUNTER: It was a real pleasure to get to see him speak. I tried to talk to him afterwards, but he strikes me as a guy who doesn't really talk very much.

CROWE: No, no, I tried to talk to him too, and particularly with his Nicaraguan connection, because I'd been very involved.

HUNTER: Yeah.

CROWE: He doesn't want to go there.

HUNTER: Yeah, he doesn't, no, he didn't, yeah I asked him a question during the Q and A, and he very lightly scratched the surface on it.

CROWE: Yeah. The book is very good.

HUNTER: I love the book, yeah, I read it all in one day.

CROWE: Did you?

HUNTER: It was really intense. Yeah, he's a great writer and a great speaker but I think he's just a quiet person usually.

CROWE: Yes. Have you met Tyler Boudreau?

HUNTER: I have, yes, I went to his book signing a little while ago.

CROWE: Yes.

HUNTER: And I actually worked with Matthew Mitchell for a while who's a local artist who's doing a project, he's painting portraits of veterans. And I was his intern for about a year and I got to know a lot of people through that. Tyler is one of the people I've been, I keep running into. Um, I would love to talk to him but he seems very, um, not hard to approach but just very-

CROWE: Tyler?

HUNTER: Yeah, I'm just, I'm just kind of afraid [laughs]

CROWE: Well, he's getting more courage. You know, and his book is extremely good.

HUNTER: Yeah, his book is great.

CROWE: And he came like yesterday morning, or noon, we have a vigil downtown, that we organized to moan and organize or celebrate and organize and he came, it's the first time he came to a vigil.

HUNTER: Wow.

CROWE: So, you know, he's trying to find his way.

HUNTER: Yeah, are you in touch with him frequently?

CROWE: Yes, well.

HUNTER: Just kind of when you run into him?

CROWE: Uh huh.

HUNTER: Well that's, that's really cool, I feel like everyone I speak to around here knows you. Everyone I've been talking to about this project has been like talk to Frances Crowe and I'm like, I'm going to, but I want to talk to you too.

CROWE: Yes, well I've been around a long time.

HUNTER: Yeah. And, um, let me make sure we have time on the tape. Do you want to keep going a little longer?

CROWE: Sure.

HUNTER: Cause we have twelve minutes on this tape.

CROWE: OK.

HUNTER: And then we can either stop and get back to it later, or put in another tape, whichever one you feel more like doing. But I was, I was wondering, one of the goals of my Division III that I want to do is I want to write a creative nonfiction piece about all this that really is going to bring readers into this area, I love the Pioneer Valley, I love living here, I don't think I'm ever going to leave. So I want to draw people in the way that I was drawn in. So I wonder if you could, like, describe how Northampton was like when you first got here and how it has changed.

CROWE: Oh. Well, you know, if- we had a Woolworth's on Main Street, and they had flags that they were trying to sell in the window of uh, what is it, the Southern flag, that isn't good.

HUNTER: Oh, the Confederate flag.

CROWE: The Confederate flag! In the window.

HUNTER: In Massachusetts?

CROWE: Yes. And some of us tried very hard to get them to take them out, in fact there was a professor at Smith of Af- African American studies I think who decided she didn't want to stay here because of that.

HUNTER: Wow.

CROWE: So, but, uh, you know there was a grocery store on Main Street, and there was a Teppers around the corner which was a wonderful place where you could get nothing over a dollar I think, all these little things. But there were a lot of empty buildings upstairs, it was kind of a renaissance when people came in and bought those buildings and, and upgraded them. And, uh, I feel I'd like to see it go back where we would have maybe a little branch library downtown where people could go in, get a cup of coffee in the morning, read a couple of newspapers, get on the internet. And then I'd like to see repair shops- we had a canning kitchen, that was one good thing from the women's movement here.

HUNTER: Oh wow.

CROWE: We started a canning kitchen that was down where the old law library is now, where people could take their bushel of tomatoes and get help in canning them, safely. And all kinds of vegetables.

HUNTER: That's so cool

CROWE: And it would be good, like, you know, I have things, like electrical things that need repairing, and we had Ed's Electric, but he doesn't seem to be around anymore, so I'm trying to talk Ruthie and the Pedal People into, uh, try to organize a repair shop downtown.

HUNTER: Yeah.

CROWE: But it's all this trendy expensive stuff, I can't afford to shop on Main Street and Deals and Steals they've opened a new place down on Strong Avenue.

HUNTER: I thought that was such a great sign of the economic times that Deals and Steals grew, like, got twice as big as it was.

CROWE: Right, isn't that good?

HUNTER: Like nobody can afford to buy anything anymore, not even the rich people or the college students, and they all have to go to Deals and Steals.

CROWE: Yes.

HUNTER: But yes, I do like their new store a lot, it's huge.

CROWE: But, you know and I shop locally only and, so I don't go to Wal-Marts and I try very much not to shop out of town and eat locally and so it's very different, all these expensive restaurants.

HUNTER: Yeah, I even noticed yesterday, even at a restaurant, I was in Amherst, actually and I was at the Black Sheep, and that's pretty expensive, but they just added an extra dollar to their sandwiches, it's 7.25 for a sandwich right now.

CROWE: Really?

HUNTER: It's crazy, it was like my favorite little café and now it's too expensive to go to anymore.

CROWE: Yes.

HUNTER: But yeah, so do you think that, I mean, I, I, I have heard jokes that there's the people who call Northampton Noho, and the people who call it 'Hamp, you know, and that's like the two groups, do you think that's an accurate-

CROWE: Oh, well who are the Noho people?

HUNTER: You know, like the trendy college student-

CROWE: Oh, and the 'Hamp are the old-

HUNTER: Are the old people who have been here.

CROWE: Well, that's probably true, and I think probably some of the old timers were pretty political and they were deeply embedded in the public education and things are changing and they're still trying to hang on, but, uh, the mayor for one is-

HUNTER: Yeah, I was actually going to ask what you thought about the panhandling, the, the, ordinance.

CROWE: Yes, that's crazy.

HUNTER: Isn't that crazy?

CROWE: Yes.

HUNTER: Oh, it makes me so mad.

CROWE: But you know I have been working against the Hilton Garden Inn I think if they built that it would be dreadful, taking out Pulaski Park with another hotel? Which will become an albatross in the future. I think what we need is moderate income housing down there that will be first of all would be sent, they could be condos that would be sold to people who work in Northampton, there are lots of people who can't afford to live and work in Northampton, teachers, nurses, firefighters, and they should all be able to live here.

HUNTER: Yeah.

CROWE: And not just, you know, the people who move up from New York or out from Boston.

HUNTER: I definitely feel like in Northampton, it feels to me like a very urban place, but I don't think it's always been like that. And I spend a lot of time in Greenfield, I really like Greenfield a lot, and people tell me that Greenfield was a lot like what Northampton was like twenty years ago.

CROWE: Yes, but you know the college was always very important, but when we moved here we looked at several other places. We could have gone to St. Louis, there was a good school for the deaf, and Cleveland, Ohio, but there was something about the influence of the college, and I felt that, and every Saturday night they had free films over in Sage Hall and they were foreign films that were very interesting, there was one woman who was in charge of it and she always did interesting things and there were more interesting speakers that offered a lot to the community, and many of us who lived here, subscribed to the weekly calendar events at Smith, and now I don't even think they have one anymore, it's online I guess if you can find it.

HUNTER: Right [laughs].

CROWE: [laughs]

HUNTER: Yeah, do you think that Smith has changed a lot in your observation, from the time that you've been here?

CROWE: It has changed, yes.

HUNTER: Like, in a, in what ways do you think?

CROWE: Like, you know, there used to be that there were very few women who taught there and they advertised it, they had such a heavy faculty of men teachers and it, um, and it's much more now I think part of the community, with it's presence, although Mr. Mendenhall was very good when he was here in the late 60's, and his wife, you know, was arrested with us protesting the war at Westover. And, uh, so, you know, now I think the faculty at Smith are much more afraid, everybody is looking for government grants, maybe, and they are pretty well paid so they're going off to France or Italy for January, summers.

HUNTER: Yeah. So you don't think they're as involved locally as they used to be?

CROWE: I don't think that they are.

HUNTER: Yeah. Let me actually switch this tape over, I wouldn't want it to cut out early. If I can figure out how to.

[TAPE ENDS]

[NEW TAPE- 11/13/08]

HUNTER: So what I was thinking about doing was talking a little bit more about your earlier life, um, you know, where you grew up and your parents and everything. And,

uh, I was also interested in how you got into Quakerism, we didn't really talk about that, and I'm really interested in that just personally anyway.

CROWE: Mmm-hmm

HUNTER: And I also wanted to hear more about, you mentioned that you started becoming anti-war after the bombing of Hiroshima, and I'd like to hear more about that. So those three things are like the big things that I thought we could go over, but we can start wherever you want.

CROWE: Well I'll start with the earlier part of my life.

HUNTER: OK.

CROWE: Well, I was born in Carthage, Missouri, which is a small, kind of middle class town in southwest Missouri, south of the Mason-Dixon line. And there was a lot of racism there I think. And classism, I think, more than even classism. And, I had kind of an interesting background I think. I had a real, um, two different classes came to produce me. My father's family were old New Englanders, Presbyterian ministers, uh, my name was Hyde, and they um, one was a minister for many years over in Lee, Massachusetts. They all went to Yale. And my grandfather went to Williams. And his father had been an acting president of Williams at one time. And he taught there. And he married a woman from Ireland, Lagos, Ireland, and they moved out to Missouri, and it was never clear why they moved out to this, on this very poor land outside of Carthage, but I suspect it was the clash of classes there, and I've always kind of wondered if she had perhaps been an employee in their room.

HUNTER: Oh, I see.

CROWE: And also, that was the time of the big flu epidemic and people were leaving New England, but he settled on the land outside of Carthage, very poor land, and he was teaching in an elementary country school, and trying to make a living, and I think it was hard for them really, she worked very hard. She was Catholic in this Presbyterian background. They had five children and um, when he was probably under sixty years of age, he broke his hip, which meant that my grandfather was really an invalid for the rest of his life, he got around on crutches, and he couldn't do very much work. And at that time, the Catholic priest came out to visit him, I think once a month or so and they talked, and he found him very interesting, and it was in that period that he really was converted to Catholicism. Um, he was, I think in many ways kind of above the community he felt. He, uh, the relatives in New England sent him the Atlantic Monthly, and Harpers, and the New York Times weekend edition, so that was his, his reading was more oriented towards New England, though he was living out there, and I think kind of isolated alone. And so that my father came to Catholicism in his middle years, and he was very religious, uh, that is he didn't talk about religion but he was very, he was very respectful of the church. He always took off his hat when he passed the Catholic church. And there was a small congregation of Catholics who attended the Catholic church.

And my mother, uh, she was the daughter of one of nine of German farmers down in Sarcoxie, Missouri, which was maybe thirty miles farther south. And they were hardworking and prosperous farmers. And she grew up with more of a sense of community in her life, she, I think, missed the threshing sessions and the big potlucks when all of the neighbors came together to celebrate the harvest and share the work together. Uh. When she met my father and came to live in Carthage, and he at that time had, uh, my father had taken training in plumbing and heating, and he opened his, he started working for a plumber who did plumbing and heating, and he eventually bought him out and had his own business, whereas he had two brothers who went into the greenhouse business and that was new, you know, turn of the century, people were growing things under glass, and one, my uncle in Carthage had the largest greenhouse under glass.

HUNTER: Wow.

CROWE: And we always bragged about four and a half acres, and another went over in Pittsburg, Kansas, but he sent, I think, every day, in the winter, half a carload of roses and of, uh, what else did he- to Chicago, every day. It was flowers that he grew, not vegetables, but roses were the big crop that they were doing indoors. Uh, so it was an interesting union of my father and my mother, and I was brought up as a Catholic, and, but there was no Catholic school and we were only maybe thirty Catholic families in Carthage, and there wasn't much of a sense of community around the church. And there was, you know, an active Ku Klux Klan in the area, and my father as a businessman felt he had to be very quiet and obedient to the norm. And he also started a flower shop, he got one of the stores downtown right off the square, within the county seat, beautiful little courthouse right by the town square, and with all the local, uh, businesses, and he had on one side was the plumbing and heating and the other side was the florist shop. And it also was the headquarters for the outdoor advertising where they built these big billboards on the highway which I was very opposed to. [Laughs]

HUNTER: [Laughs]

CROWE: And they advertised, you know, the major corporations, and it was the beginning of advertising outdoors. But I grew up, you know, my mother was a fulltime housewife, mother, with uh four girls in the family. And, uh, I think my father was very disappoint that he did not have a son. And he, I think he was the second and so he sort of looked at- I tried to fulfilled the role of being a son to my father, and then my youngest sister also did that. Whereas I was very interested in, uh, not in a playhouse that he had built for us, but I wanted a trapeze, and uh I went to camp when I was young, so my sister and I went to this Y camp for two weeks, and she got homesick on the third day my parents came and took her home, and I loved it, and I stayed for two more weeks. [chuckles]

HUNTER: [Laughs]

CROWE: And so I was kind of liberated from Carthage by camp. And then every summer after that I went away to camps, including I became a counselor when I was in college and went to camps in different parts of the country where I worked. And when I went to college the first two years, that, a women's college, Missouri-Stevens, I majored in physical education, because girls weren't allowed to take physical education in high school, and I lobbied for phys ed and lobbied and position drived, and I got a lot of people to sign, including the superintendent's daughter who worked for us, but when we took it to the board of education. They were very receptive, and they said it was great we were interested in this, but alas there was no money- oh, they were building a new gym for the boys. [laughs]

HUNTER: Right. [laughs]

CROWE: But I think that I was kind of born a rebel. Uh, I didn't want to fit into the role that, uh, they had, the culture was demanding of me. And, uh, so, I don't, I challenged my father at one point on killing. There was a- we used to walk every place in Carthage and use our family car only on Sundays, uh, and I was walking down town with my mother and I noticed that around the cor- the jail, they were building a big fence, a wooden fence and I asked why they were doing that and she said she didn't know, or something, they wanted to I guess, that was what they decided to do. But then I kind of felt she was being evasive, and that night I heard my father talking to a neighbor as they were watering their gardens. Uh, the neighbor asked him if he was going to get a ticket to go to the hanging, and I asked more about that. I discovered that a black man was being hung, and that people were getting tickets to go. Well my father said that he would never do anything like that, and I said that I was opposed to killing people and I took it so far that I was opposed to killing and war. Where I got that I didn't know. Well he said you wouldn't say that if you had lived through World War One. Well we had to eat brown sugar and brown flour. We couldn't have refined food. Well that was his great sacrifice.

HUNTER: That was his example?

CROWE: So, uh, I, you know my Catholic education was just catechism, and I, when I made my first communion I think I was pretty devout and sincere but by the time I got to college, and I was certainly a junior in college, I was raising serious questions about- it seemed to me the church was very hypocritical, that they were, you know, they were opposed to violence and killing but they were sanctioning war. There were just many things. The way they treated women, I think I was beginning to pick up on. So I just felt the church was very hypocritical and I was being hypocritical, and I just literally walked out of a mass and never went back. But, uh, my senior year in college I was attracted to going to a discernment discussion group on Friday nights held at the St. Thomas Moore House in uh Syracuse University, where I uh really wanted to face this and talk it through and find out where I was going spiritually, because I was interested in, in, having kind of a spiritual life. And that's where I met my husband. He was a senior in medical school and he lived at the St. Thomas Moore House and got his room by setting up the chairs and doing things around the house, but he also participated in the groups, and we were both kind of on the same page in the discussion and that's how we got

to become better friends and spent more time outside talking about our values and where we were going with our lives. And so, um, after that I didn't really identify with any religion. And I was working in New York City, living at International House, and um working at the [unknown name] Laboratories in the women's personnel department during the war- this was World War II. And I, I enjoyed going to St. Catherine's Cathedrals during Christmas or Easter, but that was kind of it, I didn't seem to need anything. And after we were married I certainly wasn't in the church and I-

HUNTER: Were you married in the church?

CROWE: We were married in the church. We were married down in Jefferson Barracks in New Orleans, uh, because my husband really wanted to be, uh, not, he didn't want to be married in the church but he wanted, he hadn't told his parents where he stood, religiously, and he wanted to keep up the façade of being a catholic, and his brother came to the wedding, it was just sort of the three of us, and he was in the Army and was on a, was a major in the medical corps and came to New Orleans once a month, he was on the troop transport, and so it was decided that I would go to New Orleans and we would be married and I would live there and so that's what we did. And we didn't really face religion until we had children and when we came we had gotten to know um a couple who were Quakers in Rochester, NY, when he was a resident in radiology at Stern Memorial Hospital, and then, which, we never went to a Quaker meeting but we liked Dane and Anne Proux a lot and we were pretty close friends, and then when we came to Northampton to live and to send our son to the Clarke School for the Deaf as a day student, we were beginning to think about their religious education, their spiritual education. And Tom went to a talk by a Quaker Bill Ross, who was teaching physics at Smith, and there was something, a men's club called the Lennard Club that met once a month downtown and they had lunch and they would have speakers and Bill talked about Quakerism and Tom came home and said he was interested in going to a Quaker meeting. So we went the next Sunday to a Quaker meeting which was held, actually, at Smith college and where we went is now the admissions office down by Paradise Pond across from the Chapel, and the Quakers here was the Middle Connecticut Valley Friends, and one Sunday they would meet in Northampton, and one Sunday in Hadley, and then Amherst and then Greenfield, and we would travel around, and we would meet and have a potluck lunch, and I know someone told me who was a member of the meeting here that day said that I came and I had the children and went along with it when they went out to play and I asked Alison Kalpel, the other person who watched the children, if the Quakers were really politically active did they act on their beliefs or did they only talk about them? [chuckles]

HUNTER: [Laughs]

CROWE: So I clearly was looking for a community where I could express my uh feelings about war and put them into uh work. And um, so, that's been, because I had when during the um World War II, I had really been gung ho after Pearl Harbor, I was working in this women's college in Missouri that I had gone to for the first two years as a dorm counselor, at the time of Pearl Harbor all the students that were so

caught up in the drama of that, and I had a couple who had been in my dormitory who's fathers were in Pearl Harbor, were in Hawaii. No, not in Hawaii, the Philippines.

HUNTER: No, Pearl Harbor's in Hawaii.

CROWE: Yes. So, anyway, um, I felt, you know I couldn't stay there. I had to get deeply involved in the effort. So I saw this article in the *New York Times*, education section, about an engineered science war training course that they were doing that summer at Mt. Holyoke for women who were interested in psychology to go into industry to replace the men who were going off to war and I thought, that's what I wanted to do. I had thought about the WACs and the WAVEs and the Red Cross but there was something about the militarism that I was opposed to. I had sort of forgotten about my pacifism I think. But the militarism I couldn't quite accept. And the Red Cross, I thought if you're serious why are you just entertaining? I didn't want to spend my time entertaining.

HUNTER: Right.

CROWE: So I took the course at Mt Holyoke and went to New York to work for [name] Laboratory in the women's personnel department and I was doing, living at International House and I was a graduate student at Columbia at first, and then you know I, I felt that wasn't really challenging enough, so I went to the New School of Social Research which was just beginning then, and I took some interesting courses then, and then I went to a school called the Jefferson School which was down on Sixth Avenue, where we studied Soviet propaganda and it was really uh a very progressive school where I was challenged deeply, but I started really reading critically and there was a wonderful little four page newspaper then called PM that came out every afternoon that was edited by some very progressive people, who had, who would be a like a Chomsky paper now, and I read that religiously and I was really beginning to question our participation in the war and Tom and I were corresponding and he was down there in the Panama Canal Zone, guarding the Canal Zone, or as he said taking care of the blisters on the feet of the Puerto Rican soldiers who were placed down there- he was working as a physician in the hospital. And he had time to read and we were reading the same things and talking and discussing things so that by the time I was married and living in New Orleans I was a new bride, ironing a placemat in the apartment when I heard on the radio that they dropped the bomb on Hiroshima. And I knew, with the description of what it was that it was really bad and because Tom was planning to go into radiology, he was very interested and he had told me that the commander of his ship in the navy knew something about a bomb that we were making that was about to be dropped that would change the course of history. So then I literally unplugged the iron and went out looking for a Peace Center in New Orleans. And I didn't find one. But I ended up in a used bookstore trying to find something to read on nonviolence, and the man who owned the store suggested I start with Tolstoy so I started reading a collection of Tolstoy's essays on war and violence, and you know that kind of set my direction. But you know it took a while then when the war was over and Tom came back and we went from Rochester and hew as deeply involved in his training,

and I was all ready to organize Rochester against nuclear weapons, and lo and behold the department was really run by people who had worked on the Manhattan project. Staff Warren, who had been one of the big people of the Manhattan project, so that I was muzzled right away I had to be very careful so that the most progressive thing I did was try, I joined a food co-op, which was you know sort of the beginning of emerging food co-ops, but it was on the other side of the town and we didn't have a car, and the only way I could get there was on the bus and I soon had two children and I couldn't do that on the bus, so I dropped out of the food co-op, but it wasn't really till I got to Northampton then and began to get myself organized that I began to think about what I could do about nuclear weapons, and Tom also was very interested in the effects of radiation, and I was reading Norman Cousins who was writing in the Saturday Review of Literature, and uh other things, and he was watching the fallout rain and writing letters to the editor about the dangers, which was really pretty progressive for a doctor. He was then the radiologist, the first board certified radiologist in Northampton who was taking a stand like that.

HUNTER: It was a dangerous time to do that too.

CROWE: It was!

HUNTER: I mean he could have been blacklisted and all sorts of things.

CROWE: Yes. And he was very forthright, he didn't feel comfortable vigling, he vigiled once with me and he said it feels too much like you were standing polishing each others haloes, and he was arrested with me once down in Springfield when we were in the Federal Center opposing the embargo of Nicaragua and, uh, along with seventy five other people, but he paid his fine and didn't go to court, and I went to court and served, didn't pay my fine and served a week in Framingham, but it was a different style. But he also at that time started Physicians for Social Responsibility and we together went to the first bit PSR conference in Cambridge. And we were both just numb after Saturday with the impact of all of that, we were just drained and totally numb. But then I worked with a group to start a SANE nuclear policy committee here and a Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, and I met Trudy Huntington through the Quakers here at Northampton, and she was a great spirit from Swarthmore, from a Quaker family and she her interest was the Amish, she had gotten her PhD in cultural anthropology and spoke a lot about the Amish.

HUNTER: Oh, interesting.

CROWE: But together we set out little invitations I remember it was on little Crane stationary that said Mrs. Thomas J. Crowe on the cover and inside we invited women to come to our tea at my house on a certain day. And I think we we invited seventy-nine women and seventy-nine women came.

HUNTER: Wow, my goodness!

CROWE: And that was our first meeting of Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, which, you know was very active for a number of years here. We, mostly it was women who's were full time mothers and we would have work groups meeting at one another's homes every morning and I remember we had one when for chi- we were looking at children's toys when we called give them a paintbrush instead of a gun, where we were working with children and nonviolence and we had high school conferences, which were, you know, wonderful, and we did a big ad, full page ad in the Gazette, I think it was in about 1960, it was against nuclear weapons.

HUNTER: Oh! I think I saw that. It was in your, in your papers!

CROWE: Yes! And I think the only person, two people who signed that who are still living maybe would be Ruth Hawkins and Adele Steinberg.

HUNTER: Yeah, I was looking for people I know and then I realized that 1960, is, is uh, actually pretty long ago.

CROWE: Yes, and Pruscilla Frond was on that list and it was wonderful, wonderful

HUNTER: Yeah!

CROWE: I think what happened to the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and when the women's movement came along, the women who were active in WIPF who went back to school to get PhDs or get jobs. And so there weren't many of us who wanted to, I was about the last I said no, you know, this is my work, justice, education, and so it was from that that I began, I started a group I think called Mobilization for Survival where we worked to try to stop nuclear weapons and testing and brought Helen Haldicott here. And then, ' 68, I had kids, I had two sons, one of whom would be eligible for the draft and one who was deaf and would not be. But it seemed as though they and their friends were always talking about the Vietnam war that was happening, and I was reading about it and of course was opposed to the war and, uh, I decided what I really should do is go off and take draft counseling training so I went to the Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors for a week's training in in draft counseling, and that was good. So then I came back and opened the Northampton Draft Information Center in the basement of my home, where I did what I call a feminist approach to draft counseling. Instead of just sort of helping each person individually, I felt it would be better if we all came together and sat in a circle and I asked them the John Woolman question that he always asked, "Young man, what is it you're objecting to? Why didn't you want to go?" And so that's what we did.

HUNTER: Wow.

CROWE: And it was wonderful. We had sessions on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from two to five and Friday night from seven to ten. And you know the fewest we had at any of those groups was eight, and the largest was seventy-nine, one Friday night. But, you know, I, people came back week after week while they were trying

to figure out kind of what they were going to do about the draft. And I bought a 16 millimeter projector and I would show films, that was before videos, and I had a slide projector and I would show slides, and during the '50's, when I first became interested in Quakers, what I wanted was some kind of a summer Quaker institute where the family could go and we could all have together learn about nonviolence and the issues, discuss the issues, and at that time they were just starting the AFSC in New England uh a wonderful man, Russell Johnson, who was sort of the peace education and coordinator started the Avon Institute where for a week- the first one was at Avano Farms Connecticut School, a wonderful setting for the institute. And about two hundred people came- families with children and they had the children's programs and we had all of these heavies in the peace and justice movement, Dave Dellinger, A.J. Muste, Milton Mayer, you could go through the list they were all there that summer. And, um, we had, we were all assigned to a workshop in the morning and a random gathering and then in the afternoon after lunch there were, that was free time and people went swimming and did things together, um, and then later in the afternoon we gathered for a kind of round table institute, and sometimes they had smaller discussion groups, and then in the evening we had another program but those were wonderful, wonderful institutes, and they went on for about seven years I think, um, and then they moved up to Lake Winnipesauke because they ran out of space and it was on the Lake and there was just incredible exposure to what was going on and in the last one they took on the issue of racism and they were very courageous inviting um the militant leadership in the black community working against racism. And, um, from Washington, Philadelphia, um, New Haven, Boston, and when these leaders came together, instead of, you know, following sort of into the pattern that had been set up, they used that week to organize themselves.

HUNTER: Right.

CROWE: And come together and their first step was there was one building that was kind of I guess used as a winter headquarters of a program that you might have at Lake Winnipesauke, and it was right by the water front and had indoor toilets and meeting rooms and it was very nice, and certain people had been assigned that space um most of us who came there were white, there were some African Americans, but most of the attendees were Quakers, whites, and often there were people who had special needs, and needed to be in a more comfortable place, the rest of us were in cabins using community latrines, and the blacks took over this space, and that went on for the rest of the week, so some of us, to protest that, we said lets talk it through and give them the space they need, but lets make a more democratic solution, but they wouldn't, the blacks also wouldn't eat with us, and there was a separate dining room that they discovered and so they would go through the line and get the food, and went into their room as they wanted to get themselves organized. And one of the big issues was kind of reparations and the AFSC giving money and Quaker meetings giving money to blacks, and there was an attempt by AFSC in Cambridge to set up a center in Roxbury, but who was going to be in charge of it, but they wanted, AFSC and the Quakers wanted to have control, particularly over finances, and that was the big issue, so, you know, they went round and round and round on that and Paul Whitman the educator was there, and some of us, I remember were

sleeping out in the green at night, and we said, well, if some people are turned out of their more comfortable places, we're not going to accept our cabin assignment, we're going to sleep out here on the green, so we took our sleeping bags out and slept out on the green. Well I remember one night, must have been around two o' clock Paul Whitman got up and said well this doesn't make any sense, I'm going home, and I saw him dragging his sleeping bag behind him as he went and got into his car and went home. But the people who stayed, uh, there, you know, we were struggling trying to hear what they were saying and trying to find a way through. And there was one man there who had had training in Denmark and um in negotiating differences and he um went off one day with his truck and came back later with the back of it filled with leather scraps and scissors and hole punchers and things and he backed his truck up on the green and um at Geneva Point Camp and he said that the leather was available for anyone to work to make anything they wanted and he would show them how to make the tools. So blacks and whites, we all gathered to make bags and all kinds of things out of the leather and we were working together, trading scissors and ideas, and this was sort of a nonviolent way of beginning to communicate, to work together. And, by, um, later into eh week there was a wonderful man by the name of Lord, I think, maybe Ted Lord, I'm not sure what his first name is, he had this great idea, he said he was going to raise money for the center in Roxbury, and he set up, he built this out of scrap lumber this kind of it looked like a door that opened in the top and people came there like a booth and they would write a check to a group, a foundation, fund that he had set up that would be for the blacks. And I think by the end of the week he had raised 30,000 dollars, which was the amount they had been asking for.

HUNTER: Wow, that's a lot of money!

CROWE: Yes, from yes, that week he raised that money for the center in Roxbury and gave it to the blacks.

HUNTER: Wow.

CROWE: But you know, after that AFSC didn't seem to have the courage to go on with another institute. It was-

HUNTER: It sounds very intense, you know.

CROWE: It was very intense, very intense. But, you know, we learned. But, you know, that was the very important part of my life, those institutes, and I remember sitting, you know, in a workshop, seeing a film, a presentation by Milton Mayer, or maybe it was in person, on why he was a pacifist, on why he couldn't support war, and I just sort of felt that's where I'm at, you know, totally, and um Russell Johnson, who was head of the institute must have picked up on one of my questions or something I said so he came over to me afterwards and said how would I like to join the American Friends Service Committee New England Peace and Justice Committee. Well what that consisted of in those years was that you would arrange- you didn't go to any meetings in Cambridge. You would arrange to put up the speakers that AFSC was sending around in the area, which often were people who had suffered

great injustices around the world and were coming to tell us about what the situation was really like, like I remember Carmela Jaharta who had been in prison in Indonesia for seven years, she came and I would have gotten biographical information about her, and I would go to the radio stations, the high schools, the colleges, the newspaper, and I would arrange to have people interview her and have her speak, and she would stay with me and I would feed her and drive her around, and I did that for three or four years and I got to meet an incredible group of people.

HUNTER: I can imagine.

CROWE: And I got to know the area. You know, driving up to Williamstown, or, um, wherever, Fitchburg, Springfield, you know some of the people I worked with for years after that I met through those contacts and I still think that's a good way to organize. It's not the way they do it now. But I think it can be very very helpful. But you know what Arthur Cirotta, a lawyer in Springfield who's working on issues of race and racism, I met when I took someone from South Africa down there uh to be on his radio program, and then he joined our Southern Africa Working Group that we had when I was doing the AFSC office, that was the way I sort of, you know, later, from being on the Peace Committee, they asked me to be an Area Office, and then I set up the Southern African Working Group, the Central America Working Group, the Disarmament Working Group, and they all worked on these chief issues we were doing and I would sometimes go to their meetings though I didn't have to but, um, they did great, great work.

HUNTER: Cool.

CROWE: And we had, you know, interns who worked with the Disarmament Working Groups so that the working groups kind of oversaw what they were doing. So I was running a very busy office downstairs.

HUNTER: Yeah!

CROWE: And I was a full time volunteer. I was paying the expenses of the office, they reimbursed me for paper and some postage, mailings, but our budget for the year was about fifteen hundred dollars and when I look now at the budget for the AFSC-

HUNTER: Oh it's much bigger now.

CROWE: One hundred thousand. You know, um, they raise forty thousand dollars and they get sixty from national. It's a whole different thing.

HUNTER: Do you like it better now do you think, or the way that it was when you were running it?

CROWE: Uh. I don't know.

HUNTER: Mmm.

CROWE: There are good things in both. Uh, I'm conflicted, I think in some ways if you are a volunteer or working on a subsistence salary, you have more passion, you're in the work because of your passion, whereas if it's a job, when you, you know, I look at when people leave the job they don't maintain the energy of work.

HUNTER: Right.

CROWE: And look, National AFSC and I see all these retired people who worked for so many years and they're not doing anything now. So, um, it's different.

HUNTER: Right.

CROWE: And whereas I think with the war resistor league, because people worked there who were on subsistence, you find the old gang is still there, they come in the help with the mailings, or telephoning, or whatever. So, you know, I know it's good for people to have a good salary and I understand those issues, but it's different.

HUNTER: Right. Yeah.

CROWE: So-

HUNTER: I can definitely see how that would end up being different. That's really interesting. Um, do you feel like- I was just thinking of pacifism and nonviolence in particular, and Maya up at the AFSC were talking about this recently, and she was saying that nonviolence was more of an action, and pacifism was more of a just kind of a way of thinking about things, but I'm not really sure of I, you know-

CROWE: Oh yes, well, nonviolence can be a way of thinking of things. I think active nonviolence is what I'm interested in.

HUNTER: OK.

CROWE: And injustice. I don't really like to talk about peace, in other words. It seems to me, it just kind of is that you want everything to be nice and smooth and no conflict, and I think conflict is inevitable if you're going to have change. And I believe and manage in conflict where you can each express yourself without hurting one another and arrive at a solution so I feel that it's important to have active nonviolence, and to talk about justice and not peace.

HUNTER: Right. Cool.

CROWE: Because I feel that the kind of image of peace is not all that constructive.

HUNTER: yeah. I feel like in general people kind of, even politicians, when they talk about peace or at peacetime they're talking about lack of military action in another country, which maybe that's not even what they're talking about either.

CROWE: yes.

HUNTER: Um, let me check and make sure I'm not [tape cuts off]

[BEGIN TAPE 3]

CROWE: Can you move the whole thing forward a little bit?

HUNTER: Yeah, there we go, that actually works out very well. OK. Cool. I hope this isn't massively distracting. I think it will be fine. Um, but yeah, I think, I think you are right about that, the Quakers, what do you think of when you think of justice?

CROWE: Well, I feel a little bit, when I came to Quakerism I was looking for a group of people working against war and whose fundamental beliefs were opposed to participating in war and working for justice and I find you know that maybe I felt in kind of the early days of Mt. Toby, the friends meeting, that was true of everyone. Now I find that, um, there's a lot of people seems to me who come to the meeting because they're looking for, um, more of a place to meditate and be quiet for an hour. Their lives are so busy and so filled with so much stuff that they want just a nice quiet, tranquil hour, and I feel they're not looking at how violence feeds their lives.

HUNTER: Right.

CROWE: That the violence of the status quo. That they're part of the empire, and they go on participating in it, paying their taxes and supporting the war and not, you know, looking at their lives and how we are contributing to the violence of the world.

HUNTER: Right. Is that-

CROWE: And-

HUNTER: Sorry-

CROWE: And Quakers, with their emphasis on simplicity, well that's good, I feel that that is held up to a point. But if you want simplicity but you also need everything new and nice, and I love going to these old friends meetings in New England like a did a few years ago at the beginning of the war when I went, I visited fourteen Quaker meetings to talk to them about the war, and I love some of them, they have, you know, the linoleum in the kitchen floor and the old benches and it was much more of a feeling of simplicity, rather than everything new and perfect.

HUNTER: It's funny that you mention that because I'm from outside of Philadelphia and all of the Quaker meetings around us are in old buildings. A lot of them are the original buildings since the Quakers started in the early 1700's, so they're old stone buildings and they don't have heat and the roofs leak and the benches are really old and there's only one room, you know, usually, and it's so different from

here, and I've gotten used to Northampton but it definitely feels really different to me.

CROWE: you know, I think there's something about the ambiance of those old buildings and that speaks to me.

HUNTER: Mmm-hm. Yeah. I mean I really love the, up on Woolman hill, I love the meeting house up there, I think it's wonderful, it reminds me of growing up, but- yeah, do you feel, uh, I was going to say something about the Quakers. Uh. This is why I shouldn't have forgotten my notes. [laughs] Well actually another thing I was going to ask, it's kind of a different topic, but how do you ca- I, I notice that you're into not drive and environmentalism you know, or, um you talked about the food co-op, how does food or the environment tie into the anti-war movement for you?

CROWE: Absolutely. Well you know our lifestyle demands war if we're going to be eating produce that comes from California, Mexico, Florida, Chile, wherever, then, um, we're going to need a lot of oil that comes by air, and which means that we have to take over, you know, the oil of the Middle East to get it at a price that, you know, we consider reasonable.

HUNTER: Right.

CROWE: And I was just listening to Democracy Now! this morning and Amy Goodman was talking about how she had friends of the Congo on, and they're um talking about the reason the Congo is under all the violence now is because of the minerals there that are used in cell phones, in computers, and that the use of cell phones and computers feeds into this kind of violence for the resources in the Congo, and that we want to be there and get all these minerals, and uh so the poor people of the Congo are pushed around and are evacuated and are killed that Nebila and his group are fighting for control of those resources. So I feel that's where it really begins in our lifestyles, so that I'm trying very hard not to use oil and to eat locally only. You know I can do it as far as produce is concerned, but still grains, but they don't have to come by air. Grains could come by train and, uh, to not buy where they have all this packaging that means that you're using the resources. I like to shop at farmer's markets and local grocery stores, and not Stop and Stop or Big Y. But, you know, it's hard, and everything we do we have to compromise. And, so, I think I've come to realize that you know life will really not be sustainable in the future for a lot of older people. That we require too much service and help and that, um, to continue living when you're not able to do a lot of things for yourself so that I very much support people who decide that they're going to spin off, you know, the planet when they reach a certain stage of their lives. I've had, you know a few friends who have done this. Alison Cappo, the woman who had said to me, that I had asked her the question how active the Quakers work, last summer, a year ago, she stopped eating, and she felt that her health was such that she couldn't really enjoy living alone and managing with a wood stove and uh so forth. So that she, with the support of the Manulock Friends Meeting, she died. Which was a courageous thing for her to had done.

HUNTER: Wow, I hadn't even thought about that.

CROWE: But that's an important thing to think about.

HUNTER: Yeah, yeah.

CROWE: And I think that we all reach a stage in our lives where we decide whether we want to accept more medical care. And, um, so that's something that we really need to take into account.

HUNTER: Yeah. Right. Is that something that's been on your mind a lot recently?

CROWE: Yes, Mmm-hmm, mmm-hmm

HUNTER: Yeah.

CROWE: And certainly with my surgery recently, you know I was challenged because I had a tumor in my duodenum and they said that if it wasn't removed maybe I would live for three more months, that it would it was cutting off my ability to feed myself and that it would grow and I would be jaundiced and it would take over, and if they operated I would have a 50% chance of complete cure, and I did, you know I had health insurance I, uh, it's really interesting, I all those years of volunteering with AFSC, with the last 5 years I ran the office for AFSC was, my husband had had a heart attack and retired and our son decided to go to medical school, so I asked if they would give me a part time salary to supplement my social security, which they did, but that put me onto their pension plan, so now I have wonderful insurance, I pay part of it but only a small part of it, I had health insurance now, all these years with AFSC.

HUNTER: You haven't had health insurance all those years?

CROWE: They pay for most of it. Well, I mean- back in those days we didn't have health insurance.

HUNTER: I guess it wasn't such a big deal.

CROWE: Health insurance is a new thing!

HUNTER: Oh wow that never occurred to me before. [laughs]

CROWE: [laughs] Yes and so you know doctor's sort of took care of each other's families free, but it was, health insurance is a relatively recent thing. But, anyway, I feel that, um, I so that after the surgery then I was faced with the, I saw an oncologist who said I had a choice. I could have chemotherapy, which is I fall into the 50% where there was a positive node so that if I wanted to treat you know the possibility of it recurring, then I could take or not, and I chose not to, I said, you know, if I get a couple of more years that's more than enough for me to live. I feel that at 89, I'm

pushing it, and, um, it gets harder all the time to live independently without being dependant on cars and other people, so I don't want to prolong my life, so I will let nature take it's course.

HUNTER: Do you feel pretty good about that?

CROWE: Yes, I feel pretty good about that, that I could get my stuff organized so that I'm beginning to, to move out of my role. And, uh, you know get rid of my stuff before so that my children don't have to deal with that.

HUNTER: Yeah, yeah.

CROWE: And you know, try to make good choices, so that you're, uh. You know, why shouldn't we have control over our death?

HUNTER: Exactly

CROWE: You know?

HUNTER: Yeah.

CROWE: If I have control over my life, that's the final stage of the life, and I want to have as much control as possible.

HUNTER: That's really- wow.

CROWE: And you know, I think that's a good way to look at life.

HUNTER: Yeah, you know, it's really good to hear that personally because I'm pretty young right now.

CROWE: Yes.

HUNTER: And most of the people I know are also pretty young and it's very- you know when death happens to one of us it's very sudden and very unanticipated and to me it's always something you have to avoid or fear and that it's unpredictable so I've never thought about it-

CROWE: Well not when you're eighty-nine. [laughs]

HUNTER: No, not when you're eighty-nine. [laughs]

CROWE: You don't have to worry about that anymore.

HUNTER: Wow, that's really, that's really good, it's good to hear you're so at peace with that.

CROWE: So, and I, for me I fell I've had a good life, and you know I'm pleased with the decisions that I made with what I will do with my life, and I just don't want to goof it up too much-

HUNTER: [laughs]

CROWE: Like today, I, you know, I realized a few days ago, I'm won- was the car insurance paid for? I gave my car to my son although I continue to have it and drive it, I'm a driver on the car, and I gave it to the son when I had the illegal radio station here so that the government if I was fined for the radio station they wouldn't take my car away from me, I wasn't going to pay the fine, so you know, I thought did I pay that insurance did I pay that bill? And I sent him an e-mail, this is our son who's deaf and he has a new e-mail so he doesn't respond very quickly, so I sent my daughter an e-mail saying text message him, find out, I don't think I'm supposed to be driving the car right now. And then I got an e-mail from him saying no I didn't pay the insurance, I was waiting for the bill and uh so I called the insurance company and they looked it up and they said you paid the bill.

HUNTER: Oh wow.

CROWE: So I said, I think, you know, when I was getting ready to go to the hospital I was trying to do everything that I could think of, so I paid, but I didn't write it down in my checkbook. So, uh, that's what you're dealing with. So one of the things on my list today is to buy a calendar for next year to write on it in August pay the insurance. [laughs]

HUNTER: [laughs]

CROWE: But these are, you know, what you're dealing with, struggling with, to keep everything, all the balls that you're juggling in the air. [laughs]

HUNTER: Yeah. Have you enjoyed getting older, has that been good for you?

CROWE: It was, you know, I enjoy my life now and I enjoy um living alone um although it was nice having Sean here, but you know I'm kind of into my own routine, the way I want to live my life, and as long as I'm able to get out and walk when there's a program at Smith I want to get out to at night I do it, or to the library or the grocery store I do it, and I can ride the busses, so I feel I have some flexibility and mobility. I miss all my friends who died, but I have a lot of younger friends. But, uh, it you know uh- it's a, it's a good life, and I went Sunday to a couple of things, a memorial service for a friend who had died and another one for a 75th birthday party for someone who is a war tax resister who um that was good, gatherings of older people who are standing up for what they believe.

HUNTER: Yeah, I forgot to ask you about the war tax resisting. How did you, how long have you been involved in that?

CROWE: Well I think this was the fourth year. It was something I had thought about for years, you know, thinking I was being hypocritical paying taxes. But as long as my husband was living he said oh, he did not want to file separately, we would pay more taxes and it would mean they would investigate and he would have to spend a lot of time digging out receipts and he it was, he considered it a great burden, so I put it off I didn't do it. And then when I had the illegal radio station here, my kids were very worried about the house and my bank account and uh because if I was if they moved on me they would fine me and they would take it, I wouldn't pay voluntarily because I believe the airwaves belong to the people, and National Pentagon Radio doesn't have a right to tell us what we can hear and not hear and uh therefore people have got to resist and fight this way they have of handling it. And so at that time I set up a trust, I put my house in it and my investments for my children, and I gave my car to my son, so that I own nothing that they can get, except the contents of my house that are mostly old, and, you know, keeping them mended and managing but they're not worth very much, so that I did that with the radio station and when we got on WMUA and when I could shut down my illegal pirate radio, then the next year- and my husband had died- and the next year when the tax bill came, I pondered and I said why am I paying my taxes. And I read through all the material and went to a few war tax resistors meetings and talked to people, and my conscience kept growing so that by the time it was really due I felt so strongly I could not pick up the pen and write the check. So I filed and sent a letter um with it it saying why I was not paying taxes. And of course I got the letters afterwards saying they were going to come and take you know my possessions but I, I, you know the first letter was scary, and I called Randy Keeler who went up right away and talked to him and he assured me, the fact that he had been doing it for so long and he felt that the way I was doing it was the right way, by filing it and doing it openly. They take 15% from my Social Security, which is the only way they can take anything and, uh, otherwise they can't, there isn't anything they can take. So it feels good.

HUNTER: Right.

CROWE: I have, I pay no federal taxes, because I feel, you know, if you just resist war taxes they, the defense, the Pentagon gets the, the war department gets the money, and that therefore I have to protest all of it. And that therefore I have to protest all of it.

HUNTER: Yeah. That's where most of it goes anyway.

CROWE: And I redirect my money. I, I take that money that I should be paying in taxes and I sent one third of it for international peace keeping, a third to the peace organizations in this country, and a third to Northampton public schools.

HUNTER: Mmm.

CROWE: So I feel good about those choices.

HUNTER: Right. I mean, that's where, if you were paying taxes, that's where you would be paying taxes to.

CROWE: These are the places I want my tax dollars to go.

HUNTER: Cool. I mean I've definitely been thinking about tax resisting it seems so complicated to me.

CROWE: Uh-huh.

HUNTER: But yeah, you know, it's always kind of in the back of my mind.

CROWE: Many of these war tax resistors in this area keep their income below taxable level.

HUNTER: Yeah.

CROWE: And you know, maybe mine will be this year, it's pretty year that area now. Um, but I do have a few little um pension checks that come in from my husband where he had worked at Smith College and the University and the Veterans Association, VMA, so I get some loose little checks that add to my social security, but I live well within my means, I save money every year, and then the money that's in the trust I used to help the grandchildren go to college.

HUNTER: How many grandchildren do you have?

CROWE: I have five.

HUNTER: Wow. How old are they? I'm just interested.

CROWE: yes, and the oldest is 26 now, and he had a couple of years of college, and he's not really a student and he's working in Boston now. He was starting out to be a carpenter and he was part of the carpenter's union and he got roped into working for Comcast selling their high-speed equipment, and I've been talking to him about the immorality of that, but then I use it so-

HUNTER: Right.

CROWE: Uh, and uh, then Rosa, the second, uh is a wonderful young woman, it's my daughter's daughters, and she is out at Naropa College in Boulder, Colorado, studying uh, to be uh a psychotherapist.

HUNTER: Oh cool.

CROWE: She had, uh, she took three years of high school and did one kind of, she finished high school in three years by going to night school in New Haven, and she's also went up to the Vermont Wilderness School, where she worked as an outdoor wilderness teacher, and she did college online through Prescott College in Arizona.

HUNTER: Oh, awesome.

CROWE: And she finished and now she's out in Naropa, and she says she wants to be a psychologist, and I suspect that she might not end up there, because she said that she finds it very challenging to be in classes listening to fellow students moaning about the tragedy of their lives instead, she said, of getting on with their lives.

HUNTER: [laughs]

CROWE: So I, I see her more in the future as being an educator like she was taking kids into the wilderness three days a week, the home-school kids, she would take them to a different mountain top where she had them, you know, maybe five hours out there in the wilderness she worked with the kids and so that's and Rosa she's great, she's a real hard worker, self starter, living in a cabin on he top of a mountain outside Boulder

HUNTER: Oh, that's wonderful.

CROWE: Heating with wood, with her boyfriend who is also an outdoor wilderness education. And then Sean who was here with me who had finished at American University and worked in New Orleans the last year for Americorps rebuilding housing down on the lower 9th Ward, who then came to take care of me when I, took me to the hospital and supplied me with iPods of Democracy Now when I was in the hospital, and then brought me home and took care of me for six weeks and now he's on his way, he's probably in California.

HUNTER: Oh, he's the one in California.

CROWE: And then, um, Simone who started college and she's really more of an artist than, she, um, is now taking a year off working in Burlington, Vermont as a waitress and is going to start taking colleges- eh, courses at University of Vermont. She took, last year, she was at home one semester and took courses at the college in the Atlantic and she's a good potterer, a very good artist, and uh, Tom, young Tom, who is in high school in George Steven's Academy in Blue Hill Maine who is really an all America, sort of a sports person, he's into voll- basketball, varsity basketball, although he's only a sophomore, soccer, and baseball.

HUNTER: Wow.

CROWE: He, you know, is totally into sports and but you know he's a good student at he's a really good kid.

HUNTER: Well that's great. That's really cool. Was there anything else you wanted to add or talk about?

CROWE: Well you know I'm um struggling to find my way and I'm always conflicted about, you know, will I find it with the Quakers or not, and I am looking forward to this weekend. Um, I don't think I mentioned that I'm going over to Worcester Friends meeting on Saturday night and Sunday morning. Um, Robert Shatterly, a portrait

artist who does a book every year on Americans who speak the truth, um, added me to his book this year.

HUNTER: Oh cool

CROWE: When I was up in Maine last summer, um, he saw me with my t-shirt on saying we will not be silent and he said you are Frances Crowe aren't you and I said yes and he said I've always wanted to meet you and do a portrait of you, and he did. And so the portrait is going to be exhibited this Saturday for a week at the Worcester Friends Meeting and so I'm staying to do a 9:30 hour on Sunday morning and staying for their potluck. So, uh, I'll take the bus over and back, and it'll be interesting to see where Worcester Friends are at on these issues.

HUNTER: Yeah.

CROWE: So uh, I like visiting different meetings.

HUNTER: Yeah.

CROWE: So.

HUNTER: That sounds awesome.

CROWE: I'm looking forward to it.

HUNTER: Cool. How does it, I'm just wondering how does it feel when people know you, when they see you and they know you like that?

CROWE: Oh, well you know if they'll just accept me as I am then that's fine.

HUNTER: [Laughs]

CROWE: If they're expecting anything else out of me, that's, that's not possible.

HUNTER: I just, it's funny, I was in class and I, and we were going around and doing the interviews we had done, and I said something about Democracy Now! and there's this girl in my class who says oh wait, was she, was she handing out flyers because I think I got one, I think I met her and I'm like yeah that was Frances. [Laughs] You know? But I think it's just funny because every time I describe you, or every time I mention the anti-war movement your name comes up.

CROWE: Oh really?

HUNTER: They all seem to know who you are, obviously not just around here either. I just think that's pretty awesome.

CROWE: And you know I keep thinking I should do more, like, you know, and I'm not that articulate and I don't write that well, but the other night I went to a film at Smith

that, um, I was rather disturbed by, it was called *We are also Americans* and it was the Muslim community's response to 9/11 and it was sponsored by the Chapel Council at Wright Hall, and the two women who seemed to be in charge of the audio-visual part of it were Muslims, they had their hair covered and um, but it was all about Muslims for Bush, and they didn't deal with what I think is the real problem in this country, the way we treated Muslims. And it was kind of how the upper class, wealthy Muslims, particularly in the Detroit area, are fighting for Bush. And, I, I was kind of shocked, you know, why was Smith showing this film, and they had someone in the history department and a another woman there maybe from sociology, and the sound quality was not very good I was having trouble hearing, to respond, and I just wanted to say why are you showing this?

HUNTER: Mmm-hmm.

CROWE: But you know, and I left pretty quickly, and I thought I should have stayed and really raised the question. I should have said, this is what's going on, why are you showing this, but I left, trying to think through and figure out what I should have done, and, you know, it opened me up to another way of looking at it, there was no doubt about that. And maybe those, that's the Muslims who come to Smith, who can afford it, who come from wealthy backgrounds, and I thought, hmm. And Tuesday night, at Amherst College, they had Dennis Ross who, you know represents the State Department on the Middle East, great friend of Israel not a friend of the Palestinians, and why they had Dennis Ross, and I thought I guess that's where Amherst College is and this is where Smith College is. So could I do more to challenge this, uh, then passing out cards.

HUNTER: I see what you mean.

CROWE: Uh-huh.

HUNTER: So-

CROWE: That's the question.

HUNTER: Right.

CROWE: I'd like to be able to do more. And you know there was a time when we could do more. We did a couple of actions at Smith under the disarmament working group and the Southern Central America working group when uh people came to Smith who were um you know representing the State Department point of view and sending more weapons to Nicaragua, where we went into, um, when, Wright Hall where the speaker was to be, and I had a slideshow about what was really going on in Nicaragua and the bombing and I got it all set up in the middle of the hall with my own projector and the slides in it and we were all organized at some point and someone turned out all the lights and I put mine down with a tape recorder and all the scenes of what was really going on in Nicaragua and people spoke up and the speaker fled.

HUNTER: Wow.

CROWE: So that, um, we prevailed. But um you know we worked with a group of students and I supplied the equipment and was there and also there was a time when we were working this Southern African working group and we were trying to get Smith to divest and the trustees were meeting and they didn't want to see the students and the students wanted to go over to College Hall and do a sit in at the President's office, so I did the nonviolence training and went over to support them, and uh they occupied the hall and they filled the lower part of the hall and the steps and upstairs and they were filled with the students and after being there a while, it was late in the afternoon it was about dinner time, and uh when the police came to arrest people, to remove them, and um I remember it was Mary Mapleston, the president of Smith, and the person in charge of all that was this white haired old lady, Frances Crowe, that I was there supporting them. But it was great to see the energy of the students.

HUNTER: That's, wow. You've done a lot of stuff.

CROWE: Yeah, so that, when we did things like that there were arrests at Amherst, and the Southern African working group was very influential in getting the University of Massachusetts to divest when I got the chancellor to permit me to show the film *Last Grave at Dimbaze* when the trustees were eating lunch at Memorial Hall, so you know I lugged my projector in with the screen and showed it, and the students were all protesting out in front of Memorial Hall, and after you know about ten minutes into the film I realized nobody was eating their chicken salad. [laughs]

HUNTER [laughs]

CROWE: Forks were all on the plates!

HUNTER: Oh wow.

CROWE: And when the film was over you know there was one question they asked the Chancellor Brownberry- what will we do if we can't find investments that are not in South Africa. He said we'll get another broker.

HUNTER: Nice.

CROWE: It was beautiful.

HUNTER: Yeah. Well it's funny because we're trying to divest from Palestine right now- Israel, not Palestine- and it's definitely- I don't see that energy right though, you know, I mean, we definitely had, we had a big like panel last year um which was really intense and everybody came and people spoke about the occupation and then we had a vigil and that was really moving and-

CROWE: Ah, well just today the news of what we're doing in Gaza. If they would just lift the siege on Gaza, now that is the issue.

HUNTER: Yeah, yeah.

CROWE: That people are suffering terrible. And Amy had a lot on it today, and you there are people like Cheryl Hogan who has been to Palestine the last six summer she went you know picking olives and being there in solidarity with the people, and she's going to be speaking in December, part of our Friday night group series. But you know they don't identify with the suffering of the Palestinians.

HUNTER: Yeah. I don't even know.

CROWE: And it doesn't look much more hopeful under Obama!

HUNTER: No, it doesn't.

CROWE: Cynthia McKinney-

HUNTER: Rahn Emmanuel, I'm so worried about that guy. I'm not liking his advisors Obama's advisors so far.

CROWE: Well he's part of the empire, and it's just a better emperor.

HUNTER: Yeah, yeah. How did you feel when he got elected?

CROWE: What?

HUNTER: Wh- how did you feel on election night when you found out about Barack Obama?

CROWE: Well I felt, you know, relieved that it wasn't McCain. But I voted for Cynthia McKinney, because I knew Obama would carry Massachusetts, and I wanted the greens, I wanted the third party, but looking at the data by how Hampshire county went, a lot of us voted for the greens. And I think it's one hundred eleven of us in Northampton who voted for Cynthia McKinney, and about three hundred of us voted for Nader. And so I'm encouraged when I look at these small towns, hill towns, and Granby, when you see how many people voted for Cynthia McKinney and Ralph Nader, so I feel there is hope there. And I feel that Obama will offer a lot of hope for a lot of people in this country. For the young people, African Americans. People of color. He, you know, the image he will project will be so healing and positive, if we can just organize and keep him focused on the right issues.

HUNTER: And I think, from the discussions I've been hearing I think that-

CROWE: Pardon?

HUNTER: From the discussions that I've been taking part in with my friends and things, I think that's very, it's gonna things are going to keep happening, people, they organized around Obama and I think they're going to stay organized. And I think

it's really incredible, I was born in the Reagan administration and I've never felt this way bout anyone before. So I really hope that you're right.

CROWE: Yes, yes, well I certainly felt energized, and it's wonderful my grandchildren were calling me the next day to say wasn't that great, so that's good that they feel positive. So.

HUNTER: Cool. Well is there anything else?

CROWE: I think not.

HUNTER: Well thank you, very much.

CROWE: You're welcome.