

**Guide to the Oral History of
NICHOLS, BETTY B. (-)**

Biographical/Historical Notes

Betty B. Nichols was the Director of Planned Parenthood in Montgomery County. She was born in Newton, Massachusetts. She received her Bachelor's degree at Smith College and attended the University of Chicago. During World War II, she ran a cooperative nursery school. She was a member of the League of Women Voters and the Citizens Advisory Committee on Family Life and Human Development. From 1941 to 1946, she served as a volunteer nurses' aide for the American Red Cross. In 1956, Nichols became the Director of the Montgomery County Clinic, Planned Parenthood of Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Inc., a position she still held at the time of her interview in 1975.

Interview – Interviewed March 27, 1975 by James Scull for MCHS.

Subject

Family planning
Maternal Welfare Association of Montgomery County
Planned Parenthood League
Planned Parenthood of Montgomery County

Subject Names

Table of Contents/Index – See also Topical Index to Transcript for additional subjects and topics. Archive file also contains artist sketch of Nichols.

TIME INDEX

Oral History Recording with Mrs. Betty Nichols, director, Mont. County Planned Parenthood Clinic, Wheaton, Md. March 27, 1975

SIDE I

- 0.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Personal history- her interest in people, visits to prisons with father, Sanford Bates, volunteer in public welfare and Children's Hospital, nursery school
- 6.0 Appointment as Montgomery County Planned Parenthood director, 1956
- 8.0 Early history of clinic- instigated in 1939 by Dr. Ellicot, health officer, some of founding members, location in Mont-~~gomery~~ Montgomery County General Hospital at Olney, typical patients-poor rural women
- 14.00 Role of Mrs. Harold Ickes in forming Montgomery County League
- 15.00 Clinic when Nichols took over- small patient load, lack of recognition and publicity, most referrals from public health nurses, restrictions to married women with income under \$3,000
- 20.00 Efforts to expand and broaden services, removal of income ceiling and gradually serving unmarried women also, concerns for child-spacing as health measure
- 25.00 Support of Dr. William Peoples, health officer^N in 50's in increasing referrals
- 26.00 Early lack of support from ministers^{sk} and their later push in "60's for extending services to unmarried. Like change in support from social workers.
- 31.00 Impact of "the pill" on program
- 35.00 Breakthrough in public information in county and county. First booth at County Fair in 1960 not well received. Speakers bureau.
- 42.00 Money raising problems "then and now". Approval by Community Chest withdrawn after rejection by United Givers Fund. Present sources of income, including reimbursement by State^x and health department, Thrift Shop.
- 52.00 Transition from Olney clinic to ~~to~~ office building in Wheaton. Growth of clinic services.
- 55.30 Transition in program from Margaret Sanger's day with primary concerns for indigent, married women to unmarried and young. Sex education and rap sessions for teen-agers.
- 64.00 Question of whether expanded program encourages immorality

Time Index, Mrs. Betty Nichols (continued),

- 68.00 Need of young people in county for guidance- dealing with reality
- 70.00 The question of "abortion"
- 73.00 Changes in numbers of people served from '56 to '74, volunteers, * to educational services. Change in age level of clients.
- 83.00 End of Side I.

SIDE II

- 0.0 How parents of young people are viewed
- 0.1 Change in primary support from "elite women" to broader community representation.
- 10.00 Integration into public health services. Future need for planned parenthood organization and services in county.
- 13.50 Changes in values and goals since Margaret Sanger. Emphasis on need of child to be born "wanted" as against early emphasis on mother's health.
- 17.00 Planned Parenthood as an international concern in relation to overpopulation, scarcity of resources
- 19.00 Contribution to Montgomery County- minor to physical development and growth but vital to health and family welfare, quality of living.
- 25.30 Conclusion