

KUNHARDT **FILM** FOUNDATION

BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS INTERVIEW
MAKERS: WOMEN WHO MAKE AMERICA
KUNHARDT FILM FOUNDATION

Barbara "Dusty" Roads
Flight Attendant & Activist
7/12/2011
Interviewed by Betsy West
Total Running Time: 47 minutes and 23 seconds

START TC: 00:00:00:00

ON SCREEN TEXT:

Makers: Women Who Make America
Kunhardt Film Foundation

ON SCREEN TEXT:

Barbara "Dusty" Roads
Flight Attendant & Activist

Barbara "Dusty" Roads
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00:00:06:00

BETSY WEST:

Can you tell me a little bit about your upbringing, where you grew up, what your family was like?

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

I was very fortunate. I get down on my hands and knees every- Thank my God for my family. My mother and my father were very much in love. They were both educated. My father was an attorney. My mother had gone to the University of Chicago for 2 years. Her sister was a PhD from Columbia. So education was important. And we had dinner every night together and we talked politics, history and the day's happenings and it was smart to be smart.

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BETSY WEST:

What were your parents' expectations for your future?

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

My father said I could do anything I wanted to be if I worked hard enough, and my heroes were Amelia Earhart, Jacqueline Cochran, Beryl Markham—women fliers. And of course, we had the WASPs then, and then the WASPs were disbanded, and they told that they could be hostesses for TWA. They couldn't be pilots.

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BETSY WEST:

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So you grew up with this idea... You wanted to be-

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

I wanted to be a pilot. I wanted to be a commercial pilot. Of course my idea would have been to be a pilot off an aircraft carrier in World War II. A marine, a marine. That was it, but no, I- But growing up then was so much easier than now. No drugs, no gangs. Girls could be good girls, and still be popular.

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BETSY WEST:

So you wanted to be a pilot, then what happened?

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

Towards the end of the war they disbanded the WASPs. And that meant no women in the military flying airplanes. And then TWA offered them jobs as hostesses, no pilots. Women army ferry service. They ferried aircraft, military aircraft to London, to all over the place and all over the country. To Alaska, to Russia, and they flew a lot of four engine airplanes.

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BETSY WEST:

And you, as a little girl, realized this?

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

Oh I wasn't that- Oh, that was, hey, I was 16. I was 16 when the war ended, so I was 15, I was 15 years old when I realized, "Hey," and I was getting to be, I could see the handwriting on the wall, with Daddy wasn't always true about, "You could be whatever you wanted to be." The reality starts hitting you and- but I did want to go to college.

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BETSY WEST:

So you went to college. Then, how did you become a stewardess?

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

I was very fortunate. I was one of those, that I think they call it "dusty luck." One of my sorority sisters worked in a placement center at Western Missouri and I had talked about wanting to be a stewardess and she came in one day, she said, "Dust they're having- There's a man from American airlines who is holding interviews down at the Hollenden Hotel. Why don't you go down and see?" Oh, I ran home, put on my Peck and Peck suit, my hat and the whole bit, and went down there and he was holding a meeting, and there were about 10 or 12 girls in there, and I looked and I thought, "I'm in the wrong place."

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They wore so much makeup, they were so overdressed and I thought, “Uh-oh, I’m in the wrong place.” Then he went on and described what the job entailed, what the benefits were and so forth and so on, and at the end of that he said, “I’m going to take you each in there and talk to you about it.” And he pointed to me first. I think maybe the way I was dressed, instead of all the makeup and so forth, because at that time, the image of a stewardess was of the girl next door, Doris Day, not Marilyn Monroe.

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And he asked me and he said—this was in April—and he asked me if I could join up, he wanted to hire me right then and there. And I said, “Well, I really can’t because I want to finish college and I’ve gone this far, and my father has paid for this and I want to graduate.” It was the right thing to say. I thought maybe I wasn’t going to be hired because I wouldn’t drop everything.

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But so I went back in April and they gave me my medical and I started in. He hired me and I went to work, July 10th, I went to stewardess school. Graduated August the 10th and flew for them til 1944. Pardon me, 1994.

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BETSY WEST:

So you flew, can you tell me again, from when to when?

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

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From 1950 to 1994, 44 years.

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BETSY WEST:

What was the training like?

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

The training was excellent, really. We had a lot of emphasis on safety and a lot of emphasis on how to care for people that can't take care of themselves. In other words, you had to show a blind man where his air vent was. You had to show a blind man how to fasten his seat belt. You had to show a blind man where the call button was. And you said, "Push the call button when you want to go to the toilet. And I will come."

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You know, those things, and then also how to bend over an aisle without showing everything. We all wore skirts. And the meal service was very minor because we didn't have that many meals. You'd have a tray with some coffee and a sandwich or whatever, but on the non-stop trips- but the meal service was very minor and we passed out magazines and passed out mints, and we were to talk to the passengers.

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If there was an empty seat next to a passenger, we were to sit down and talk to that passenger and- yes, it was fabulous. We had Supreme Court Justice

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Tom Clark, I want to talk to him. Eleanor Roosevelt, oh yes, I want to talk to Eleanor Roosevelt.

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BETSY WEST:

Did you talk to Eleanor?

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

Oh yes. I would say the most thrilling passenger that I had was talking to Eleanor Roosevelt. She was so charming and so warm, just lovely. And my parents were Republicans and they hated Roosevelt, and I called them up and I said, "You're stupid." She was wonderful, just charming.

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BETSY WEST:

Tell me, 'cause I don't think a lot of people understand, it was a glamorous life you were leading. Give me some examples.

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

Well... having Eleanor Roosevelt on board. When I flew from LA to New York, we had movie stars on board. We had Rock Hudson, Marilyn Monroe, you name it. And we also had movie moguls who could get us tickets to things.

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We'd go to New York and, "Oh, lookee here. Hey Dusty, want a ticket to go see Julie at the Palace tonight."

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Woo. Yes, it was wonderful. And Tom Clark, Supreme Court Justice, invited me to come see the case that was before them, Brown vs. Board of Education, which then I didn't realize how important it was. I went, "My god, that was one of the most important-" And Frank Sinatra, all those people, because there were no corporate jets so everybody had to fly commercial.

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BETSY WEST:

And you were meeting them, actually talking to-

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

Oh yes, that was- And if there was a- We had a lounge on the DC7, and we were to sit there and talk to passengers, and in fact it was so obvious that we did talk to passengers that we had an interline ski club. All the different airlines would give us free transportation to go skiing in Europe because we would come home and say, "Oh I skied St. Moritz last week, you must go there."

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So we were sales women for... It was a fabulous career and it was looked up to, we were admired. And people dressed differently, and they treated each other differently.

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BETSY WEST:

What was the dress code?

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

People dressed up. They dressed like they were going to church.

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BETSY WEST:

Along with the glamor, there were some downsides to this job. Can you tell me what the rules were that began to bother you?

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

They would give us girdle checks, and there was a tremendous emphasis on personal appearance which I look back on... it was ok. It was a little bit overboard, because it made such emphasis on what you look like instead of what you really are, and safety to me was the most important issue, but we had to look good. But that was part of the glamor.

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BETSY WEST:

And in addition to looking good, there were certain rules of... that you had to...

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

Oh yes. First, one of the most important things was, when we were hired, they never hired anybody with bad grammar. You had to be- 'Cause these people that were traveling with us were educated people, and they did not want us to say, "They invited me and him to go to the store." They didn't want that. They wanted you educated and having had entertainment in your home, which my dad was a lawyer and so we did entertain at home. We knew how to be gracious around strangers.

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BETSY WEST:

And what other, kind of, restrictions for stewardesses were there? What other...

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

You couldn't be married. And you obviously couldn't be pregnant. And they were fired at age 32.

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BETSY WEST:

What was the rationale for this?

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

Economics. A stewardess that had been flying at the age 32 was making four or five hundred dollars a month. And they fired her and they hired somebody else, she was making \$250 to \$300 a month. Go to management, you go to medical, you say, "We have 2000 employees who will never be pregnant, who will never have retirement benefits, and who will never be over age 32." Medical costs go down the tubes. It was economics.

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Plus I think they just didn't want us around 'cause you got smarter. The union leaders were the senior people. We learned about, "Hey, wait a minute," so they took these anti-union little girls and turned them into union girls. And they didn't want that.

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BETSY WEST:

Now, you didn't start out a union gal.

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

No, no, I didn't. My folks were anti-union, we thought of unions as blue collar guys that drove buses, and trucks. Trucks! But then I saw some of the inequities and I just- My sense of fair play, my Midwestern sense of fair play made me run for office in LA because we had one supervisor who was particularly bad, and wasn't fair.

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And you pick on someone that I thought was a good stewardess, "Just a minute here." So I ran for office and I won, and then I met Nancy Collins and she was very active in the union. And we both became, "What's with this 32 thing? You know, what's this?" And we didn't like the intimation that if a woman got married, she became fat and lazy. Women that are married work harder than anybody.

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But that was the- they just didn't want married women 'cause they wanted the men on board to think we were single. They were selling sex. Subliminally, but they were selling sex.

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BETSY WEST:

You came to that realization.

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

Yep, yep.

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BETSY WEST:

What about the ads that they were running?

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

They weren't bad then. Delta was the one that was bad, and then Eastern Airlines came out with one, "Fly me," or something or other... but American never did get down to that low level. Because Delta was bad. They came out with those awful uniforms, that were just gross.

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BETSY WEST:

Tell me, what were they?

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

Oh, they looked like pajamas, and we went, "Oh," but so, I went to our supervisor. I said, "If you think that we're going to wear something like that,

you're wrong. I wear pajamas to sleep. If you put me in that on the airplane, I'll sleep."

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BETSY WEST:

I remember seeing some of the ads, and being a little appalled.

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

Oh, they... Yeah, but that was towards the end. They just got, they got wacky, they really did. Competition got so- they just got wacky with it and some of the Eastern Airlines and Delta, both went around the bend on that, I think. I loved our navy blue uniforms, I thought it was just great. It was business-like and it was a uniform.

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BETSY WEST:

As you were becoming a little more hip to what was going on here, tell me what you started to do to try to oppose these conditions, and...

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

I became a member of the negotiating team with Nancy and another gal, and we negotiated the 1963 contract and that was one of our big issues.

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BETSY WEST:

What was...

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

The age. Elimination of the 1953 edict that you were fired at age 32. And we also wanted marriage. We had, I would say, 30% of the flight attendants were married. They'd get married in Mexico. Because American would go to Las Vegas to see who was married. We told them to go to Mexico to get married because...

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And so we wanted that, we wanted that legal because we wanted the husbands to have travel privileges. But we didn't get it in 1963, but we had a press conference. And we had tried through other areas, we had tried through the state of New York to get a law against discrimination because of age. And they did, but it came out in between 45 and 65. It didn't help us a bit.

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So we tried to negotiate it and I came to realize that- First, I thought it was a base problem. Then I thought it was American Airlines. Then I realized it's the industry. And then I went, "Wait a minute, this is a national problem." Discrimination, gender discrimination, against women, that says you're an old bag at 32. There's no way.

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BETSY WEST:

It's like a light bulb went off for you.

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

Yeah, well, it was just in- To hear their answers and the reason for it was the same image of a stewardess is of a young single girl. And they kept repeating that over and over and over again. And finally Martha W. Griffiths is the one that said to Mr. Mason, president of United Airlines, "Sir, what are you running, an airline or a whore house?" And that made right around the world and we were thrilled to death with that.

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But it still didn't get us anywhere. In the 1963 contract, we had a press conference, luckily on the day when there was no news, and we had pictures of, I think about, 55 or 65 newspapers in the country, and six or seven of us with, you know, kind of a sexy pose, we'll use it, why not? Well, the word stewardess got me into congressmen's offices so let's face it.

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BETSY WEST:

What did you say- Tell me what you said at the press conference.

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

My one quip was, "A Lolita I'm not, but does that make me an old bag at 32." But we said, "Pick out which of these stewardesses shouldn't be flying because there are some of us that are over 32. Pick out the ones." And we had one gal there who eventually married Henry Fonda. She was Shirley Fonda who was a model for teenage clothes.

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And she didn't want them to know she was over 32 cause she'd be fired. But it went all over the country and American was madder than hell, because that was on a Thursday and we came back to LA and went back the next Monday for some more negotiations and there was a stack of mail for us from the people that had seen that. They were furious.

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BETSY WEST:

So you really used a little... PR.

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

Honey, they are going to use sex, we'll use the same thing. We hinted at it more than anything. But the word stewardess would get me to the congressional offices, let's face it.

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BETSY WEST:

You met a congressman who became important. Tell me about her.

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

I had a rather lucky break. I met a gal named Ann Cooper Petting on a double date when I was living in Chicago, and she worked for congresswoman Martha Griffiths, a democrat from Michigan, and Ann had gone to law school and that's how she was hired by Martha. Martha had gone to Michigan Law School, and she and her husband had started a law firm in Detroit and Martha eventually ran for Congress and won.

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She was mad because she was not allowed to go to Harvard Law School because she was a woman and that's... Don't make Martha mad. Anyway, she became a real advocate, a brainy advocate for women's rights, and I don't think we realized how many areas of discrimination there were. At first, I just thought it was the airlines, aviation and then—wait a minute, and Martha, the same way.

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She thought, "Maybe it was because I couldn't go to Harvard Law School, I couldn't do this," but then all of these little... and then she got a job, the same job that her husband had, and he was paid \$20 more a month than she was.

And she said, “Why?,” said, “Well, he’s head of a household.” Come on. So anyway, Ann introduced me to Martha.

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If I would tell Annie funny airline stories, she said, “Oh god, wait till Martha hears this.” So I met Martha and it was just, it was marvelous. She’s just, I just loved her, and she was just fabulous, and I loved her husband, and we just had a great time. And she just was very, very adamant. She just couldn’t believe it so I kept her abreast, as it were, of what the age thing was, and then she made a magnificent speech on the House floor.

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The 1964 Civil Rights bill, as it was written, and as it came to the floor of the house—no discrimination because of race, religion or ethnicity, nothing about sex. Martha was able to get sex on the floor to be voted on, and the way she passed, it was a marvelous- she made a marvelous statement, it was thrilling. She stood up and there were 16 women in the house at that time, the rest of them were all men.

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And she said, “You are paying for the sins of your grandfathers and great grandfathers who allowed the black ex-slaves to vote and not their wives. And their mothers and sisters and their daughters. You are a slave to the same prejudice.” And that hit a few. And it passed.

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And as it passed, it established the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, so we thought, “Oh god, we’re just- This is, this is it. We’re so,

this is it." And they looked at us. Young, attractive, middle-aged white women. They said, "What are you here for?" And I said, "Sit down honey, I got a story to tell you." We helped them unpack the typewriters and everything, and they were, "Ooh," they said, "Do they fire the pilots at age 32?" "No." "Ooh. Do they fire the engineer?" "No." "Ooh, ooh."

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They were just... and we thought we had it made. Then they had a hearing on it and we did very well and Aileen Hernandez was on the board. And I knew Aileen from having done some work in California on the Fair Employment Practices Commission. And it was such a thrill because here it is, 5 members of the board, we come up and we're in the audience, and they came in.

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She says, "Hi Dusty! And here's management over here, and here's labor over there. Hi Dusty!" American Airlines guy looked at me, but... she resigned because there were so few cases. They weren't handling any of the sex cases for women, so she resigned and then American Airlines was able to put her in jail on Christmas eve,-

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-and another woman on Christmas eve because they said that there is conflict of interest because she was on the board of NOW. And she hadn't been on the board of NOW when she resigned. She resigned, they put her on the board, NOW wasn't even in business then. So American Airlines, they said, "Conflict of interest," and had them arrested. Christmas eve!

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BETSY WEST:

Tell me though, here are the women who take your complaint, they seem interested, and then you go before the EEOC, and there are the commissioners, and then what happened?

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

They were going to hear the case late- They heard it and now they're going to go make a decision. But they kept putting it off and putting it off and the airlines asked for quote, "an industry wide exemption." They wanted more hearings to show why, why, why, why... So they put it off, and they put it off and they put it off, and first, they used Aileen Hernandez, they used her as an excuse, and then they had the industry wide exemption, and then they just kept putting it off and off and off and off.

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Finally in 1968, now this is 3 years after we started, we thought- We were naive. We thought, "Well, it's fair, it'll pass, it's just right." And we were so naïve, but then we were about to go on strike on American Airlines, and this was one of our issues. And I knew we couldn't strike. The gals wouldn't, they wouldn't cross the picket line. 'Cause when you are 22, you're never going to be 32. And they're not going to go on strike for some gal that wants to keep her job at age 32.

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“Why shouldn’t she just get married anyway like the rest of us?” So I called Martha, God bless her, I said Martha, “We’re in a real thing. We got a real problem out here. We may have a strike. If you know anybody on the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, call them and tell them to make a decision one way or the other.” And the next day, they made a decision in our favor. The issue was gone. Into the woodwork.

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BETSY WEST:

So what was the decision?

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

It was sex discrimination. It was against the law, they had to rehire us. And back seniority. Seniority! It was everything in the airlines, the seniority.

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BETSY WEST:

So no longer were they able to-

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

Couldn't fire anybody. Couldn't fire anybody at age 32, no, you could not do that. You could only fire them if they were way overweight, or they were...

did something bad on the airplane or... just their normal reasons, and then you had a union that could come to your defense if it was a made up charge.

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BETSY WEST:

Now, at one point, stewardesses found themselves testifying before Congress.

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

Yes, I did several times.

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BETSY WEST:

How did that go?

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

Well it went very well but no one- The issue wasn't taken seriously, that was the thing. They'd pat us on the head, "Nice little girl," It just wasn't taken seriously until Martha grabbed it and she was very tenacious and she held on to it but- And there were articles. Art Buchwald wrote an article. Jimmy Breslin wrote an article. Nancy and I went down and had drinks with them, and they thought it was kind of cute. But it wasn't taken seriously because women were supposed to have jobs and not careers.

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00:25:03:00

BETSY WEST:

Wasn't there a very condescending comment made by a congressman, who sort of said to the stewardess, "Please stand up?"

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

A congressman said, "Well, let's stand up and see the measurements of the problem." Yeah, clearly says that the measurements- That's a sexually- Come on.

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BETSY WEST:

Said that to you?

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

Said that to- Yes.

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BETSY WEST:

So what did you think?

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

We had- I had a bunch of flight attendants- I had a bunch of stewardesses in the audience and that's when he said, "Why don't you stand up and see what the measurements of the problem are." I'm like... 'Cause you know it was so demeaning and just nothing was- It wasn't taken seriously. Go home, barefoot, have babies, be a wife, get out of here. That was just the attitude then and, some places it still is. But you were supposed to get married at age 20 and have babies and have a split level home and two kids in private schools and a station wagon.

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BETSY WEST:

You were doing all of this pretty early on. Were you part of the women's movement?

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

I think we were all part of the women's movement. There was no one focus on it. I think that, the fact of guerrilla warfare. Airlines did one thing,, somebody else did something else, it was just an attack when women start- we went, "Wait a minute. This isn't right..." and individually in different groups. But I think it was a guerrilla type warfare. It was never one thing.

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NOW came along and they kind of...coalesced everything but the stewardesses did one thing and somebody else did something else, and it was never one great, great ocean.

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BETSY WEST:

Monolith. But it just seemed, everybody was coming to this realization.

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

The 60s were very much that way. It was a strange time, it really was. It was a wonderful time. The race thing, it was a terrible situation in the South, it was just awful then. And Lyndon Johnson, a Texan, God bless him, he was able to get the civil rights bill passed, knew that as a Texan, getting that passed, he was condemning the democrats for a long time out of power in the South. 'Cause the South had been all democrats and now it's gone.

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BETSY WEST:

I'm thinking there were a lot of stewardesses, not all of them stood up and did what you did. What gave you the moxy to do this? How did this happen?

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

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I think that my Midwestern sense of fair play, I basically, I really don't know. I just was- it just aggravated me and I had so many friends that were affected by it and I saw the trauma that they went through. Because they didn't- they loved the job and when you're senior, it is great. I mean, you get to travel, you get to vacation in Europe, vacation...

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I went around the world in 1960, my air fare was \$90. Around the world.

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BETSY WEST:

You loved your job, but you just...

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

I wanted to make it better. I wanted to make it a career instead of just a job. And a profession and it was, and I was proud of the profession.

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BETSY WEST:

You mentioned before you didn't see yourself exactly the same way as, let's say, women protesting at the Miss America pageant-

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

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Burning... no, no. That I thought was, that was beside the point. If those gals wanted to do it, fine. They're not fired, there's no recrimination, there's nothing. Go ahead and do it, I just think it demeans them. If they want to, let them.

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BETSY WEST:

Tell me how you saw the difference. You were like, what was the...

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BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

We were- I really don't know. I just thought it was demeaning to fight- If these ladies want to do it, fine.

00:29:09:00

BETSY WEST:

I'm sorry, to do "what?"

00:29:10:00

BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

If they want to- I didn't think anything wrong with the Miss America contest, if they want to do it, fine. I just, that's their bag and I don't know why they would protest. Let them do what they want to do. It's not affecting anybody.

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00:29:26:00

BETSY WEST:

Did you think of yourself as a feminist?

00:29:30:00

BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

No, I thought of myself as fair play. Fair play, fairness. I thought 50% of the globe would hold up 50% of the sky, I don't think that we should take the crap that we've been taken for so long, and unless we stand up and fight for it, nobody else is.

00:29:29:00

BETSY WEST:

Did you think that some of the women's movement was going too far in terms of alienating people...

00:29:56:00

BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

Yes. I think the bra burners and all that junk was nonsense. What does that accomplish? You go to Africa and you see why we wear brassieres.

00:30:07:00

BETSY WEST:

Did that...

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00:30:08:00

BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

That turned me off, yeah, that turned me off.

00:30:11:00

BETSY WEST:

Do you think it turned off other-

00:30:12:00

BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

Oh, yes, I think it did. I know it turned off the flight attendants and Phyllis... Martha was always so beautifully dressed in her Ferragamo shoes and Chanel suits and she just looked- And she was happy to be a woman. These women that were burning their brassieres were almost saying, "I don't want to be a woman." I want to be a woman but I want to be fair. And there is a big difference. I don't want to be a man. I want to be a woman and I want it to be fair.

00:30:40:00

BETSY WEST:

Talk to me a little bit about your own personal choice: what you wanted to do with your life, and also about the kind of the work-family challenge that so many women face. How did you tackle that?

00:30:51:00

BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

I didn't have a work- I didn't have a family so I didn't have any problems. I was totally... what I wanted to do when I wanted to do it. And I was engaged a couple of times and then I kept thinking, "Gee, I want to go to the inaugural ball and I can't if I'm married to Joe." And I had a date to the inaugural ball, several of them. I went to Kennedy's and Eisenhower's second. And there were just so many things that I wanted to do.

00:31:20:00

And I kept saying I'll get married later. I'll get married later. I want to go to Hong Kong and have clothes made. I want to go here. I'll get married later. I want to ski St. Moritz. And I did. No regrets at all.

00:31:37:00

BETSY WEST:

So you stayed working as a stewardess, did things get better for you-

00:31:41:00

BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

They got better for me in many ways because we started flying Europe—London, Paris, Frankfurt, New Zealand. Fly fishing in New Zealand where you throw them back if they're under 5 pounds. Really, truly. And Australia I loved, I just loved Australia and New Zealand. And then the last

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few years I flew Hawaii. I just loved Hawaii. Oh, Hawaii is wonderful. Oh. Just that, the air there just caresses you.

00:32:14:00

BETSY WEST:

How important do you think that the birth control pill was, to women of your generation?

00:32:20:00

BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

Oh, I think it was immensely important to my generation. It meant that you didn't have to have a baby if you didn't want one, and a lot of married people didn't want to have babies. These gals, some of them got married at 40 and they didn't want- 35, they didn't want to have babies. The birth control pill gave women a choice on whether to have children or not, and it also gave them the choice of whether to have them, and it gave them the choice of when to have them.

00:32:50:00

BETSY WEST:

I'm wondering why you think women today think of feminism as a dirty word.

00:32:58:00

BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

I really don't know. I think it's total ignorance and I think Flora Davis' book, she wrote her book because her daughter did not know some of the things that we had gone through. They just took for granted the fact that women will be paid the same as men, that women will have as many opportunities- that we'll have more women in Congress than we did, we'll have a Supreme Court Justice. Can you believe that? On the supreme court.

00:33:27:00

They take it for granted now. The way I took it for granted, to vote. But my grandmother didn't because she couldn't vote till she was a certain age. So she didn't take it for granted. I did, and I think each generation takes for granted the gifts they have been given by the previous generation.

00:33:45:00

BETSY WEST:

You know a lot of women have been given the opportunity to go to professional school to take advantage of training that you couldn't, obviously, when you were younger, and yet, there's been a study showing very large percentage of graduates with advanced degrees who wind up opting out of pursuing careers like this. What do you think that is about? Do you have thoughts about that?

00:34:12:00

BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

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I just think that some people have more ambition than others. And more self confidence. And more motivation. The same way with men but men are expected to do more. We don't expect women to do as much as we expect men to do. We criticize a man when he stays home and takes care of the babies. We don't say, "Oh, the woman is a homemaker."

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BETSY WEST:

Do you think a lot of women shy away from ambition?

00:34:41:00

BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

I do. I don't think it's emphasized enough in the home. I think you get a lot of this from your mother and your father, what your parents expect you to be. And I looked at my mother and my father and my grandmother, and my grandmother was a... she was a Christian science practitioner in downtown Cleveland at her age. And my mother had a good business. And I just accepted that and I thought it was wonderful and it did not detract at all from the kind of mother she was.

00:35:12:00

BETSY WEST:

Did you read *The Feminine Mystique*? Did it kind of click with you at the time?

Betty Friedan?

00:35:18:00

BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

I'll tell you the one that I liked. I read *The Female Eunuch* by Germaine Greer and I loved it. *The Feminine Mystique*, yeah. There was something in all of them that appealed to me. Not all of it but there was something in every single one of them that appealed to me. "Yeah, that's right, ah ha, ah ha." I remember one time when in *The Female Eunuch*, she spoke about her brother being treated differently than she was.

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And this thing came back to me, in spite of how liberated our family was. My brother wanted another glass of milk and my grandmother got up to get him one. And I wanted a glass of milk and I had to go get my own. That was when I went, "Ah, that's what that was." I remembered something clicked there that I just didn't think was right. Nana would get up for David but not for me.

00:36:20:00

BETSY WEST:

What's the best advice that you've ever received?

00:36:24:00

BARBARA "DUSTY" ROADS:

I guess it was, "Do the best you can." Whatever you do, do the best you can. I was always active in sports and I always wanted to win, I really worked hard

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to win. Whatever you do, do it well. Winston Churchill once said he would walk by a man that was laying bricks, and he asked him what he's doing and he said, "I'm laying bricks." Went by another man and the man was laying bricks, he said, "What are you doing?" He said, "I'm building a cathedral."

END TC: 00:37:00:00