

TEMPE ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
Tempe Historical Museum
809 E. Southern Avenue
Tempe, AZ 85282

Project Director:
John Akers, Curator of History

Narrator: JAN YOUNG

Interviewer: Lisa K. Miller

Date of Interview: May 2, 2001

Interview Number: OH - 169

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Biography

Jan Young was born in Baltimore, Maryland in 1918. In 1951, married with three children, Jan moved to Tempe, at the suggestion of her doctor, to see if the dry climate would improve her chronic sinus condition and her low blood pressure. She had been educated as a school librarian, and upon arriving in the Valley, she took as her first position the librarianship at the Roosevelt School. Later she worked as a librarian at Monument Valley High School on the Indian reservation. Moving back to Tempe, Jan canceled her teaching contract when a position of press photographer opened at the *Tempe Daily News*. Jan was to remain with the *TDN* for fourteen years until the *Tribune* chain took over the paper.

Up until 1957, Jan had never so much as loaded a camera, but during her time she was employed as a librarian she took photography courses at Arizona State University and in Sedona. She immediately fell in love with the art form and consequently let her painting, which she had done for years, dwindle. As perhaps the first female full-time press photographer in the state of Arizona, Jan photographed many high-profile figures, but she is mostly known for her photos of the residents, scenes, and events of the growing city of Tempe. Jan is remembered by many as being clad in her ever-present trench coat, driving her blue Volkswagen Bug, and shooting only one shot per assignment.

BEGIN TAPE ONE, SIDE ONE

Miller: This is Lisa K. Miller for the Tempe Historical Museum Oral History Project. Today is Wednesday, May 2, 2001, and we are with Jan Young. Jan, can you start by giving us some background information on yourself—where you were born, educational background, and so on?

Young: I am from Baltimore, Maryland, and was born in 1918, which makes me a senior citizen by this time.

Miller: And a brave woman. [Laughter]

Young: My father was a Reformed minister, and my heritage is Pennsylvania Dutch from western Pennsylvania, besides Maryland. In fact, I still have the Pennsylvania Dutch furniture in my home that I brought from Pennsylvania. I was married in Maryland and have three children. In 1951, suffering from horrible sinus and low blood pressure, the dear old family doctor said the only thing that is ever going to cure you is to go sit in the sun in Arizona. So, we came out and sat in the sun, which contributed to my wrinkles all my life, but it cured my low blood pressure in about two years plus my sinus trouble. I was very happy.

Miller: Sitting in the sun cures low blood pressure?

Young: The doctor at that time said there just wasn't a cure for low pressure, and I was falling and fainting all over the place. It took about two years to bring it up to normal, and it's been normal ever since. So, that's rather interesting.

I had gone to Western High School, which was a girl's high school. In fact, my elementary school education was purely female because it was an all-girls school, and the high school was an all-girls school, and I never actually saw a boy until I was out of high school, which today would be considered a horrible kind of education, if there weren't any boys around. So then when I was about 35-years old, (first we lived in Scottsdale and then we moved to Tempe) I decided to go to ASU. And I went to ASU and spent my time in college for two degrees in the art department, and that is where I discovered photography. I had never loaded a camera before in my life.

Miller: And this would have been what year?

Young: That was about 1957-58. I had gone to Sedona for the summer session art course, and I was sick and tired of painting, and I wasn't the world's greatest painter. So they offered their first photography course in the art department. Before then, photography was never considered an art, and there were only two other places in

the country—Kansas State University and University of San Francisco—that had ever offered photography as art. And also, the museum up in Chicago (Art Institute) also taught photography as art. Of course, it was black and white photography, which was wonderful because my conception of becoming a good photographer is purely to start out with black and white because then you understand the difference between light and shadow, and color to me is just a prop to make people look at it because it's colorful. So, if you can't dig black and white photography, why, you're just not going to be a good photographer in color even.

Miller: Black and white is still used quite a bit today, for example, for an actor's portfolio. Your professional photos, aren't those usually done in black and white?

Young: Because people's different concepts of it don't want to be influenced by color. If you can shoot wonderful, artistic black and white, then you're considered a gallery-type photographer. They are showing color, I noticed, at the Phoenix Art Museum they have a show of Mexican photographers, and that was in color, but in the United States, if you go to the big museums and see the famous photographers, it's in black and white. Like Ansel Adams and people of that caliber.

I came out as a school librarian, which I truly loved, and also two teaching certificates, both at the high school and the elementary level. So my first library job was at Roosevelt School Library. It was a very large library, and they gave me two wonderful assistants, clerks, and then I'd build the libraries for the new schools in the Roosevelt District. I loved it; however, somebody wanted to become head of the libraries in the system, and after I had ordered—I'll never for the number—5,200 books on the little white cards with seven entries on it, and already to go to the publisher. And this particular person sent three great big boxes of Demco cards over, and here the clerks and I had stayed up nights and typed and typed all these new cards, and she insisted that I retype it all on Demco cards. And that is when I quit my job, because I could not—I went to the school board, I went everywhere—but they would not allow me to use the white cards because Miss So-and-So said it had to be Demco cards. Without any rhyme or reason because I told her all I had to do—in those days we had a shelf list, all you had to do was count the shelf list to know how many books you have in certain categories—but she didn't know that. So I said, Well, the heck with this. I'm just going to up and quit. So I did because I knew the clerks could take over for the students because they knew how to do it.

So anyway, that was my one experience in the library that I truly enjoyed, but my problem was dealing with administrations, which happened up at Monument Valley High School a few years later. You know, when you handle a money

budget, you can't deviate from it, and sometimes people would ask me to do just that, and I refused to do it. So I would quit my job again. So this went on for eight years really, and finally this friend of mine who happened to be the high school news photographer for the *Tempe Daily News* happened to be promoted to a job as a camera for Channel 10. He had gone to high school with my girls and hung around the house all the time, and he came in one night and said, Jan I'm in a fix. I can't get a photographer for Frank Connolly. And he has been so good to me.

Miller: And Frank Connolly was...?

Young: The publisher of the *Tempe Daily News*. So he said, Would you please take over for me--this was after I had developed my own black and white lab at home--until I can find somebody, for, say, two weeks in the summer? So I did, and I fell madly in love with the job, and I turned in my teacher's contract again.

Miller: So photography had been a hobby that you were developing all the time that you were a librarian?

Young: Yes, I enjoyed it. Once I took the course up in Sedona. You have to fall madly in love with photography because it takes up your whole life and [is] time-consuming. And if you don't love what you're doing, you can't produce. That's how I stayed at the *Tempe Daily News* for 14 years. In the meantime, I had also been doing theatrical stills for a booking agent out of Hollywood. It took me two years to learn to do a beautiful theatrical still for a portfolio.

Miller: Can you explain what...?

Young: They're black and white 8 by 10 action shots in costume and makeup for the actors. For instance, if they want to be in western movies, then you create the whole scene. And so I did this for quite some time and had done some very good work, but it did take me a couple years to learn it.

Miller: Did you do any actor's whose names we would recognize today?

Young: Yes, I guess the biggest one years ago was an actor by the name of Boston Blackie. He was in a series out of Hollywood. I did a whole book for him. The agents at that time were booking local people for the movie companies that would come over and had to have action stills, so I did those. So, that made it very simple for me to do this Maria book because the author and I collaborated on the research and everything of her part of it. She helped me to get the costumes, the actors together, and we set up schedules and went out to Golindrinas, and it took me a day and a-half to shoot 105 stills that are in the book.

Miller: And the name of the book is *Maria, Mata and the Grandmother*, and it was published what year? 1993.

Young: Sunstone Press up in Santa Fe.

Miller: This is a collaboration with you and the author?

Young: She was a good writer. She had done children's materials before back East. We were very dear friends, and the combination of what she would suggest and I would suggest would always jibe as far as the research was concerned. Of course, she did the writing, and she helped get the costumes together. Then I made a list of the pictures exactly as I wanted to shoot them according to the book. And that is why we did it in such a short period of time. The Living Museum let us use the interiors as long as we didn't disturb anything. Everything was shot right there.

Miller: I understand that your daughter and your great granddaughter were involved with that.

Young: Yes, whenever I needed models. I had a second daughter that had done modeling for commercials. Then the first daughter had a professional classic Spanish dance company. So they were well-acquainted with the actions and everything. If someone would give them directions, they would do it. The great granddaughter, of course, was only two-years old, and she followed directions and thought it was loads of fun. So she's in the book. The second daughter, Carol, did the pen and ink drawings for the book. It was just like movie script and we followed it through.

Miller: It is a book of stories?

Young: No, it is a book about the grandmother. The grandfather dies up in New Mexico. [In] the culture back in the 1880s, there was a grandfather's house and a grandmother's house. When one or the other would die, then they would be along either in the grandmother's house or the grandfather's house, whichever they wanted to call it, and would leave their big farm or ranch if they were happening to live in a large home. Then one of the grandchildren was selected to go and live with them and help them out and take care of them. Ten-year old Maria was elected to go live with Grandmother, but she didn't want to.

Miller: So, this is a true story?

Young: This is a fictional story of the way life was back in the 1880s at Rancho de las Golindrinas. The grandmother is a corindera, which is an herbalist. And it has a glossary in the back. The story of Maria and Grandmother teaching her all the

different ways of living in that area. She had to learn to do this because she was spoiled because her mother always did the cooking and things of that sort. It is a picture of life of a family at a rancho back in the 1880s and this particular ranch happened to be a stage stop. A town unit maintaining the blacksmith and all the different areas of a small village. That's what Rancho de las Golindrinas is. You can still go up there and see it today. It's a living museum.

Then Stella died a couple months a couple months after I came back to Phoenix, and one of her daughters took over the publication of the book because I was down here, and they thought Sunstone Press would pay to pick it up. So they did. However, the circulation of the Sunstone Press told them that they could not market it outside of the state. And Sunstone Press was going to do the marketing in New Mexico. So as a result, it hasn't gotten around very much. I think it may be very valuable to the cultural aspects of the Spanish back in the 1800s. Very educational, besides the writing is geared to the middle school. Even adults enjoy it because of the information in it. My contention years before that as a librarian and a photographer at the time, I said that due to the fact that years ago color was so expensive to print. For instance, color separation would cost over \$350 even 20 years, and so black and white could be produced with very little expense if the photographer did it himself. I said, Why can't children, or people in general, understand black and white? Why do they have to have color? Because that was the era of library books that came out in these bright, imaginative fantasy colors. I think, as a librarian, I found some man in San Francisco that had tried to publish a book in black and white for children about animals. How successful it was, I don't know, but I think I got the idea that this is possible to do this in black and white from him. Why can't they relate to black and white? Why must they have brilliant colors, which actually when you come down to it, are not natural. If you look at television today, that is not what the eye sees. If I am looking at you, the colors are going to be much brighter on television, and not natural.

Miller: I remember reading books like *Make Way for Ducklings* and all those famous children books, and I believe those all had black and white illustrations.

Young: That was many years ago. I don't know when the advent of color came in, but it seemed to be back in probably the mid-60s or early '60s, and that is when I was appalled at the fact that everything had to be in color, and why can't it be in black and white as it was many years before?

Miller: Is the book still in print?

Young: It's available. In fact, I called up there to Sunstone Press and ordered ten copies just to give to friends. That's the retail price on the back. That is a little more than half the price of the regular book. I tried peddling the books around, but I

never had the time or the energy to take them around to libraries. It was my hope that Sunstone Press would get it into the *Library Journal* or one of the catalog books for review, but they never put their best foot forward and did that. So, it's still in the first printing.

Miller: Maybe you should take it to an Arizona Library Association conference because they have a lot of children's books vendors and distributors.

Can you describe your years with the *Tempe Daily News*. You said you worked there 14 years?

Young: I was there approximately 14 years. I went down to the *Tempe Daily News* and met two of the most wonderful bosses I ever had. That was Frank and Irma Connolly. They were tremendous. Once Frank saw what I could do and handle, he would say to me, O.K., you go fill the paper with pictures.

Miller: He didn't give you a specific assignment?

Young: No. He'd say, Jan, go take care of this. Do this, do that. We need a picture page this week. So I'd rush out and get a whole picture page of something I would find and see. Then, if any of the big shot politicians came to town like Johnny Rhodes or Senator Hayden, he would say, O.K., Jan, go out and get 'em. But he never had to tell me what to get because that was part of the fun job. I could say to myself, What does the paper want? In other words, I could do my own thinking. Then, a new reporter from ASU would be hired, a young reporter, and they evidently told him at ASU to get a sheet of contact prints from a photographer and then you choose the picture. They would get there and say, O.K., Jan, go here and pick up this. They would write it on a piece of paper. Then I would bring a picture back. Then the reporter would say, I can't accept that picture. I need a contact sheet of all the pictures you shot. I'd say, I'm sorry but I only shot one picture. Then they would go in tears to Frank Connolly and say, Well, Jan refuses to give me a contact sheet so I can choose a picture. Frank would say to them, You do the writing and Jan Young will do the photography. When you give her directions of what you want, what she brings back is what you're going to put in the paper.

Miller: Were they wanting you to supply the photograph and then they would write the story around the photograph?

Young: No, not necessarily. They would write the cut line if they wanted to do their own cut line. I explained what it was. They gave me a sheet of paper that said, "Johnny is getting an award from Tempe Union High School" and then they'd say what the award was about, and [they would say], I want Johnny in the picture plus so and so and so and so. And I would go and do it. But they thought I would

shoot a whole roll of film. And they wanted to choose. That's why Frank would say, Jan can't write but you can't shoot pictures like Jan. So Jan chooses the picture to illustrate what you want her to illustrate. That was the idea. Now the reason for me being one shot was because I had to fill the whole paper, and it took 70-80 pictures to fill that paper. So I would have to come up with 70 to 80 pictures—even more—to fill every demand for each page of the paper. I couldn't take 70 or 80 rolls, and I wasn't about to because I was taught that you learn to look through the view finder and you design your picture and you shoot it. Cover yourself if you feel like you should with one shot, but there is no reason. I learned to do that because I had developed my own pictures late at night and then printed at 4 or 5:00 in the morning in order to hit the deadline of 7:00. I had to have sometimes as many as 10 or 12 pictures to print every morning in order to meet the deadline. If there was a fire in the middle of the night, the fire department would call me after they dispatched, if it was big enough, and give me the address. Then I would throw my trench coat on. Everybody wondered what I had on under it in the middle of the night.

Miller: I've heard about that trench coat.

Young: I was going to wear it but it was too dusty. Usually I had a short nightie under the trench coat and a fast pair of slip-on shoes. Then I'd run out, and I had my trusty little blue Bug. In those days, the police and fire departments knew me, and I could go past the speed limit and often beat the paramedics and the fire department or police to the scene. I always had wonderful relationships with them. I never got in the way and never caused them any embarrassment through my photographs. These day, that does not exist, which is sad. The motivation was being able to create and do the job with the assistance with the newspaper, what they wanted me to do. But then it was left up to me to create the manner in which I would do it. From the very start, after Frank saw that I could handle it, he allowed me to do that.

Later on I worked for the *Tribune* for a couple years, and it wasn't that way. We shot accidents thinking that people would slow down if they saw bad accidents [in the paper]. The viewers of the papers would say the next morning, O.K., I'm not going to exceed the speed limit. I might get into an accident like I saw in the paper. However, the paramedics always told me if the victim was going to make it or not. To begin with, I never shot the victim because of the feelings that the family might have seeing the picture in the paper. I never even shot the victim covered up with a sheet. But I would get out of the car—and this is the reason I could do one shot for any reason—and know exactly where I could park in the distance and then I would have the picture framed in my mind before I even got up to the scene, whatever it was I knew what I was going to shoot. In a case of an accident or a parade or something like that, I already knew exactly what I was

going to do. That is why I could do the one shot. In other words, you start from the time you hear about it thinking about what you're going to do. Of course, my art training at ASU in design and general art education for those five or six years gave me the ability to design through the viewfinder, looking on that round glass thing. You could design it on there, and if you didn't like it, you could move two inches and make something different out of it. Most people don't look on the viewfinder; they think the camera takes the picture. That's why they have so many failures. I am talking about regular, ordinary folks that are trying to shoot pictures. I notice even today in design and what have you, there is just one basic design that you can have in time that create decoration in your house when you hang pictures, your clothing, anything. Things in odd numbers are much more interesting to look at than even numbers. You have to move your eye and use your brain to see what on the viewfinder.

Miller: What would you consider the most important photograph you ever took?

Young: Well, I've always said, I took the last photographs of Senator Carl Hayden when he retired. He liked me to come into his house or wherever because I did it so quietly and so quickly and I smiled. I really felt so good about being able to do the pictures of him. Then, of course, Johnny Rhodes used to come up and give me a kiss on the cheek and say, Jan, what do you want? And all the TV camera and newspeople standing around and waiting for a shot. And he would give me the first chance to do my own thing with him. Even to this day--he's retired in Mesa--but he's a real fine guy. The most unusual scene I ever went to, I was supposed to go and shoot a picture of ex-President Ford. John Rhodes was there, it was in downtown Phoenix somewhere, and Frank had gotten me clearance with the Secret Service. So here this little old gray-haired lady in the dirty trench coat and a camera and a bunch of stuff hanging around her neck walks in, and John get President Ford together. I always told John to get real close. And I went up to the picture and I felt two big burly men pushing my arms against me. Two Secret Servicemen clamped my arms against my sides. They thought I was going to lift my hand to shoot. Instead, I had a view camera that I looked down in, so I got the shot anyway. But they were scared to death that little gray-haired lady was going to pull a gun on the president or something.

Miller: So, you took the picture while they had hold of your arms?

Young: Yes, so that was the most unusual thing.

Miller: What about the most fun picture?

Young: Everything was fun. I especially enjoyed the picture pages because I could search out what would make a wonderful picture page. For instance, once I had a picture

page of clouds down by the river. I shot six pictures just by standing in one spot and moving around. In other words, you could take a whole picture page without going anywhere, except to stand still with your camera.

Miller: I see your problem with library administration. You are creative and autonomous. That doesn't work well with administration and budgets. [Laughter]

Young: I loved being in the library though.

Miller: Did you ever get the short that every photographer is looking for?

Young: I guess you would say one that no other photographer got. I happened to be riding in my trusty old blue bug down at 5th and Mill years ago, and there was a shooting in an apartment on West 4th Street, or something like that wherever it was. Evidently, the woman and the boyfriend had shot the husband in the apartment and they ran out with the year-old baby and started running. They didn't have a car; they must have gone on foot. Down at 5th and Mill—of course, I had a police monitor around my neck all the time—I parked my car and happened to come across the action practically right there, just a few feet from it. There was a police officer sitting in the car because he had to shoot the man, and he grazed the baby's leg. He didn't kill the man. The man was using the baby as a shield. So I got a picture of the officer sitting in the car, and then a picture of someone else. The man dropped the baby and ran. Some bystander picked up the baby with the wound of his leg, and then they caught the man and the woman and the police had them sitting down on the ground handcuffing. So I got three shots, and no other photographer or newspeople were around at all.

Miller: And that was because you happened to be there?

Young: Because I was listening to the police monitor and listening to where it was happening. Then, of course, I had to choose a quick place where I could park legally out of their way. Then I ran over and there I was.

Miller: Now while you were doing this all these years you were married and had kids. At this point were they teenagers, in college? How did this affect your family life?

Young: The two girls were in high school and the boy was 10 or 11-years old.

Miller: So, if you had to jump up at 3:00 o'clock to go and take a photograph, what it O.K.?

Young: It so happened that I had sued my husband for divorce toward the end of my college career. I had an aunt who had come to live with me from Pennsylvania.

They had sold the farm and she had no place to go, and she was a dear person and very close to me. She was always at my home in Tempe when the kids were in school. She lived with us. She took care of the kids from then on out. Of course, when I had to jump up in the middle of the night she was always there. She lived actually until the kids were on their own and grown.

Miller: What did your kids think of your career? Did they think it was cool?

Young: They didn't use that term. I'm not sure that they thought much about it because I asked them about certain things today, just out of curiosity. They do remember certain things I did, when I had to go out and shoot. They said, Oh, yes, I remember that, or, Well, you didn't tell me you did that. Of course, they were awfully busy with dance lessons and all that sort of thing.

Miller: It sounds like they turned out to be very creative as well?

Young: Yes, they were very successful in what they did. Then Mark, the boy, was left, and he was trying to work and go to ASU at the same time and in an apartment with the boys. I told him to come home and mow the lawn and just don't cause me any hassle and finish college and wash the dishes once and awhile. Forget all about working your way through college. Then he became a computer engineer, a rather well-known one. He developed the satellites for the Lincoln Town Car.

Miller: The global positioning system?

Young: Yes, he would bring the town car home on weekends. He took me for a ride once. So I opened the door, and a man's voice said, You're not Mr. So-and-So. Creative? He does beautiful woodwork just to be creative. Now he teaches computers at Phoenix College.

Miller: What's his name?

Young: Mark Kirshner. So, anyway, they survived it. They never knew when Mom would be around, but they always had Aunt Susan to cook for them and to make sure they behaved themselves. So they are three good kids.

Miller: What were your favorite types of events to cover? Which were the most fun and interesting to go to?

Young: Everything. Everything was fun unless it was tragic. But Frank Connolly's idea for his paper was that it was a community daily, and he wanted everything covered that was starting to grow in Tempe. When a new church or religious facility came in for groundbreaking, he covered that. New industry, the

development of different businesses to promote them. It was basically free publicity to get companies in progress in Tempe. I enjoyed all that. And he supported all the community aspects for children, and Frank Kush was most cooperative. Anytime I needed a picture to promote children, I would call Frank Kush,

Miller: And he was a coach?

Young: He was a rather well-known coach at ASU.

END OF TAPE ONE, SIDE A

BEGINNING OF TAPE ONE, SIDE B

Miller: Jan, can you tell us how you view the changes that Tempe has experienced in your years here?

Young: When we moved to Tempe in 1954 or '53, or something like that, it was something like 10,000 population. Then, of course, it started growing. However, I view this new Tempe as we see it with a little bit of sadness because, in the first place, so many of the old folks are gone, naturally. Secondly, the politics, if I may express my views about the politics of Tempe, it has changed quite a bit over the years. It is very vindictive. Instead of stating issues, they are pulling things out of the air about the horrible things about the opposite candidate, but this appears to be nation. This leaves me sad in itself because I think that we're losing a lot of good people that would otherwise run for different local politics.

Miller: Are you referring to the recall effort of the current mayor?

Young: No, I live in Chandler and I wouldn't have any part of that. I basically want to stay away from it, to tell you the truth, because I don't agree with a lot of it. However, this is what makes me so sad is that people, instead of looking at the good that they can do or will do or do do, they try everything in the world to discredit them. My daughter happens to be in a business that she has to deal with the Tempe City Hall quite a bit, and she is very discouraged because there is no-money seems to be the most important thing in the world. It is not the way it was. In the old days on the paper, Frank Connolly would go to the meeting of the city council every morning, and he'd sit there and listen to them. And they had to behave themselves because he kept them all out of trouble. He showed up every single morning in City Hall. They knew he was coming down there, and boy, they had to fly right. It is not that way these days.

Miller: So, the changes in the politics have not pleased you. What about the development

of Tempe.

- Young: They are trying to do a good job, but then I notice there are too many high rises going up. A lot of the small businesses and historic places are being destroyed because of this. I see no reason why Tempe has to be big-time New York. It doesn't make sense to me. Why can't they retain it as a wonderful place for people to go instead of going down Mill Avenue and you think you're in New York City?
- Miller: I've heard a lot of people say that because Tempe is now landlocked by the other valley cities that it is inevitable that growth will be upward. Some of them regret that, and some of them think it's great.
- Young: My thought is why does it have to be on Mill Avenue? There is plenty of extra space elsewhere where they can put high rises that are just a stone's throw from Mill Avenue. Then, of course, the thing about the Butte. Well, finally people trying to develop the whole butte. They were going to bulldoze half of it away or some such thing. They finally lost out on that, and they are going to put [another high rise] a couple hundred yards from the Butte, some kind of development was taking over the flour mill. Too many hotels, too many this, too many that. I don't know if the bookstore is still on Mill Ave.
- Miller: Changing Hands?
- Young: I don't think they have it on Mill Avenue yet. So, some of these delightful little places that you could go in and enjoy are disappearing. I see so many new gourmet restaurants coming in, which will eventually get rid of the wonderful little places that the average person could afford to go. My question is, I guess there are enough millionaires to afford it [living in a penthouse on Mill Avenue].
- Miller: Let me ask you about what it was like to be a woman in a mostly male profession? You've told me you've had some really good relations with the city agency and the press, and so forth. Was it a little difficult for you at times?
- Young: The only time in fourteen years, I went to take a picture of a man in front of his little store at the Tempe Center when it was little stores. I get out of the car and I come up and he is waiting at the door. He says, Why did the newspaper send a woman? That was the only time in fourteen years, and I smiled sweetly and I said, Well, the newspaper sent a woman because there wasn't a man photographer there to come and take this wonderful picture of you to go in the paper. Then he calmed down. I'm not sure, but I think I was the first full-time only press photographer on a daily paper in the state at that time. Of course, there were ladies that would take pictures of the garden club and send them to the newspaper,

which we always printed. I even did a football game, and when the big bruiser came rolling toward me and almost knocked me down, I thought, I can't afford to get a new camera. So I told the boys, You go do it from now on. But I used to do features on the football field when I had to. It all goes down to one thing, and this is true in most every other business, when you walk into a place you smile. It just takes a smile. Same way with being any kind of a service person, like librarian....I was up on the Navajo reservation teaching for three years, due to the fact I smiled at the students even though there was a language barrier, they had my confidence after two week. When I first went there the teacher said to me, Well, it's going to take six weeks before Johnny is even going to say good morning to you.

Miller: What do you think about modern technology, like the Internet and photo wire services? How have they affected the job of a newspaper photographer?

Young: The trouble is with the photographers today, of course, this doesn't go for all of them, I hope, is that everything is done for them. They don't have to develop their film, and the worst part of it is, on a newspaper today, even these small community papers, somebody goes in there who knows how to shoot a roll of film and gets a job as the photo editor. Well, I was never exposed to a thing like a photo editor because I edited all my own work. The photo editor in some cases, when I was exposed to any of them, seemed to know less about what you were doing than the photographer. And I think this is true today. So their growth basically is stunted by what they call the photo editor. Maybe it's necessary, but they don't have any choice. They just turn in a roll of film. They shoot a roll of film, and they only have two or three assignments a day, where I would have anywhere from ten to twelve. In that two or three assignments, all they were concerned about was shooting off the roll because they told them to shoot a roll. This came out of ASU journalism a long time ago. Shoot a roll in hopes that you get a good shot. If I had to shoot a roll to get a good shot, I would have thrown my camera away. I'm not about to take a roll of pictures to try to get a good shot.

Miller: So you think a lot of the skill is being lost?

Young: A lot of the talent is, the creativity of it, and a lot of the satisfaction of being a part of the paper is lost. These people are told to go out and use crazy lenses. That is why I quit the *Tribune* because they wanted me to use a distorting lens. In other words, make people's heads look bigger than their feet.

Miller: For what purpose?

Young: Just to attract attention. People that don't deal with reality in photography use all these different methods of doing something crazy so people will look at it. That is not photography. If you can't deal with the reality of the subject, then you are not

a photographer. In other words, these photo clubs of these wonderful people who are retired and have all these thousands of dollars-worth of equipment, when they go in the photo lab to print something, if they want a moon in the picture, they stick a half-dollar piece down on the print paper and make a moon.

There was an atrocious bit of photography at the Phoenix Art Museum. This guy had colored pictures five-feet by six-feet. Just pure sensationalism. Nothing real at all about it.

Miller: Imagine that someone is listening to this tape or reading the transcript of it, say, fifty or 100 years from now, is there anything else you want to add? Is there anything you would like them to know about Tempe, about your career as a photographer, about yourself?

Young: I think I've just about said everything. I shot a couple pictures of famous people. I did a photograph of Ansel Adams when he was in Arizona once. I sent him an 8 by 10 (he was here with his wife and I happened to meet him and asked if I could shoot his picture). He sent me a letter and he said, "I look just like an elf in the woods." I looked at the picture and I said, I'll be darn, he does look like an elf in the woods. I've done pictures of well-known people, and they have been very nice. One or two politicians haven't been nice. They've refused to pose with somebody that I wanted in the picture, but other than that, my whole life has been a wonderful experience. I'm very happy. The last time a doctor sat me down to check me out, he said I'd live to be 100. I'm working on it.

END OF INTERVIEW