

Ashley Battilana

Question Script for NJ Women's Voices Interview

1) What is your:

Name? **Jean Overpeck**

Age? **54**

Education level? **High School**

Current profession? **School Bus Driver**

Marital status? **Married**

Race/Ethnicity? **White**

Hometown/where were you born? **Camden**

Political affiliation? **Democrat**

Religion? (Or, would you consider yourself a religious/spiritual person?) **Catholic**

Relationship to me (the interviewer)? **Godmother/Family friend**

2) In what format did the interview take place? Face to face

3) Do you have children? (How many? What ages/genders?) **Yes: 2. 21/Male; 19/ Female**

4) What do you think about full-time stay-at-home mothers? What about full-time stay-at-home fathers? If you have or plan to have children, what influenced, influences or will influence your decision about how to manage childcare? **I do not have a problem with full-time stay-at-home mothers.**

I have mixed feelings about stay-at-home dads, I feel if possible the mother should be the one that stays home as they tend to more of a nurturer which I believe children need, however that's a choice each couple has to make on their own, whatever works best for their situation.

Before having my children my husband and I discussed that I would stay home with them until they were at least school age and then if needed get a part-time job whereby I would be home when they came home from school and we were fortunate to be able to do that, so childcare was not an issue.

5) For you, what defines a woman? Is there anyone you can think of that embodies these qualities?

To me nothing in particular defines a woman. A woman is a woman. However there are strong women and there a weak women, just as there are strong men and weak men. If you are asking me what defines a strong woman it is the ability to take on the challenges that life sends their way and tackle them head on. They should be able to handle more than one task at a time; problem solve; stay true to whatever convictions they may have; and fight for what they feel is right. There are many in our society today that embody those qualities.

6) What do you believe is the most challenging part about being a woman in today's society? What personal struggles have you faced as a woman?

The most challenging part of being a woman today is the expectations that are put upon us. We are expected to raise the children, work outside the home, manage finances, take care of the household such as cleaning, cooking, food shopping, homework, etc.

The personal struggles I have faced is wondering if I have lived up to the expectations placed upon me and if I have done/am doing it well. I also find it harder to secure better employment as an older woman. While I realize the economy is bad for everyone right now, employers do look upon a woman's age more harshly and would rather hire someone who is younger.

7) Do you think we still live in a society where women are sexually exploited by or oppressed by men? Why or why not? (What examples/evidence would you point to support your ideas?)

Yes. Why, because there are still males today that look down upon women as being lesser than they are. While we have come a long way the majority of the male society still feels threatened by women in the work force and their desire to get ahead. A woman has to work twice as hard in some instances to achieve what their counterpart achieved. They also have to maintain a certain "eye appeal".

Evidence of this is all over. Take for example female actress vs. a male actress, as a male ages he becomes more "distinguished" but as a female ages in order for her to remain working they have to resort to plastic surgery. And how many woman get breast augmentations in order to make themselves feel "more appealing" to the male.

8) Have you personally experienced sexism or know of anyone who has? If you have, briefly describe the situation and its outcome.

Personally I have not experienced sexism. I did have a female friend that went for a teaching job and while she had the same qualifications as a male applicant, the male applicant was hired due to the number of female teachers already hired at the school. Outcome was simply that she did not get the job and had to seek employment elsewhere. Unfortunately as much as society may say you can fight for your rights, if you do, you will become "blackballed" in your profession.

9) Do you believe there is still a double-standard when it comes to men's and women's sexual behaviors? For example, is society still more tolerant of men who have sex with multiple partners? Are there behaviors that women can exhibit that men cannot?

To a certain degree, yes, there is still a double-standard, but more with the older

generation. I don't believe there are behaviors that women can exhibit that men cannot. Men can still exhibit certain sexual behaviors and it is brushed off as "him being a man", whereby if a woman displays certain sexual behaviors she is "labeled".

10) It's often assumed that women are more emotional than men. Do you agree or disagree with that common assumption? Do you think a female president would be able to handle tough situations as well as a male president?

I do believe that women are more openly emotional than men, I do not agree that men lack the same emotions, they are just manifested in different ways and have been taught to suppress them.

Yes, I do believe that a female president would be able to handle tough situations as well as a male president.

11) What do you know about feminism? Do you consider yourself a feminist? Why or why not? If you wouldn't call yourself a feminist, is there another term that better describes you?

Feminism is whereby people fight for the rights of women to be equal to men.

I guess I would consider myself a feminist as I agree that women should have the same rights as men although I don't belong to a specific group who actively fights for it.