

Oral History of
Lynda Jacobson Keele Sorensen Stienke Christensen

Collected by Carly S. Davis
For Diane Carter's History Class

2 May 1997

INTRODUCTION: My Aunt Lynda is my mom's youngest sister. She has been married 4 times and has three kids. Her full name is Lynda Gay Jacobson Keele Sorenson Steinke Christensen. She was born January 16, 1956 in Spring Lake, Utah. She now lives in Springville, Utah.

Carly: What is your full name and why were you named it?

Lynda: Do you want all my aliases too?

Carly: (Laughs) Yeah.

Lynda: Lynda Jacobson Keele Sorenson Steinke (pause) Christensen. And why was I named that?

Because my mom would've-I would've been pissed if mom had named me Melinda instead of Lynda. I go by the middle initial J.

Carly: What's your middle name?

Lynda: Gay. I changed it when I was thirteen.

Carly: Were you named after somebody else?

Lynda: Aunt Lyndie.

Carly: Did you have a nickname as you were growing up?

Lynda: Braces Buckaroo.

Carly: (Laughs). OK, why did they call you that?

Lynda: 'Cuz I had braces on my teeth.

Carly: Have you had any other nicknames as an adult?

Lynda: Jake.

Carly: Why?

Lynda: Last name. One of 'em.

Carly: (Laughs) What do family members call you now?

Lynda: To my face, or? (Laughs)

Carly: (Laughs) Yeah, either.

Lynda: Lynda.

Carly: Where were you born and when?

Lynda: Payson.

Carly: Do you remember hearing your grandparents describe their lives?

Lynda: No, I don't remember 'em.

Carly: Do you remember your great grandparents?

Lynda: Nope.

Carly: Who was the oldest person you could remember in your family as a child? What do you remember about them?

Lynda: My mom's brother Uncle Howard 'cuz he was really nice.

Carly: Was there a chore you really hated doing as a child?

Lynda: Yep.

Carly: What?

Lynda: Cutting down the weeds in the pasture.

Carly: What would you consider to be the most important inventions that have been made during your lifetime?

Lynda: Inventions? (Under the breath) I have to burp (laughs).

Carly: (Laughs) OK. I have to put this on the interview, she said not to stop it or anything.

Lynda: OK. The most important invention...the microwave (laughs).

Carly: How is the world different now from what it was like when you were a child?

Lynda: It's all bullshit now. With kids, they don't--there's no place for 'em to go and play.

Carly: What kind of books did you like to read?

Lynda: I can't remember his name. What were them westerns I used to read? Ya-huh. Louie Lamore.

Carly: Do you remember having a favorite nursery rhyme or bedtime story?

Lynda: I remember Karen singing "Mama's Gonna Buy You A Mockingbird."

Carly: What were your favorite toys and what were they like?

Lynda: Toy horses.

Carly: What were your favorite childhood games?

Lynda: Toy horses.

Carly: What were your schools like?

Lynda: They sucked.

Carly: (Laughs) Why?

Lynda: I sat in the back of the class and I didn't say nothin' and I was bashful and I didn't learn anything and I was stupid.

Carly: How did you get to school?

Lynda: On the bus.

Carly: What was your favorite subject in school and why?

Lynda: Health, 'cuz they taught us about horses.

Carly: What subject in school was always the easiest for you?

Lynda: Health.

Carly: What was your least favorite subject in school and why?

Lynda: English and math.

Carly: Why?

Lynda: 'Cuz the English language is the hardest to learn and I never understood math.

Carly: Who was your favorite teacher and why were they special?

Lynda: Um...Worthington, 'cuz he taught health...and Mr. Hassell because he taught me about horses.

Carly: Who was your fav--how do your fellow classmates from school remember you the best?

Lynda: How do they remember me the best? (Laughs) Bashful and quiet.

Carly: What school activities and sports did you participate in?

Lynda: None.

Carly: Did you and your friends have a special hang-out where you liked to spend time?

Lynda: We used to sneak mini bottles of Whiskey in the gym class.

Carly: (Laughs) That was your hang-out?

Lynda: (Laughs) In the gym room shower when everybody else was out playing sports.

Carly: Were you ever given any special awards for your studies or school activities?

Lynda: No, I dropped out.

Carly: How many years of education have you completed?

Lynda: I graduated high school and I did four years of college.

Carly: Do you have a college degree? If so, what was your field of study?

Lynda: I did General Education and CAC.

Carly: Did you get good grades?

Lynda: Yes.

Carly: Did you like school?

Lynda: Yes. The second time around.

Carly: What did you like the most and least about it?

Lynda: The least about is I had to drive to Salt Lake and the best about is I just enjoyed learning again.

Carly: What did you usually wear to school?

Lynda: Anything I wanted (laughs).

Carly: (Laughs)

Lynda: When I was a little girl I had to wear dresses.

Carly: Were there any fads during your youth that you remember vividly?

Lynda: Bell bottoms and peace signs and sunflowers, and hot rod cars and James Dean stuff.

Carly: How old were you when you started dating?

Lynda: I never dated I just got married.

Carly: Do you rem--oh, Ok. Name a good friend that you had known-

Lynda: (Talking to my mom who interrupted) I didn't. I never went on a date--

Carly: (To my mom) Shhhh!

Lynda: --until after I after I got divorced (laughs).

Carly: Name a good friend that you have known for the longest period of time. How many years have you been friends?

Lynda: (Pause) Um...Linda Martensen.

Carly: How long have you been friends?

Lynda: Since we were thirteen.

Carly: Has there ever been anyone in your life that you would consider to be your kindred spirit or soul mate?

Lynda: No.

Carly: How did you meet the person that you would later marry? The first time.

Lynda: Which one?

Carly: Well all of 'em.

Lynda: I met him out back in the orchard smokin'.

Carly: Describe him.

Lynda: He went to the boy's ranch, he was adopted by his parent's and he was abusive.

Carly: How long did you know him before you got married?

Lynda: Probably a year.

Carly: Describe your wedding proposal.

Lynda: I can't remember it.

Carly: Um...when and where did you get married?

Lynda: Got married at the Spring Lake Church in, four days after my seventeenth birthday.

Carly: Describe the ceremony, who was there?

Lynda: Kory held my train, and Koby held my ring and dad made me laugh all the way in to the auditorium to say "I do."

Carly: Did you have a honeymoon?

Lynda: Uh, one night in Provo.

Carly: How would you describe your spouse? What did you admire most about him?

Lynda: Not a damn thing, he was an asshole.

Carly: Did you admire anything about any of your spouses?

Lynda: Yeah, my second husband. He's the only one that ever accomplished anything.

Carly: Who was that, Rod?

Lynda: Ron.

Carly: How long were you married, each time?

Lynda: The first time I was married for 23 months, the second time I was married for 10 years, the third time I was married for three months, and the fourth time I've been married almost three years.

Carly: What wise advice would you give to a grandchild on their wedding day, when you have one?

Lynda: Are you sure? (Laughs).

Carly: (Laughs). How did you find out that you were going to be a parent for the first time?

Lynda: I went to the doctor. Did a pee test and they come out and said "congratulations."

Carly: How many children did you have all together?

Lynda: Three.

Carly: What were their names, birth dates and birth places?

Lynda: Travis was born in American Fork on the 23rd of Octo-or September, 1981, Lacey was born August 3rd, 1985 in American Fork and Kady was born October 25th, 1989 in Price.

Carly: Do you remember anything that your children did when they were small that really amazed you?

Lynda: Yeah, Travis could take things apart and put 'em together at a really young age.

Carly: What is one of the most unusual things that one of your children did regularly when they were small?

Lynda: Unusual things that they did? Lacey used to chew on my chin all the time.

Carly: (Laughs)

Lynda: She did. (Laughs) Gummed my chin to death.

Carly: What was the funniest thing that you can remember that one of your children said or did?

Lynda: One time Travis took a nap when he was two years old and when he woke up we were talking about muscles, and he come out to the kitchen table and there was about five or six of us, and he goes "You wanna see my muscle?" And he stretched like that and his pants fell down and his little thinger was erect (laughs). And that was his muscle.

Carly: (Laughs) If you had to do it all over again, would you change the way you raised your family?

Lynda: Yes.

Carly: How?

Lynda: (Pause) Have more bonding between the three kids as brothers and sisters.

Carly: What did you find most difficult about raising children?

Lynda: Doin' it alone don't work.

Carly: What did you find most rewarding about being a parent?

Lynda: I considered myself blessed just being able to bring any kids into this world.

Carly: Did you spoil any of your children?

Lynda: Uh-Huh.

Carly: How?

Lynda: I over compensated with Kady after her surgery.

Carly: Were you a strict or lenient parent?

Lynda: Huh? (Background listeners asked how the situation was with Kady) How? We lost her once. I, that's a big deal. It affected everybody in the family.

Carly: How did you spoil her, after that? Did you buy her a lot of stuff, or just...

Lynda: I spent as much time as I could with her, everybody did, everybody paid a lot of attention to her. Always just tried to make her feel that, evidently she was here for a reason 'cuz she came back the second time.

Carly: Were you a strict or lenient parent?

Lynda: Overprotective and lenient.

Carly: Did you find that you had to treat each of your children differently?

Lynda: Yep.

Carly: Why?

Lynda: 'Cuz Travis didn't need half as much discipline as Lacey, and Kady just needs a lot of remindin'.

Carly: How did you first hear that you were a grandparent and how did you feel about it?

Lynda: Well Val, the shit got pregnant (laughs).

Carly: How did you feel about it?

Lynda: I was excited.

Carly: What advice do you have for your children and grandchildren?

Lynda: About what?

Carly: Anything.

Lynda: Stand up for yourself, be responsible, have goals and you'll make 'em.

Carly: As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?

Lynda: Loved.

Carly: What was your first job?

Lynda: Pickin' cherries with Brad Boyle.

Carly: What kinds of jobs have you had?

Lynda: Um...mostly, the first ten years it was sewing factories, and then machine shops, and warehouses, heavy work. Finishing concrete.

Carly: Did you make enough money to live comfortably?

Lynda: Hell no.!

Carly: (Laughs) How long did you have to work each day at your job?

Lynda: The longest I've worked is sixteen hours and the shortest I've worked's eight. Oh, how many years at one job? I've worked let me see, twelve years at High Kets.

Carly: What were the hardest choices that you ever had to make? Do you feel like you made the right choices?

Lynda: The hardest choice I ever made was lettin' my two kids go live with their dad and yes, I think it was the right decision.

Carly: Who was the person that had the most positive influence on your life? Who were they and what did they do?

Lynda: Wayman Jennings, Willie Nelson (laughs) I don't know.!

Carly: Is there a person that really changed the course of your life by doing something that they did?

Lynda: Yeah, Kady.

Carly: By dyin'?' (laughs).

Lynda: By dyin' (laughs).

Carly: Ok. Do you remember someone saying something to you that had a big impact on how you lived your life?

Lynda: Yes, and I can't remember who said it, but they said "What we cannot endure we must persevere."

Carly: How would you describe yourself politically?

Lynda: I couldn't give a shit less about any of that.

Carly: Are you conservative or Liberal and why? (Laughs)

Lynda: (Laughs) Liberal and why because I wanna be.

Carly: What wars have been fought during your lifetime? How did you feel about them?

Lynda: What wars!? Vietnam, was that a war, Desert Storm? How did I feel about 'em? I hated the Gooks and I didn't know that much about Desert Storm.

Carly: What U.S. President have you admired the most and why?

Lynda: Not one of 'em.

Carly: As you see it, what are the biggest problems that face our nation and how do you think they could be solved?

Lynda: Drugs are the biggest problem in the nation and all these parents splittin' up 'n the whole family value system has gone to hell.

Carly: How tall are you?

Lynda: Not tall enough (laughs).

Carly: (Laughs) What color was your hair as a young child and then as an adult?

Lynda: Black.

Carly: What color are your eyes?

Lynda: Brown.

Carly: Where have you lived as an adult? List the places and the years that you have lived there.

Lynda: First time I moved out I moved to Delta. For six months. And I ran away to Wyoming for six months. And then I came home and lived home for a year and then I moved to, um, Pleasant Grove, and I lived in Pleasant Grove, Lehi and American Fork for ten years. And then I moved to Santaquin. Um...and then to Payson...Castle Dale for a year, I never lived out of state have I? Oh yeah I lived in Fresno, California for six months. I lived in Twin Falls, Idaho and worked on a dairy.

Carly: Hurricane.

Lynda: St. George, yeah, for two years. Springville.

Carly: Why are you living where you are today?

Lynda: Why am I living where I are today? 'Cuz there ain't no place in Spring Lake to live
(laughs).

Carly: Do you wish you lived somewhere else?

Lynda: Spring Lake.

Carly: What made you--Ok, describe your general health.

Lynda: I'm physically really healthy, but mentally I'm a mess.

Carly: (Laughs) What major illnesses or health problems do you remember having?

Lynda: I remember having a lot of stomach aches and headaches when I was a little girl. Earaches.

Carly: Do you have any health problems that are considered hereditary in nature?

Lynda: Ulcers.

Carly: What do you do regularly for exercise?

Lynda: I work.

Carly: Do you have any bad habits now or in the past?

Lynda: Yes.

Carly: What are they?

Lynda: Smokin' and drinkin', as much as I can.

Carly: Have you ever been the victim of a crime?

Lynda: Yes.

Carly: What happened?

Lynda: I had an attempted rape on me once, and I had somebody break into my house and rob
me.

Carly: Have you ever been in a serious accident?

Lynda: I've been in three rollovers.

Carly: Has anyone ever saved your life?

Lynda: No.

Carly: Have you ever saved someone else's life?

Lynda: Ya-huh.

Carly: Describe.

Lynda: (Laughs).

Carly: (Laughs) Oh the cat?



Lynda: Kady and Tallin drowned the cat and I pumped 'im out and got all the water out of his lungs and give him mouth-to-mouth, and he lived and they used to call me Cat Woman at work.

Carly: Have you ever been hospitalized?

Lynda: Yeah.

Carly: What for?

Lynda: I had a cyst rupture on my ovary was the first time, then I had three babies and I had major knee surgery, um...I'm trying to think of my scars. That's enough.

Carly: Ok. If you could change something about yourself, what would it be?

Lynda: About myself? (Pause) My nose and my wrinkle between my eyes (laughs).

Carly: (Laughs) Have you ever had an experience that you would consider to be super-natural or psychic?

Lynda: Yes and I'm not gonna tell you about it though.

Carly: Why?

Lynda: 'Cuz it's private.

Carly: OK. What do you usually dream about?

Lynda: Horses.

Carly: What church, if any, do you attend regularly?

Lynda: Christianity.

Carly: Describe your religious beliefs.

Lynda: I believe God judges by what's in your heart and your actions toward other people.

Carly: Do you believe in an after life?

Lynda: Yeah. I believe I was in a previous life and I musta been a man and I messed up so he made me a woman in this life.

Carly: (Laughs) What was the most stressful experience that you ever lived through? What helped you get through it?

Lynda: Besides Kady's ordeal, the biggest stressors of my life has been dad dyin', twenty four hours after that my uncle dyin', uh...losin' Koby. There was just a period in our lives for like five years when we had so many deaths in the family.

Carly: What helped you to get through it?

Lynda: Other family members.

Carly: What is the scariest thing that has ever happened to you personally?

Lynda: The scariest thing? Gettin' lost up in the mountains when I was a kid.

Carly: What kinds of musical instruments have you learned to play?

Lynda: Oh my God, I'm not even ownin' up to the clarinet.

Carly: (Laughs) Would you consider yourself creative?

Lynda: No. I'm boring.

Carly: What things have you made that others have enjoyed?

Lynda: What things have I made--rice crispy bars (laughs).

Carly: (Laughs) How would you describe your sense of humor?

Lynda: Warped (laughs).

Carly: (Laughs) What is the funniest practical joke you ever played on anyone?

Lynda: (Pause) None, I always had 'em played on me.

Carly: What activities have you especially enjoyed as an adult?

Lynda: Activities...I don't know I don't do anything but work and clean.

Carly: What are your hobbies?

Lynda: Givin' my nieces interviews (laughs).

Carly: What did you like to do when you were not working?

Lynda: Oh, sit home and crochet and bake bread, (laughs) go four wheelin' and drink beer.

Carly: (Laughs) What is the most amazing thing that has ever happened to you?

Lynda: Amazing? Child birth.

Carly: What is the most embarrassing thing that has ever happened to you?

Lynda: Child birth (laughs).

Carly: (Laughs) Have you ever met any famous people?

Lynda: Ya-huh.

Carly: Describe what happened.

Lynda: I was at the laundromat in Provo on Center Street and the guys from He-Haw came in-

Carly: (Laughs)

Lynda: -no shit, the He-Haw guys came in there.

Carly: What organizations and groups have you belonged to?

Lynda: None.

Carly: Have you ever won any special awards or prizes as an adult?

Lynda: (Laughs) No.

Carly: Ok. Describe a time and place when you remember feeling truly at peace and happy to be alive.

Lynda: Self-hypnosis, and I go right up to the meadows in the mountain.

Carly: What is the most beautiful place you have ever visited and what was it like?

Lynda: What I just said.

Carly: What is the longest trip you have ever gone on? Where did you go?

Lynda: I went to um... Went through Idaho and Oregon and Washington and out on the Victorian Islands in Canada on a boat and back home.

Carly: What has been your favorite vacation? Where did you go and why was it special?

Lynda: Never had one, never been on one.

Carly: What was the favorite place you ever visited and what was it like?

Lynda: The favorite place I ever visited...I liked Fish Lake (laughs).

Carly: What pets have you had?

Lynda: Dogs and horses, and cats 'n a monkey. After the monkey and the tarantula I had a snail and a scorpion...um...that's all I can think of.

Carly: Do you have a favorite story about a pet? What is it?

Lynda: (Laughs) The scorpion got loose 'cuz I left the lid off. We didn't sleep for two weeks, everybody was crawlin' around on their hands and knees tryin' to find the scorpion.

Carly: Did you ever find it?

Lynda: No we never found him.

Carly: Is there anything you have always wanted to do, but haven't?

Lynda: What I wanted to do but I haven't?

Carly: Uh-huh.

Lynda: Yeah, I wanna go ta Italy.

Carly: Ok, what is your favorite style of music?

Lynda: I have a pretty wide spectrum on music.

Carly: What is your favorite musical instrument?

Lynda: I don't have one.

Carly: To hear, to listen to.

Lynda: To listen to? Dwight Yokam (laughs).

Carly: (Laughs) That's not an instrument .

Lynda: He's my instrument (laughs).

Carly: Ok, Who is your favorite musical group?

Lynda: Dwight Yokam.

Carly: What is your favorite song?

Lynda: (Pause) "Gone".

Carly: Who is your favorite singer?

Lynda: Conway Twitty.

Carly: Who is your favorite movie star?

Lynda: The Duke.

Carly: What is your favorite movie?

Lynda: Anything with he's in except, except for the war one's.

Carly: Do you have a favorite artist?

Lynda: Shanna and Kady (laughs).

Carly: What is your favorite painting?

Lynda: I like Shanna's Spring Lake painting and all of Kady's pictures are beautiful.

Carly: Who is your favorite poet?

Lynda: I don't know no poets.

Carly: Do you have a favorite poem?

Lynda: No, I can't say it on your (laughs) thing anyway.

Carly: What is your favorite t.v. program?

Lynda: I don't like t.v.

Carly: Who is your favorite author?

Lynda: Louis Lamore.

Carly: Do you have a favorite book?

Lynda: I can't remember, it's been too long ago.

Carly: What is your favorite season?

Lynda: Fall.

Carly: Favorite tree?

Lynda: Tree?! Quaken Aspen, 'cuz when I was in camp, I got kicked out for writin' my initials in there, so I had to write a twenty word--er, twenty page report on the Quaken Aspen. Ask me any questions about it.

Carly: (Laughs) What is your favorite flower?

Lynda: Sweet Williams.

Carly: What is your favorite holiday?

Lynda: Fourth of July.

Carly: What is your favorite color?

Lynda: Red.

Carly: Favorite sport?

Lynda: Football

Carly: Favorite athlete.

Lynda: (Whispers so her husband can't hear) John Elway (laughs).

Carly: (Laughs) Favorite team.

Lynda: The Broncos.

Carly: Favorite animal.

Lynda: Horse.

Carly: Favorite meal.

Lynda: Anything Italian.

Carly: Favorite fruit.

Lynda: Green apples.

Carly: Favorite vegetable.

Lynda: Peas.

Carly: Favorite candy?

Lynda: Can't eat candy.

Carly: Why?

Lynda: But I like Butterfingers.

Carly: Favorite cookie.

Lynda: Chocolate chip.

Carly: Favorite drink?

Lynda: Beer.

Carly: What's your favorite restaurant?

Lynda: Arby's (laughs) Pizza Hut.

Carly: (Laughs) K, is there anything else that you wanna tell me?

Lynda: No you did a pretty damn good job.

— Carly: Ok.

Lynda: Hope you get a good grade.

Carly: Me too.