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## Interview with Rebecca Nimmo (FA 1293)

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Interviewer: Chloe Brown  
Interviewee: Rebecca Nimmo  
Date: April 10<sup>th</sup> 2017  
Topic: Women's March

### Rebecca Nimmo Interview

CB: This is Chloe Brown interviewing Rebecca Nimmo. Before we get started I just wanted to double check that I have your consent to donate this to the archives of Special Collections.

RN: Yes.

CB: Cool and to also use it for my class.

RN: Yes.

CB: Okay. So were you able to attend the D.C. or local march?

RN: I was not able to.

CB: Okay. So I'm assuming that's the reason that you decided to make a pussy hat?

RN: I made several pussy hats. I heard about it—I didn't hear about it until end of December, early January-ish because Kristina Arnold tagged me in a Facebook post about the pussy hats and I was intrigued. I was like, "That looks simple enough." And I just gotten off of a big crafting bender to make things for Christmas because I was on bed rest from pregnancy for half of the year last year. So I wasn't working a making money so I decided to make Christmas presents. And I made ninety percent of our Christmas presents last year. So I had just gotten done making all these other projects and I didn't know what to do next. And Kristina Arnold tagged me in this post. And I said, "Well I can do that!" and I made—I think my last count was fifteen. One went to Lexington, one went to Minneapolis, I kept one for myself, two little miniature ones for my children, and then the rest went to D.C.

CB: Alright. I forgot to ask you to give me some basic background information about yourself. So do you mind?

RN: No, that's fine. We can back track. It's all good.

CB: So where are you from? What's your educational background? What are you doing now?

RN: I am originally from Breckinridge County, Kentucky. Well I was born in Franklin, Indiana. I don't remember living up there because we moved when I was like two and a half years old. But I'm from Breckinridge County, Kentucky, originally. I say Breckinridge County because like most places in Kentucky, there aren't any towns large enough to say that's where I'm from because nobody would know. But basically, if you were to make a triangle between Owensboro, Bowling Green, and Louisville it's kind of in the middle of that triangle. So it's about an hour

from all of those places. And I moved to Bowling Green in 2007 for college. I am a two time Western alumni. I got two bachelor's degrees. The first one was in Interdisciplinary Studies with Humanities emphasis and the second one was a major in Anthropology with a minor in Folk Studies.

CB: Alright. And now you are working at Western?

RN: I work at Western as a part time library assistant in the Educational Resources Center.

CB: Alright. I'm assuming you have two kids too?

RN: Yes, I got married when I was 21 and we've been together since we were in high school. He also came to Western and got an Art degree. And we've been together over ten years. We've been married over six years and we have two children. Penny is two and couple months and then Callie is five months old.

CB: Okay, so you—how did you—you found out about the pussy hats because Kristina sent you the link.

RN: Yes.

CB: Had you been—do you knit?

RN: I knit and crochet and sew and embroider and weave. I do—basically if you do it with some sort of yarn, thread, fiber, I do it.

CB: Okay. So this was—she probably tagged you in it because she knew you..

RN: Yeah. I took installation with her a couple of years ago now; it was 2013 when I took it. And I did a big embroidery project for one of my projects in that class and she also knows that I've taken weaving and things like that and knows that I'm very much into fiber arts. So she tagged me and a couple other people.

CB: Was that the bathroom thing that you did?

RN: I did do the bathroom thing.

CB: I remember that! Can you speak a little about that? It seems related.

RN: Yeah! I—and this was one of the first crochet projects that I have ever done. I crocheted male and female genitals and replaced the bathroom signs on the fourth floor of FAC with these crocheted genitals and—I did my best to go into detail with them. If you feel the little scrotum—I say little, they're pretty close to life size. There are little testes inside the little scrotum and everything. I even crotched them with white. And I crocheted them with pink because pink and soft are very feminine traits, assigned feminine traits, and they are seen as non-threatening. The whole idea behind the piece was I was thinking about all of these bathroom bills and where

people are trying to police who can use what restroom. And they are basically saying, “No, it’s not little person with a dress, little person with pants. We want people with penises going into this bathroom and people with vaginas going in this bathroom. And you’re SOL if you’re intersex or have ambiguous genitalia or if you’re transgender and don’t identify with your assigned gender. That kind of frustrated me and so I was like, “Well, if this is what they are saying then this is what we are going to say. We’re just going to be out in the open about it.” And it was made more effective by the fact that two other people in that class did projects having to do with the bathrooms. One student had a grey gradient between the bathrooms and they were also exploring ideas of gender and gender fluidity, how it is being gender queer and dealing with the whole binary restroom situation. Another person actually covered up all of the signage and room numbers of the fourth floor. So literally the only signage telling you which bathrooms to use were a crocheted penis and a crocheted vagina, well vulva, not a vagina.

CB: Yeah.

RN: You know.

CB: So is that the first time that you had blended your art and activism or were there other instances of that?

RN: I think that was definitely one of the first times that I blended art and activism. I’m very interested in perceptions of gender and gender stereotypes and how pervasive they are. Especially, now that I have two children and whenever I describe them, we are raising them female. They were born anatomically female and that’s what I say when I’m on a parenting form online or something like that. I say my anatomically female children. And yes, we have given them “girl” names and the older one she likes princess stuff and she wanted to be Elsa for Halloween and all that sort of stuff. So we’re not raising them gender neutral but we want them to know right away that from the beginning that if they feel that that’s not how they identify then they can come to us and we are not going to shun them for that. I mean I’m cisgender, my husband is cisgender, we’re in a heterosexual relationship, very traditional (I took his last name and everything), but we want them to know that it’s okay if they don’t want to follow that path. That has really affected how I approach the things that I create.

CB: Okay. So what do the pussy hats mean to you?

RN: For me, I look at them as being very much symbolic. I know that there were some people who took issue with pussy hats because, you know, pussy—it’s a slang term for vagina. And a lot of people were looking at that as being transphobic and anti-trans and very second wave feminist. But the way that I look at it, transphobia, homophobia, sexism those all stem feminine traits being viewed as lesser. And the vagina is the ultimate symbol of that viewing as lesser. The whole “Freud’s penis envy” and things like that. You know, if a boy is showing any feminized traits then he’s automatically labeled a pussy and things like that. So I looked at it as more of an umbrella symbol of that, of those feminine traits that society has deemed lesser and the pink colored, the bright obnoxious pink color that they were all created in, not being the quiet demur, pastel pink, the baby pink, it’s very in your face. This is us; we are standing firm. So that’s kind

of what it meant to me. That it was symbolizing all of these tropes that we have traditionally viewed as lesser and putting power behind it.

CB: Okay. That makes a lot of sense. So can you tell me some of your opinions about the march itself?

RN: I am 100% support of the march. I wish I could have gone. I had just gotten off of bed rest. I had just gotten my appr—I had my baby in late October. She was actually born on Hillary Clinton's birthday which I was hoping would be a positive omen and, you know, it didn't work out that way. But we took both of our children to the polls in November so I had a week and a half old baby. And I wasn't technically off bedrest until finals week of the fall semester and I got back to work the first week in January. And at that point my baby was two months old by the time the march rolled around and even traveling to Nashville seemed pretty insurmountable with a two-month-old and a two-year-old. So we weighed our options and decided it would best to contribute in other ways.

CB: So do you-- even though you didn't attend the march you still contributed pussy hats, multiple pussy hats. So do you consider yourself a part of this broader Women's March resistance movement?

RN: Yes, definitely. I like to think that I do what I can to contribute in the ways that I can. And it may not always be the going and marching or going and holding up signs but I can do something to at least allow other people to do so.

CB: Yeah.

RN: So I can't physically be a part of it every time but I can still lend support.

CB: Have you—I know that it's really—school is crazy and also raising two young children—have you been able to attend the events in Bowling Green related to the Women's March or..?

RN: -- I have not but I've been keeping up with things through Facebook. I'm a part of the United We Stand group, organized front of Soky, and things like that, the Riot Grrls group. I keep **apprised** of all the things to go on but a lot of them are in evenings and I work evenings.

CB: Yeah.

RN: And so I miss out. I do keep up with whenever BG Fairness goes to the City Commission meetings, I will watch the live streams, and participate in the conversation that way but that's about as far as I get to go with much of it. I do intend on participating in the March for Science that is going to happen here in a couple of weeks because the little ones are finally big enough where we can do things like that. And there is one here in Bowling Green.

CB: That's why I got this shirt!

RN: Nice.

CB: So—ah I had a question. But anyway, the night events I always have a night class the night that they have something.

RN: Yeah.

CB: So circling back to—actually I want to ask you another question about the Women’s March.

RN: Sure.

CB: What message do you think they were trying to communicate? And do you think that they successfully communicated it?

RN: I feel like a lot of the message stems back to statements that 45 has made and some of the unsavory parts of his character that he has revealed through the many, many years that he has been a public figure. And they—I feel like the Women’s March was showing that we are not going to sit idly by and let such behavior continue. And I feel like the message was heard loud and clear to some but I think that we have a very partisan media and people tend to live in their own echo chambers and because of that if certain news organizations spin something one way then that’s all people are going to hear. And so the people that needed to hear the message the most about the Women’s March are just hearing this very different message. So I think that it was somewhat successful, but I think that the way our media is currently constructed, it kept it from being as successful as it could have been in prior decades.

CB: Yeah. A lot of women are claiming this term ‘nasty woman.’ Do you identify with that term?

RN: Oh, definitely.

CB: Okay. How so?

RN: I have—I actually have a bumper sticker. It’s not on my car because I’m saving some of my memorabilia from this past election to pass on to my children, but I have a bumper sticker that says ‘Nasty Women Vote.’ I feel like the connotation behind nasty woman when he said it in the debate and called her, called Hillary a nasty woman, he was referring to the way that she was not willing to just sit by and let them talk. And she was doing what a lot of men do, you know, interrupting, and saying, “No, you’re wrong. This is what’s really going on.” And she wasn’t letting him talk over her and I very much support that. I feel like the way that I was raised, I was raised to sit quietly and listen, not just because I was a girl, but because of—we’re from a very quiet family and when I got married to my husband, he comes from a very loud family. He’s one of the quiet people in his family but I’ve realized in most situations, you’re not going to be heard if you don’t raise your voice. And I’ve realized that that doesn’t just apply to personal conversations; that applies to these very important conversations that we’re having now about politics and the economy and the education system and missiles in Syria and all these things. And we need to raise our voices to be heard and I still tend to be a little more on the subtle side on social media because I know I have a lot of very, very conservative people on my news feed and I try to go more of the diplomatic approach because I know that if I’m not diplomatic,

they're going to just unfriend me or block me and then they are going to not hear anything from me. So I try to be a little more on the diplomatic side but I do still share those things and I actually got unfriended by people for explaining evolution and for saying that my daughter was not a person before being born. People get very angry at you for being pro-choice but especially when you have children, I have learned. Because they say, "Well, what if you had done this at whatever point?" Then I say, "Well then, she would not exist and she would not be a person but she wasn't a person then." And I have lost Facebook friends for posts like that and I know that the more outspoken I am, the more likely I am to lose those friends but if I don't speak up at all then they're not going to hear anything beyond they're little echo chamber. So I try to strike a balance.

CB: Yeah. Did you post much about making the hats on your social media?

RN: I actually have a Facebook page that I post for my arts and things like that and I posted about them on that. I did post pictures of my daughters wearing their hats on my personal social media and my profile picture for quite a while was me and my friend Katie wearing our hats, which she was the one that took the hat to Minneapolis for the Minneapolis march. But my profile picture was the two of us wearing our hats for quite a while and—so I posted that I was doing it and I posted pictures of us personally but I didn't—the actual photos of the ten or twelve I sent, those went on my more professional Facebook page and they also went on my Instagram, which I did not have an art Instagram until the march. And I was like, "I want to have something available where if people want to post pictures of themselves at the march with the hats I made, then they have a way to tag me or whatever and if they don't, that's cool too."

CB: I think I have a picture of me wearing one of your hats.

RN: Oh, awesome!

CB: Yeah, I'll have to give it to you. So do you—you consider yourself an artist?

RN: I do to a certain extent. Artist, artisan, crafts person-- I tend to go with: I am a fiber artist who tends to work in traditionally feminine handicraft because I learned to sew when I was five-years-old, basically as soon as I could hold a needle. I learned how to sew. I learned how to embroider around the same age. I didn't know that those things could be used in fine art until I was in college. I didn't major in art. I have taken a few classes in the art department but—and I hung out in the art department a lot because my husband was an art major and his brother was an art major. So I was in the art department a lot. Kristina has called me art adjacent because I'm kind of always lurking on the fringes but I have put a few pieces into shows and things like that. Mostly, I tend more towards the handicraft side of it, like I'll make little \_\_\_?\_\_\_ crocheted figures and things like that. Which those skills I learned in doing the more fine arts sort of stuff like when I did the installation on the bathrooms and things like that. And I've entered shows and I got first place in amateur fiber arts in the US Bank show in 2014 for those crocheted pieces. Since I couldn't do installation and put them on the bathroom, I actually mounted them onto little wooden plaques and I entered that in amateur fiber arts. Now I feel like I've been doing it enough and I've been approaching art seriously enough that I would probably categorize myself in the professional category and I have sold a couple of things but, yet again, the things that I

have sold are more on the craft side of it. Not so much the meaningful pieces but the this-is-fun-and-cute kind of things.

CB: Okay. Do you think because you work in a traditionally feminine form that makes it more difficult to categorize your art as art?

RN: Oh, absolutely! I very much look up to artists like Faith Ringgold and Howardena Pindell who worked a lot in feminine forms. Like Faith Ringgold, she's worked in very many forms, has even written children's books and things like that. But I really got interested in her work looking at her quilts and the idea of fine art quilting has always been very fascinating to me because my grandmother was a quilter and I didn't really have a chance to learn from her before she passed away but I watched her a lot. And I like to kind of—I don't know if I'm kind of passing the buck and if it's like a humble brag, but I, I pick up on things by looking at them pretty easily. So I feel like from watching her I could try and I could probably succeed pretty well and in the same way, I draw? patterns from clothing and things like that and I feel like it's kind of me trying to pass the buck saying that because I'm like, "Oh, well it's not a skill. It's just something I was born with so I don't deserve praise for it because it's just something that I can. It's not something that I have practiced." So it feels very much like a humble brag to say stuff like that. But there are definitely artist who are working in these feminine forms and they are doing very interesting things and I love it but I know that a lot of the art establishment does not see it the same way unless you are a big name like Faith Ringgold or Howardena Pindell.

CB: How would you categorize the pussy hats in terms of—are they an art or are they a craft?

RN: See I feel like they kind of straddle that line and a lot of times I will say that craft is the skill you use to make something and art is the meaning behind it. And pussy hats are very much a meaningful piece and I feel like that it's very much an almost performative, collaborative, sort of artwork because it caused people to come together and have almost this uniform and they are all very unique but different ones have these different touches. I don't know which one you had.

CB: It was pink and purple and it had..

RN: That was the last one I did. That was my grand finale. That one was my favorite one actually.

CB: It was great! I really loved it.

RN: That one was my favorite one. Don't tell anyone else. We're recording but, you know. I mean I love all the ones that I made but I think that one was my favorite one, really. And I thought about keeping it but then I was like, "Well I'm not going to a march and I want it to go out there and be a part of it." But I feel like it's very much a collaborative art although I feel like it kind of borders on that—like I said, it kind of straddles that border. And I feel like a part of it is the intent behind it because I know there were a lot of people going on Etsy and selling them. And personally, I did not want to do that. I—because I viewed it as a service that I was doing and my way to participate in this event, in this happening, and so I have not sold a single pussy hat. I have given them for free every time. I have said that if someone wants one now, after the fact, I



would ask for maybe five dollars to cover materials but I still would not sell it for a profit. Because I feel like that's part of the artwork side of it for me is that it's a participatory artwork, it is being a part of the event how I can, and being a part of this larger movement. And there's no profiting off that. I feel like it goes against the ideals of it to just mass produce these things for a profit. And I mean I did mass produce them. I was moving fast. I had—I finished one every other day for two weeks, three weeks, something like that. And there were a few days I actually finished one in a day. And I feel like a part of the whole thing was just not profiting, just giving of myself for that and buying yard, that was a lot of yarn. I probably spent sixty dollars just on yarn and maybe more than that. I don't know because I don't do most of the purchasing in my household because my husband works in Walmart so he just picks things up after work. So I, honestly, have no idea how much we spent on yarn. I mean I'm sure it was more than sixty. And I don't know beyond that. So I ran at a major loss making these but I wanted—I feel like that's part of the art of it. I couldn't afford to travel. I couldn't go and carry a sign or anything like that, but I could make hats.

CB: So I think you described the making of the hats as a collaborative art event. How would you—I'm assuming most people made them individually but how was it collaborative also?

RN: Yes. Well part of the collaborative effort of it was just participating together and like there was website "The Pussy Hat Collective," I think it is, where they posted different patterns that people could use or you could use them as a jumping off point or whatever. And I know I had—I'm part of a—I'm trying to think how to describe this community. It's an online community and are you familiar with the nerd-fighter community?

CB: No.

RN: There's a YouTube channel called the Vlog Brothers, Hank and John Green. John Green being the young adult author of *Fault In Our Stars*, *Looking For Alaska*, *Paper Towns*. He and his brother created a YouTube channel ten years ago. It's called the Vlog Brothers and they create videos and interact with their audience and the nerd-fighter community is this community that kind of grew up around their channel.

CB: Okay.

RN: and I'm part of a—I'm part of several nerd-fighter groups on Facebook but one of them is a crafting group and a lot of people in this group will make things for The Project For Awesome which is YouTube based charity event and they will do other activism events and we had a group on there who were tallying their pussy hats and sharing patterns and things like that and sharing pictures of the completed ones and all of that sort of stuff. And I know there were other similar groups who were doing the same sort of thing, even if they couldn't meet in person, they were sharing what they were doing, and it—even though it was not an in-person shared experience. It was still a shared experience.

CB: So you specifically shared pictures of what you were working on and talked to other people about what they were doing and why they were doing it and progress you were making?

RN: Yes. Yes.

CB: So I think I'm going to end by asking you about your process but can you—you mentioned earlier that you were going to pass on the hats to your daughters or pass on some memorabilia. So why are you interested in doing that and what are you going to tell them about this whole experience?

RN: Well I've never been much of a history buff. I'm good with dates. I'm not good with remembering locations and things like that, but one thing that I've always been interested in is Antiques Roadshow.

CB: Okay.

RN: And one thing that has always interested me on Antiques Roadshow is people sharing their personal family's histories from the biggest historical events. I think that's one reason I got interested in anthropology and folk studies because I'm interested in those personal stories. And I know that this is history in the making. I know that—I still have a notebook from 9/11. I was in seventh grade and I kept this little notebook where I talked about conspiracy theories and things like that and how is it Iraq behind this, is it South Korea, or what's going on, it's Afghanistan, Al-Qaeda, what's Al-Qaeda? Trying to learn all these different things and I remember doing that and I said, "You know this is going to be a historic election." And no matter how you slice it, it's going to be historic. Because either we are going to have the first female president, which, you know, fingers crossed, but didn't happen or we will have a president who is very polarizing. And so I—we put one Hillary bumper sticker on the car, we have three or four more, we have buttons we wore on election day, I have a picture of my youngest who was a week and a half old at the time with a button that says "Women For Hillary"—like it's almost as big as her head because, you know, she is tiny baby. And I've got these, I think I have four or five buttons, and I have the "Nasty Women Vote" bumper sticker, I have pussy hats for each of them that they both wore, and they wore them that day, and for my older one that was her winter hat for this past winter, the younger one has already outgrown it because babies grow fast.

CB: Yeah.

RN: But I want to hold onto those things because I want them to know that they were present. And, you know, if everything goes to shit, I want them to know that their family was not on the wrong side because I know that this is going to be a very long four years. And there could be major damage done and if there is or even if there isn't, I want them to know what side of history their family was on and that we didn't just pull an Aaron Burr. You know, to quote Hamilton, "Talk less. Smile more. Don't let them know what you're against and what you are for." I want them to know that we didn't just sit on the sidelines. We may not have gone to the marches but we participated and we were a part of this thing that they will probably read about in their history books, assuming there are history textbooks in fifteen, twenty years. So, yeah, just holding onto it just because they will obviously have the history that has been laid out for them but I want them to know that they're apart of it. They went to the polls that day, my two-year-old actually held the pen with my husband, filling in the oval for Hillary Clinton.

CB: Ah, that's so cool!

RN: The one and a half week old, she wasn't quite big enough but she went into the booth with me so they both got to participate in the electoral process and that's the first presidential election that either one of them has been alive for. And I hope to continue to encourage civic engagement and even if we end up disagreeing politically, I will still support them because I feel like I was raised to learn how to think versus what to think. Which is why I don't agree politically with my parents. We are very much on opposite ends of the spectrum. But that's because I was encouraged how to think and I hope to encourage my kids in the same way and I want to hold onto these things for them as kind of a testament to that so when they are older, they can see that they were apart of this history.

CB: Okay. So did you follow a pattern?

RN: I did starting out and then I internalized it and I tweaked it here and there between hats to change the process up a little bit and make it work better for me and the way I was doing it. And there were a couple of hats I didn't follow the pattern for because they were different. Like there was one that I crotched in a different pattern which gave it—because it was a patterned yarn and that one I crotched differently so it made a pattern. And then like the one you wore, I drew up that pattern myself which I have done a little bit of, that's called tapestry crochet and I have done a little bit of that for the Christmas present. That whole thing. And that's kind of where I learned where to do that and I decided I wanted to translate that to one of these hats. And so I drew up the pattern to that myself and other than that part of the pattern, it was the same basic pattern I did for ninety percent of the hats I did. And like there were a couple of hats, instead of having the seams down the side, I worked them in the round so that if they had color changes, it would change from the band or whatever. So those I crotched differently and I worked them in the round so stitched up the top instead of working in a giant rectangle and then stitching up the sides. And it still gave, basically, the same look. So it wasn't too different. But the original pattern I used, I got from the pussy hat collective website. And I kind of tweaked it and kind of internalized it and—I'm trying to think. I think that's, yeah, that was the pattern that I used for most of them but there were a couple different ones.

CB: Yeah. And so were there designs on any of the ones, other than the one I got?

RN: That was the only actual picture design which that one, honestly, took about twice as long as the other ones because of that and I didn't decide to do that until toward the end and I was like, "I really need to get this done. I really need to get this done." So that's the only one with a design like that and there were a few that had stripes and things like that. Like I said one of them was almost like a plaid kind of thing going on, but, yeah, that was the only one with a design.

CB: Do you want to walk me through the process of making that one and why it's your favorite?

RN: Sure. Well I mean it's my favorite just because I did put a lot of work into it and creating the design and all that. And first I started with the purple yarn and I did the band for the front and I switched to the pink yarn and did one or two rows of just solid pink and then—I'm trying to think how to describe integrating the purple in. basically, you get to the stitch before and because

this was all crotched. You get to the stitch before and then you do a color change to the purple and I kind of buried the pink yarn under the purple stitches and then when I got the other side of the purple, you pick back up the pink. And so I just kind of did that following this—I drew out the design on graph paper and it was like two stitches per square of graph paper or something like that. And so I had drawn out this pattern and I followed it and then I was like, “This looks a little weird. I wonder if I can fix this.” I couldn’t fix this so you might notice that on some of the curves it looks a little weird. That’s just a product of this style of crochet, apparently, because I looked up other projects people had done using this style of crochet and the curves just look kind of weird. So that’s something I learned. And I had originally thought about doing one on each side but then I realized that it wouldn’t be super visible if did it that way and I just kind of muddled the overall design. And plus, I also like the idea of being able to turn it around and just have the solid pink. And so I decided to just do the one of the design and then I finished out the pink and did the other half of the purple band and then stitched up the sides. And it was a hat!

CB: So do you want to—what was the symbol? Then why did you choose the symbol?

RN: It was the Venus symbol which a lot of people just call it the woman symbol. Okay, sure. And it—I feel like it has strong associations with the feminist movement. Especially, older feminists’ ideals and a lot of—I feel like it is a very prominent symbol, especially with second wave feminism. And I liked the idea of marrying that very second wave feminist symbol with this pussy hat which is very much like a third wave feminist symbol that has sprung up. So I kind of like the idea of merging the symbolism and—I originally felt very much more ambitious with my design. I wanted to do the full on with power fist in the middle and everything. The size of these stitches—that’s not going to work. So I just did the Venus symbol. Just the very classic Venus symbol. And okay, I like how it’s looking. I feel like it’s a very iconic symbol and it’s very unambiguous. It’s very unambiguously associated with the feminine which kind of goes on back to that idea that I had for why I wanted to make these hats. And it’s very unambiguous and unapologetic while being still very simplistic and it’s just a circle and a couple lines and yet it has this symbolism associated with it that I really like. I wish I could have done more like that one because I was really pleased with how it turned out. And that’s a lot of why that was my favorite; I put the most effort into it. I called it my grand finale because it was the last one that I was going to make before the march and so I was like, “This is it. This is the one. This is all of my last will to make these hats is going into this hat.” Because anything else that I could try to finish won’t get finished before then. So I like it because it’s the last one and it was—I put a lot of work into it and I experimented with it. I mean it might not have worked out at all. I’ve only done that, the tapestry crochet, I’ve only done that once before. And it was a blanket so it was big project using it but still it was—I’ve only done it once before. So I knew it could be a gamble but I went for it.

CB: It was great. That was the one that I gravitated towards when I saw all of them. So do you think it’s important that the hats weren’t all uniform?

RN: For sure. I think—I think it would have been very boring to make the same hat over and over and over again. I mean some people like that but I like a challenge. So I made four or five solid pink ones. Then I was like, “Okay, I’ve got the hang of this. What can I do to make it different?” Because I feel like, yet again, with the whole thing about feminine traits being the

one that are denigrated and things like that. In the same way, we are all women-identified people that are not one thing. And that's really fantastic and I liked the idea of doing slight variations for the different hats because just like there's no one way to make a hat and I wanted these very individualized, unique, different traits for them. And in the same way, I wrote notes to go with them. It was just a little short—I was like I could write a full, long thing or I could just write a little phrase. So I put a little phrase, basically like a tweet. And put #whyicrochet because there was the #whyimarch. And I was like, "I'm not marching but I am crocheting." So I used #whyicrochet and wrote—I wrote a different reason on each slip that went with each hat. And then I put information on the back of that, if anyone wanted to contact me. And I did actually have a couple people tag me. It was pretty cool. But I think that the individuality was important and that's part of why I did separate little reasons instead of just having a form letter of this is all the reasons why I made these hats. I just came up with individual reasons for each one and I tried to make the hats very individualized as well, even ones that were more identical. I still tried to—there might have been something different about the way that I stitched up the sides or something. Like something that wouldn't necessarily be noticeable but I would know that it was somehow unique from its counterparts. And I felt like that—having those unique options while still being in the confines of "yes I can look at that and it is a pussy hat." So it needed to have some uniformity to it but I wanted there to be some sort of difference.

CB: Yeah. So it still needs to communicate the message but you also want to be an artist when you're making them.

RN: Yeah.

CB: Yeah. So can you tell me a little bit about the people that contacted you and what your interactions were like?

RN: It was just a couple little short things saying, "Hey, I wore one of your hats." And a couple of them sent pictures. So I got to see them in action and it was just really short interactions. Just saying, "thanks for letting me know," and, "glad to see the hat found a home," and all that sort of thing.

CB: How does that feel to receive those messages?

RN: I really appreciated getting to see where people were wearing them and that they had found their way there. I mean, of course, I trusted Kristina to get them to Washington and I figured someone somewhere would wear them. But it's nice to know that they didn't just disappear into the void. And even for a few people who didn't contact me, Kristina tagged a few pictures so I saw some in photos here and there. And my husband made one hat. He works full time so he did not have as much free time to work on hats but he did make one that he sent. So we saw the one that he made and I've seen a few of the others in action from people who didn't contact me and then there were two or three people who contacted me as well.

CB: Cool. What were some of the reason you included in your—I think my said something about your children.

RN: Yeah, there were a couple that were about them, some were about women's healthcare—trying to think. I posted several of them on my Instagram. I posted the pictures of the notes throughout the day of the march.

CB: Could I have a link to your Instagram?

RN: Yeah!

CB: Did you watch the march on TV?

RN: I watched a little bit of it live streamed because I don't have cable. None of the local news stations were really covering it so I watched some live streams of the speeches and stuff like that on YouTube.

CB: What were your impressions of..?

RN: I was very impressed by it. It was so massive and I thought it was just amazing. I really liked getting to see the sea of pink, especially. I did not watch the inauguration but I saw some photos of the inauguration. So seeing the difference there. And I know that it—they said that the numbers, there were less people than for Obama's inauguration but I guess the overwhelming pink made it look a little bigger. Looking at pictures side by side and, of course, compared to the day before festivities, it's very different.

CB: And then including all the people who marched in different satellite cities.

RN: Yeah, I know. I saw where even some tiny cities in Alaska and there was the one in Anartica.

CB: I think the L.A. march was bigger than the..

RN: Yeah! It was. I saw a lot from the L.A. march. I saw where the actress who plays Supergirl posted from the L.A. march and her sign said something like, "Donald don't grab my pussy. It's made of steel," or something like that. You're funny. I like you.

CB: I think I have exhausted my questions. I'm looking through my notes. I'll get that whenever we..

RN: Yeah, we can do that after recording.

CB: Yeah. Do you—I've asked everything that I had planned to ask but is there anything that you wanted to add that you think should be on record?

RN: I'm glad that I was able to participate and I look forward to seeing how this movement continues. I feel like a lot of, especially, conservatives think that it was just the march and they don't realize that there have been these actions continuing throughout the months since the march but I look forward to seeing where it goes from here.

CB: Nice.