



## **“Definitely Representative of Nebraska”: Jeanine Giller, Miss Nebraska 1972, and the Politics of Beauty Pageants**

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Full Citation: David C Turpie and Shannon M Risk, “‘Definitely Representative of Nebraska’: Jeanine Giller, Miss Nebraska 1972, and the Politics of Beauty Pageants,” *History Nebraska* 94 (2013): 74-89

Article Summary: Jeanine Giller competed in the Miss America pageant at a time when protestors accused the event of oppressing and commodifying women. Her story illuminates the continuing controversy over pageants and their attempt to portray the ideal American woman.

### Cataloging Information:

Names: Jeanine Giller, Robin Morgan, Bert Parks, Terry Anne Meeuwsen

Place Names: Atlantic City, New Jersey; Kearney, Nebraska

Keywords: Jeanine Giller, Miss Nebraska, Miss America Pageant, feminists, Vietnam, abortion

Photographs / Images: Giller’s official Miss Nebraska photo; Giller with Rebecca Ann King, Miss America 1974; new car used by Giller as Miss Nebraska; Giller performing in the talent competition at Atlantic City; Giller with Mayor Eugene Leahy and her family on Jeanine Giller Day in Omaha; Giller as Miss Omaha; Giller and other state winners at the Miss Colorado pageant; evening gown competition; Boardwalk Parade in Atlantic City; Giller at “Parade of States”; Giller and other state winners at the Miss Iowa Scholarship Ball; 1972 Contestant and Miss Nebraska ribbons; telegram from Governor James Exon to Giller in Atlantic City



“DEFINITELY REPRESENTATIVE OF NEBRASKA”



# Jeanine Giller,

## *Miss Nebraska 1972, and the Politics of Beauty Pageants*

BY DAVID C. TURPIE AND SHANNON M. RISK<sup>1</sup>

In 1982, the *Lincoln Journal* published an article entitled, “Miss Nebraskas rate pageant experience: Great!” For the article, the reporter, Charles Flowerday, had interviewed seven of the previous ten winners of the Miss Nebraska pageant. As the title makes clear, the article put a positive spin on the state beauty pageant. The former Cornhusker State queens made a point of mentioning the importance of the scholarship money that was awarded to winning contestants at both the state and national pageants. In a telling remark about the expanding public roles for women, Flowerday wrote, “All the former Miss Nebraskas who were interviewed have attended college. Some have opted for a family while still working part-time and others have developed their careers.” One of the former queens interviewed was Jeanine Giller, Miss Nebraska 1972.<sup>2</sup>

As Flowerday noted in his article, Giller had graduated from college, later received a master's degree in management from Central Michigan University, and, at the time, was teaching courses at Mitchell Community College in Statesville, North Carolina.<sup>3</sup> Like many of the other former queens, Giller became an accomplished woman. The case of Jeanine Giller, Miss Nebraska 1972, and her participation in the Miss Nebraska and Miss America pageants in the summer and early fall of 1972, illuminates the continuing controversy over pageants and their attempt to portray the ideal American woman. In the 1960s and 1970s, feminists began protesting beauty pageants for being exploitative of women—there were few, if any, male beauty pageants, they correctly pointed out. Beauty pageants seemed a cogent example of the ills of a patriarchal system because they celebrated the power of a woman's beauty. But when that beauty faded, the power was revealed as hollow. Yet, thousands of women continued to enter the pageants and claim that they did not feel exploited. Jeanine made the case for beauty pageants in numerous interviews before, during, and after competing in the Miss Nebraska pageant in June 1972.

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**Jeanine Giller's official Miss Nebraska photo, used in the Miss America Pageant program and other promotional items.** Photos in this article were provided by David Turpie from Giller's scrapbooks.

Beauty pageants have received scant attention from scholars. As historians Elwood Watson and Darcy Martin point out, most scholars probably view pageants as trivial events, while most feminist scholars undoubtedly “would dismiss writing about an institution that so clearly oppresses and commodifies women as a waste of time.”<sup>4</sup> Most works on the Miss America Pageant take broad, sweeping views of the contest. Scholars, in fact, have probably paid as much attention, if not more, to the feminist protests and critiques of pageants as they have on the views and experiences of pageant contestants. Examining the experiences of one contestant allows for a more intensive study of the political dynamics of pageants during a time of rapid changes for women in America. Despite the feminist protests of the late 1960s and early 1970s, the show went on. Feminist groups correctly pointed to the negative aspects of beauty contests; yet that tells only part of the story. Jeanine’s experience as Miss Nebraska 1972 points to the good and bad qualities of the modern Miss America Pageant and its state affiliate pageants, and demonstrates that the pageant experience had the potential to empower women, even as it could also objectify them.

### **The Miss America Pageant and Second-Wave Feminism**

The first Miss America Pageant was held in Atlantic City, New Jersey, on Labor Day weekend 1921. Atlantic City’s inter-city beauty contest was held as part of a weeklong event that local hotel owners staged in an attempt to keep tourists in the

area past August. The original contest was small, with only eight contestants competing. Over the next several years, the contest grew and became more publicized by the nation’s newspapers. The pageant survived the Great Depression and World War II, though not without some pitfalls, as it was cancelled several times in the late 1920s and 1930s. In an effort to make the pageant more than simply a parade of young women in bathing suits, a talent portion was added in 1938 and a scholarship fund was created in the mid-1940s. It was in the early 1940s that the name of the pageant officially became the Miss America Pageant. With the scholarship fund in place, pageant officials made it clear that they wanted young, unmarried college-age (or even high school age) women as their contestants.<sup>5</sup> It was at once an entertainment spectacle and a medium for showcasing the “ideal” American woman. Apparently, the ideal American woman was single and lost her appeal after marriage.

By the 1950s, the modern Miss America Pageant had emerged. Young women in their late teens or early twenties, most of whom were college students or recent college graduates, competed in a beauty and talent competition for scholarship prize money and national fame. In 1954, the pageant was broadcast on television for the first time, to a nationwide audience of 27 million people. Television bred conformity among the pageant contestants. In order to win in the age of television, a young woman had to appeal to national beauty standards. In 1969, sociologist Henry Pang noted that “the last 10 winners are taller and lighter and weigh less and have better measurements [than previous winners] . . . The last ten winners are more similar to one another in these measurements.”<sup>6</sup> Television also created a packaged product for the nation that obscured many of the real events that occurred in Atlantic City. For, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, while the national viewing audience saw only smiles and swimsuits, people in Atlantic City frequently saw other women protesting the contest.<sup>7</sup>

Many groups vied for change in the United States during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Challenges to the white patriarchal power structure in the country came not only from feminists, but also from African Americans, Native Americans, and other groups, who spoke out against racial and class injustice. Feminists had some success at the national level, with the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment by Congress in 1972 (although this later failed to be ratified by the requisite number of states). Women made strides in education, in the birth control movement, in the professional realm,

**Giller with Miss Colorado, Rebecca Ann King, who was crowned Miss America 1974.**





and in government, but change was still slow. For feminists, the popularity of the Miss America Pageant demonstrated the continued objectification of women in American culture. In response, the Women's Liberation Front first staged a protest of the Miss America Pageant in Atlantic City in 1968.<sup>8</sup> This protest was heavily covered by the news media and led to national awareness of the rebirth of the feminist movement, what historians call second-wave feminism.<sup>9</sup>

One of the protesters at the 1968 pageant, Robin Morgan, in an essay entitled "No More Miss America," laid out a ten-point platform for women's liberation. The ten points included objections to sexism and racism, the consumer culture, competitive culture, and the Vietnam War, all of which, she argued, adversely affected women. Morgan's manifesto, of course, specifically targeted the Miss America Pageant, comparing the female pageant contestants to animals in a county fair contest competing for a blue ribbon. "So are women in our society forced daily to compete for male approval, enslaved by ludicrous 'beauty' standards we ourselves are conditioned to take seriously," Morgan noted in point one. Held up as the middle-class ideal of mainstream America, "Miss America represents what women are supposed to be: unoffensive, bland, apolitical."<sup>10</sup> The feminist protests of the Miss America Pageant continued in the early 1970s. The very conservative Laurie Lea Schaefer, Miss America 1972, was burned in effigy during her reign by women's liberation activists. The National Organization for Women (NOW), which in its founding statement of purpose had decried "the false image of women now prevalent in the mass media," staged a protest at the 1974 pageant in Atlantic City.<sup>11</sup> These challenges to white patriarchy, of course, did not go unnoticed by traditionalists. Conservative Americans persisted in preaching "traditional" values in reaction to such challenges.

For feminists, beauty pageants represented the continued dominance of patriarchal values—that is, that women needed to be docile and subservient to men. Women were valued for a narrowly defined beauty, allowing them favored status if they were deemed "beautiful." Feminist theorist Judith Butler has advanced the idea that gender is not fixed. She sees pageants as part of the performance of gender required by society, something for which, if a person did not perform his or her gender accurately, punishment often followed. Pageants served to reinforce the ideal gender performance for women.<sup>12</sup> Since pageant contestants were required to be unmarried, it also reinforced the old idea of *femme*

*covert*—that a wife belonged to her husband. Women were visible only while on the marriage market.

While the original Atlantic City beauty pageant was simply an attempt to extend the tourist season, from the 1950s through the 1970s, the modern Miss America Pageant searched for the "ideal" female to represent America, one who is, historically at least, white, beautiful, talented, and intelligent, but also a woman who did not challenge women's traditional place in society. Yet, whatever the meanings the creators intended for the modern Miss America Pageant, other people—whether judges, audience members, or contestants—could infer different meanings from the pageant. Each contestant could have her own reason for entering a pageant, whether it was to win scholarship money, to improve her public speaking ability and "poise," to garner attention from family, friends, neighbors, and the local media, or to possibly win an all-expense paid trip to New Jersey! As with any entertainment production, beauty pageants can and did have contested meanings.

### Jeanine Giller and the Pageant Circuit

Amidst the turmoil of the late 1960s and early 1970s, twenty-two-year-old Jeanine Giller was crowned Miss Nebraska 1972. After winning the state title in Kearney, Giller went on to compete in the Miss America Pageant in September 1972. She had been born and raised in Omaha, as one of six children in a working-class, Catholic family. After graduating from Westside High School in 1968, Giller went to the University of Nebraska-Omaha on scholarship. While in college, she also worked part-time as a checkout clerk at a local grocery store, and even made her own clothes in order to make ends meet.<sup>13</sup> She participated in several beauty pageants while in college, but never placed first.<sup>14</sup> She also participated in student government as a senator. In at least one series of votes that was discussed by the student newspaper in May 1970, she demonstrated her conservatism by voting against resolutions that expressed opposition to escalating the war in Vietnam, although she did voice some sympathy for the student protesters recently killed at Kent State University.<sup>15</sup> Giller graduated from the University of Nebraska-Omaha in June 1972, with a bachelor's degree in journalism. She planned to teach speech and English at an area high school and found out a week before the Miss Nebraska pageant that she had been assigned a position at Northwest High School in Omaha, something she believed would be her "biggest thrill," as she noted at the Miss Nebraska pageant.<sup>16</sup>



**As Miss Nebraska, Giller had the use of a new car, shown here in her driveway in Omaha.**



**Performing in the talent portion of the competition at the Miss America Pageant in Convention Hall, on Wednesday, September 6, 1972. In response to her father's recent death, Giller performed a modern dance interpretation of life and death.** Photograph by Donald J. Walker.

As for many young women, the pageant circuit was a medium through which Giller could attain the spotlight and gain recognition. When asked by a student reporter at a local high school why she chose to enter beauty pageants, Giller answered, "A friend asked me if I would consider running for Miss Omaha in my sophomore year in college. I found it to be an inside challenge that I would like to try. In the contests I'm competing against myself and not just the other girls."<sup>17</sup> She told another reporter, "I want[ed] to attain better poise and confidence in front of large audiences."<sup>18</sup> Thus for Jeanine, the challenge—and perhaps the thrill—of appearing in front of an audience, an audience that would be judging her, enticed her to enter pageants. Entering beauty contests, she hoped, would enhance her confidence for her teaching career. Jeanine stated quite clearly that she wanted to be a career woman, a phrase never applied to men.

### **The Miss Nebraska Pageant, June 1972**

Giller's path to the Miss Nebraska Scholarship Pageant was an unorthodox one. She had competed in pageants before, especially while attending college.<sup>19</sup> In March 1971, she competed for the crown of Miss Omaha, but was named second runner-up. Sheryl Donnermeyer, the contest's winner, represented Omaha in the 1971 Miss Nebraska pageant. That same year, the Omaha Jaycees, who organized the Miss Omaha pageant, decided to move the annual affair from the spring to the fall, and crown the 1973 Miss Omaha in October 1972. That meant there would be a year-and-a-half lag between the 1971 and 1973 contests, with no official pageant for 1972. As a solution, the Jaycees simply picked a 1972 winner without actually holding a 1972 contest; Jeanine, the 1971 second runner-up, was chosen to represent Omaha in the 1972 Miss Nebraska pageant.<sup>20</sup>

The 1972 Miss Nebraska Scholarship Pageant took place in the central Nebraska town of Kearney over a three-day period, June 22-24, at Kearney High School's auditorium. The nineteen pageant contestants from across the state were given the opportunity to rehearse in Kearney in the days leading up to the competition.<sup>21</sup> Preliminary competitions occurred on Thursday and Friday nights, while the grand finale, including a choreographed song-and-dance show, took place on Saturday night. On the first night of the pageant, Thursday, June 22, Giller participated in the swimsuit competition, for which she wore "a navy blue one piece swim suit," as reported by the *Kearney Daily Hub*. Competing against half the contestants that night, Giller won the preliminary swimsuit competition.<sup>22</sup>

The next night, she competed in the talent portion of the preliminaries, again against half of the contestants. For the talent component of the competition, Giller performed an interpretive modern dance meant to examine the human experience of life and death. According to the *Omaha World-Herald*, Giller's modern dance "thrilled the audience—and apparently the judges."<sup>23</sup>

A winner would be named on the final night of the pageant, Saturday, June 24. The Miss Nebraska Scholarship Pageant was not simply a beauty competition; it was also a show. Produced by Debbie Sullivan, Miss Nebraska 1970, the show's theme that night was "Colorfest of Song." The nineteen contestants vying for the Miss Nebraska crown joined Miss Nebraska 1971, Sally Warner, and Miss Wyoming 1972, Annette Klipstein, onstage to perform song-and-dance routines for the eight hundred people in attendance at Kearney High School. Klipstein was the first out-of-state queen to ever perform at the Miss Nebraska pageant.<sup>24</sup> The contestants also had to answer a question prepared by the judges. When asked how she would "sell" Nebraska, Jeanine "proved she was both quick of wit and tongue in extemporaneous speaking," as she replied, "I'd sell Nebraska on its best commodity, its people who are some of the warmest in the world. They are better than beef or industry or anything else."<sup>25</sup> That night, Jeanine Giller was crowned Miss Nebraska. As the new Cornhusker State queen, she received a \$2,000 scholarship award, a sizable sum in 1972, and a \$500 wardrobe.<sup>26</sup> For a woman who had clerked at a store to pay for college and had made her own clothes to save money, this award was significant. Following the show, a "coronation ball" was held at Kearney's Holiday Inn.<sup>27</sup> As newsmen Dean Terrill reported from the coronation ball, "the tanned 5-5 queen briefly took the floor center to tell her 18 fellow contestants that 'all of you were fantastic.'"<sup>28</sup>

As feminists and scholars have pointed out, beauty pageants often objectify women by focusing on their physical attributes. This was clearly true in Kearney in June 1972. It was especially evident through media coverage that pageants celebrate the "ideal" American woman, which in the early 1970s typically meant white, "middle-class," and rather docile. The 1972 Miss Nebraska pageant was widely covered both before and after by newspapers around the state. Press coverage of the state pageant glamorized the event. Jeanine was typically depicted as the all-American (or in this case all-Nebraskan) girl next door. Press coverage also focused on Jeanine's physical appearance. Many

articles mentioned her height, weight, and measurements; most articles mentioned her hair and eye color. Jeanine “has blond hair and blue eyes,” noted the *Nebraska City News-Press*. Tom Allen of the *Omaha World-Herald* described her as a “blue eyed blonde” (as well as a “120-pound bundle of talent, personality and beauty”). In another article, Tom Allen again noted her hair and eye color, describing Jeanine as “the blue-eyed blonde monarch.” Like Tom Allen, Peg Austin of the *Kearney Daily Hub* described Jeanine as “a pert, blonde, bundle of talent,” which apparently made her “definitely representative of Nebraska.” Dean Terrell of the *Lincoln Journal* noted that, when asked a question about her life, “Her blue eyes brightened as she confided to a reporter that ‘all 22 years have

been good ones.’”<sup>29</sup> None of the articles, of course, noted her race, since throughout U.S. history, white has been considered “normal” or “neutral,” and thus unnecessary to mention. The press coverage that described Jeanine’s hair and eye color, however, clearly marked her as white, and as an “ideal” white woman, at that, with blonde hair and blue eyes.

Few reporters offered a negative view of the pageant and the new state queen. While the mainstream newspapers celebrated the victory of the blonde, blue-eyed beauty queen, one small Omaha newspaper poked fun at pageant culture. Doug Smith of the *West Omaha Sun* wrote about his interview with the state queen and her mother, Patricia Giller. In an effort to expose pageant queens

**Jeanine Giller Day in Omaha, with Mayor Eugene Leahy, probably in July or August 1972. Behind them are Giller’s siblings (from left to right) Richard, Maureen, Patty, and their mother Patricia.**





Jeanine Giller as Miss Omaha, shown in the living room of her home in Omaha.



as self-aggrandizing, Smith noted, for instance, that Jeanine had originally refused to take his call, until he made it clear that he was a member of the media. In the article, Smith then described the interview as “entirely predictable” and claimed there was “only [one] non-programmed piece of conversation” during the interview—an off-handed remark made by Jeanine’s mother about the upcoming presidential election. When Smith asked about her political views, Jeanine told him that she was “conservative in almost every aspect.”<sup>30</sup> Despite Smith’s blithe dismissal of the beauty queen, being Miss Nebraska offered Jeanine the opportunity to express her views in the public sphere. Would Smith have interviewed her if she were simply a first-year teacher at a local school? In that sense, Jeanine *was* empowered by her experience as Miss Nebraska.

## The Miss America Pageant, September 1972

Having been crowned Miss Nebraska 1972, Jeanine went on to compete for the title of Miss America 1973 in Atlantic City, New Jersey. In her effort to claim the Miss America crown for Nebraska, Jeanine had the support of many people. Some local and state officials even took the time to wish her luck and express pride that the blue-eyed blonde was representing the Cornhusker State. “You are our Queen,” the Omaha Chamber of Commerce proclaimed in a note to Jeanine. The governor of Nebraska, J. James Exon, sent Jeanine a telegram before the national pageant, stating, “Your fellow Nebraskans send along their best wishes to you in the Miss America competition [sic]. We’re sure you will represent Nebraska in Number 1 fashion.”<sup>31</sup> Clearly some politicians and businessmen in the state liked the publicity that the pageant brought to their city and state, and most undoubtedly supported the traditional values associated with beauty pageants.

Jeanine also received warm support from friends, family members, and other pageant contestants, past and present. Particularly interesting are the letters she received from other beauty pageant contestants, especially those from former competitors at the Miss Nebraska pageant. Several noted their intention to watch the national pageant on television in order to root for “our” queen. For example, former competitor Sue Maseman (Miss Kearney) wrote Jeanine before the Miss America Pageant, encouraging her, “no matter what the results on Saturday night [September 9], you are our Queen and we are behind you all the way!... We’ll all be glued to the tube [television] on Saturday night cheering for you!”<sup>32</sup> Several of her former

In Sterling, Colorado, in July 1972 to participate in the Miss Colorado pageant, a three-night event held at Northeastern Junior College. From left to right: Miss Montana, Debbie DiBiase; Miss Wyoming, Annette Klipstein; unknown chaperone (probably Jeanine’s chaperone, Judy McCaig); Miss New Mexico, Terrie Wren Prather; Miss South Dakota, Jan Hunter; and Jeanine Giller.





competitors from Kearney also made note of the fact that she would *represent* Nebraska in Atlantic City. Nancy Baker (Miss Broken Bow), for example, wrote, “Here’s wishing you all the luck in the world as you represent our great state of Nebraska in the Miss America Pageant this month!” She signed the note, “A sister in pageantry.”<sup>33</sup> Thus, pageant culture did lead to the development of sisterhood among contestants. Female friendship engendered in the contest, in a sense, was an unconscious feminist act.<sup>34</sup>

The first Miss America Pageant contestants arrived in Atlantic City on Friday, September 1, 1972, and all were in the southern Jersey beach resort by the end of the weekend.<sup>35</sup> Jeanine arrived on September 2, and the first-year teacher had to miss some school days in order to compete in the national pageant.<sup>36</sup> Upon arriving, contestants were taken to their respective hotels to check in and drop off their luggage. Jeanine stayed at the Colton Manor motel on Pennsylvania Avenue along with Misses Nevada, Missouri, and Montana. An advertisement for the motel in the Miss America Pageant program proclaimed, “The Auchter Family [owners of Colton Manor] are pleased to host four lovely Miss America Contestants and hope they will always consider Colton Manor their Atlantic City ‘home.’”<sup>37</sup> There was little time for relaxation or sightseeing, though. After their arrival, all the contestants, including Jeanine, were “whisked away from hotel rooms to the registration desks, photographers, appointments, TV filmings, press interviews, and dinners.”<sup>38</sup>

On Sunday all the contestants were required to be available for interviews with reporters and sessions with photographers. Jeanine, along with the other forty-nine state queens, was photographed around Atlantic City, and all were expected to be in attendance at a scheduled photo shoot at the Chalfonte Hotel pool sundeck on the Boardwalk. Most of the photographs were of the women in their swimsuits; these images were then published in newspapers around the country.<sup>39</sup> Thomas Baldwin, a reporter for *The Press* of Atlantic City, even admitted that the images were “‘cheesecake’ photos”—with “legs, legs and more legs.”<sup>40</sup> On Sunday, in an editorial written to the contestants, *The Press* advised the “girls” to:

Keep in mind that when reporters ask you questions, and photographers take your picture, that these stories and pictures will appear in your home-city newspapers, and in some



magazines, and they’ll be precious keepsakes of what may well be the second most exciting week of your life. (The first most exciting week, we hope, will be your marriage and honeymoon, of course.)<sup>41</sup>

The editorial was unintentionally dripping with condescension towards the contestants, young women in their late teens or early twenties. But, it also offered a message to the contestants similar to what Miss America Pageant officials would offer: be careful what you say and do under the spotlight of the pageant.

**The evening gown competition, Friday, September 8, 1972.**

Photograph by Donald J. Walker.

**Boardwalk Parade on  
Tuesday, September 5,  
1972, in Atlantic City.**  
Photograph by Donald  
J. Walker



Pageant officials preferred their contestants to be ideologically or politically neutral. In fact, in 1972, pageant officials barred the contestants from wearing political buttons during Pageant Week.<sup>42</sup> That did not stop the press from asking political or personal questions of the contestants, nor did it always stop contestants from answering. Topics of discussion between reporters and contestants in Atlantic City included the war in Vietnam, actress Jane Fonda's recent visit to Hanoi, who they would vote for in the upcoming presidential election in November, abortion, and what type of man the contestants preferred. Contestants often either dodged such questions or gave polite answers. This evasiveness was undoubtedly encouraged by pageant officials, but most contestants probably believed it was shrewd to avoid giving an answer that might upset a judge or the public.<sup>43</sup>

Although many contestants wished to avoid answering personal or political questions, some did answer such questions. For example, the newspaper in Atlantic City published an article about the legalization of abortion, which many contestants supported. Of the eight contestants mentioned in an article in *The Press*, only one did not approve of abortion under any circumstance. The other seven—including two contestants from the South—all believed that the abortion laws then in existence should be more liberal. By contrast, when asked

about the war in Vietnam, most of the state queens who were interviewed gave at least tepid support for President Nixon and U.S. policy in Southeast Asia. Most of the contestants probably feared being labeled as “unpatriotic” during a war—and during the Cold War.<sup>44</sup> Regarding political views, Kathy Hebert, Miss Vermont, in particular, stood out and garnered a lot of media attention because of her outspoken “liberal” views. Hebert may not have been the only feminist and leftist participating in the contest but she certainly was the most outspoken one.<sup>45</sup>

Jeanine, in fact, may have been among the most conservative of the contestants, and as a Catholic was most likely against abortion. Although she sometimes proudly embraced her conservatism, as in the interview with Doug Smith, at other times she was more reserved when asked about her views. In an article in the *Omaha World-Herald* before the Miss America Pageant, Jeanine claimed to be unconcerned by politics. “I’m not a political person. . . . This is the first time I’ve been able to vote (for president), I haven’t been as politically inclined as I could have been,” she said. According to the article’s author, this was a positive attribute for Jeanine to have, especially in her quest to become the first Miss America from Nebraska. “If Miss Giller wins, Miss America officials don’t have to worry about her doing anything that might embarrass the contest, such as calling for a halt to the bombing of North Vietnam over Radio Hanoi,” the author said, referencing Jane Fonda’s antiwar activism.<sup>46</sup> As the local Omaha reporter correctly noted, contestants in the Miss America Pageant and its state affiliate pageants generally tried to be as inoffensive as possible.

Yet, as feminist organizations continued to protest beauty pageants, Jeanine’s “anti-political” ideal meant that, in fact, she was implicitly taking a political stance—that of the traditional, conservative version of American womanhood, in which women were relegated to the private, domestic sphere and certain “female” professions, while men occupied the public sphere of politics and business. This separate sphere ideology demanded that the ideal woman not be *too* political. As a participant in numerous beauty pageants, Jeanine appeared, on the surface at least, to take sides in the political debates over women’s role in American society. The Miss America Pageant, while officially promoting such an image of women, also gave fifty young women each year a platform to discuss their educational and professional goals, and occasionally their political views. To their credit, pageant



officials did not completely stifle or punish expressions of liberal or feminist thought by contestants such as Miss Vermont.

On Monday, September 4, pageant officials briefed the contestants on what to expect at a meeting at noon. All contestants were expected to have been registered by Monday, a process which included having them sign their state on a large U.S. map set up in Haddon Hall.<sup>47</sup> On Monday night, the contestants and the production team had their first rehearsal for the show that would begin on Wednesday night and continue until Saturday, the final night.<sup>48</sup> Pageant Week officially began on Tuesday night, when all fifty contestants participated in the Boardwalk Parade, which began at 8 p.m. The parade took about two hours and traveled down the Boardwalk from Pennsylvania Avenue to Chelsea Avenue. The parade was taped for television, and broadcast later in the week on an estimated 139 network affiliates across the country.<sup>49</sup> Approximately 50,000 people attended the parade in person. As *The Press* reported, all the state queens “passed in review to a cheering and waving crowd.” Besides the state queens, who rode like royalty atop the back seats of convertibles, the parade also featured thirty-five high school marching bands and twenty-five floats sponsored by local South Jersey governments and businesses.<sup>50</sup> In all, there were 120 “units” in the parade. Jeanine’s Miss Nebraska car went 71<sup>st</sup> in the parade line on the heels of several high school bands, several floats, and just beyond the tail lights of Miss Montana’s car.<sup>51</sup>

On Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday nights the pageant followed the same format. An opening song-and-dance number entitled “Keeping America Beautiful—Our Way” was followed by the “parade of states,” in which all fifty contestants were introduced. The show emcee, Bert Parks, then introduced the previous year’s Miss America, Laurie Lea Schaefer, to the Convention Hall audience. The show then turned to the main event: the contest. Each night roughly a third of the contestants competed in one of the three categories: evening gown, talent, or swimsuit. First each night was the evening gown competition, which was presented as part of a skit in which Parks attempted to have a huge “dating computer” create the “girl of his dreams.” When the computer failed to provide Parks with his girl, he kicked it, and instead he magically got sixteen girls—the young women competing in that night’s evening gown competition. Next each night came the talent competition, which followed on the heels of another song-and-dance number. Each

contestant was required to choose and perform a talent in front of the Convention Hall audience. Most contestants either danced or sang, but there were some other talents on display as well, including drawing. After the Penn State University men’s gymnastics team performed, the competition concluded each night with the swimsuit competition, in which the contestants “parade before the eyes of the judges and audience.” The show then ended with another song-and-dance number, in which all state queens performed.<sup>52</sup>

The contest to be Miss America 1973 began on Wednesday night, September 6, 1972, at Convention

**The Miss America Pageant, possibly the nightly “Parade of States” when all the contestants were introduced. Other photographs from the pageant show other contestants wearing outfits of the same design.**  
Photograph by Donald J. Walker.





In Iowa for the Miss Iowa Scholarship Ball in March 1973. From left to right: Miss Minnesota, Linda Louise Hagan; Jeanine Giller; Miss Wisconsin (and Miss America 1973), Terry Anne Meeuwsen; Miss Iowa, Rene E. Stuedemann; Miss Illinois, Carolyn Paulus.



Hall. About 6,600 people were in attendance for the pageant's opening night.<sup>53</sup> That night Jeanine participated in the talent preliminary. She performed the same modern dance that she had during the Miss Nebraska pageant in Kearney a few months earlier. In one of the few mentions that she received in the Atlantic City newspaper, Eleanor Lillesand of *The Press* reported:

A very alive and vital presentation of a modern dance number was offered by Miss Nebraska, Jeanine Giller, 22, of Omaha. The state queen wore a short purple dance costume with full skirt as she performed to the music, "The Bitter End."<sup>54</sup>

On Thursday night, Jeanine, along with fifteen other contestants, participated in the swimsuit

preliminary in front of a Convention Hall crowd of 4,742.<sup>55</sup> On Friday night, the final night of the preliminary competitions, Jeanine competed in the evening gown preliminary.<sup>56</sup> For the evening gown portion, contestants walked to a microphone at the front of the stage, introduced themselves, gave a fifteen-second speech about their educational aims, and then walked down a runway for the peering eyes of the audience.<sup>57</sup>

Jeanine did not win in any of the preliminary competitions in Atlantic City and therefore was not named as one of the ten semi-finalists on Saturday night, September 9. That night, at 11:53 p.m., before an audience of 15,524 people at Convention Hall and a national television audience in the millions, Miss Wisconsin, Terry Anne Meeuwsen, was crowned Miss America 1973.<sup>58</sup> Jeanine attended the last event of Pageant Week the next morning,

a brunch for all fifty contestants at Haddon Hall.<sup>59</sup> For participating in the Miss America Pageant in Atlantic City in September 1972, Jeanine received an additional \$500 in scholarship money to add to the money that she received for winning the title of Miss Nebraska.<sup>60</sup> The Miss America Pageant has, in fact, become the largest giver of scholarship money for women.<sup>61</sup>

The Miss America Pageant prided itself on being more than simply a beauty contest. Unlike most other beauty pageants, the Miss America Pageant and its state affiliates offered scholarship money to winners, money meant explicitly to further the educational goals of contestants. The modern Miss America Pageant also tried to exude middle-class respectability, and be more than an excuse for audience members to gawk at women in their swimsuits. Thus the pageant had three categories, talent, evening gown, and swimsuit, each weighed equally in the judging. When asked by a reporter about the other well-known beauty pageants, such as the Miss USA or Miss Universe pageants, Sally Jo Anderson, Miss Colorado, noted that she preferred the Miss America Pageant because it “is not just for your body, it’s also for what’s upstairs.”<sup>62</sup>

For the Miss America Pageant in September 1972, pageant officials emphasized the talent portion of the competition. According to the official post-pageant program, “The Miss America Pageant believes that the recognition of talent is so important—not only at the National Finals, but at each Local and State Pageant.”<sup>63</sup> In fact, the eventual winner of the 1972 contest, Terry Anne Meeuwse, stated that, as a singer, she competed in order to gain the exposure for her singing career, as well as the scholarship money.<sup>64</sup> By participating in beauty pageants and performing a talent, young female participants “give all America a better understanding of *the true character* of today’s youth,” the pageant program argued.<sup>65</sup> The Miss America Pageant certainly promoted traditional values, yet it also offered a platform for young women to display their intellect and talents, as well as their bodies.

Besides arguing that pageants objectify women, feminists also claimed that pageants require contestants to hide their emotions, to figuratively wear masks, in an effort to promote the image of the “ideal” woman. Certainly this was true for Jeanine, who, for example, told a reporter at the Miss Nebraska pageant that “all 22 years [of her life] have been good ones.”<sup>66</sup> Considering that her father, William Marshall Giller, had died less than two years prior, in 1970, it would seem that Jeanine was “putting on” for the reporter rather than expressing her

true feelings about the issues of life and death—not coincidentally the theme of her winning dance at the Miss Nebraska competition in Kearney.<sup>67</sup> The idea that pageants required young women to conceal their true emotions and thoughts was pointed out quite cogently by Cathy Paul, head of the Cape-Atlantic (New Jersey) Women’s Union for Liberation (WUL). In a letter to the editor of *The Press* that appeared the day after the pageant finale, Paul lodged her protest against the false image of women that the pageant created. Women have real emotions, Paul argued, and “covering them up just for television gives a false impression of a woman.”<sup>68</sup>

More than simply asking contestants to have a fake smile, though, Paul argued that “the pageant is degrading to women. Miss America has traditionally represented the ideal women [*sic*], that is, a white, middle class woman with good credentials who expressed very few opinions on any major issues.” Paul went as far as to argue that the pageant was essentially racist, as most contestants were white and the minority contestants represented “mere tokenism.” The Nebraska press coverage of the blue-eyed, blonde Jeanine would seem to support Paul’s contention, to a certain extent. Although Paul and the WUL in the Atlantic City area understood that the pageant was an economic booster for Atlantic City, they did not support the “exploitation of women’s bodies for . . . financial gain.” Paul called for area residents to pull their support from the Miss America Pageant.<sup>69</sup> The call, of course, went unheeded.

Despite such vehement protests from feminists, as the experiences of Jeanine Giller, Miss Nebraska 1972, demonstrate, beauty pageants can both objectify *and* empower young women. The Miss America Pageant and its state affiliate pageants implicitly bring this dichotomy to life by containing elements that objectify women (such as a swimsuit competition) and elements that empower women (such as offering scholarship prizes specifically meant for educational purposes). In interviews with reporters—most of whom were male—during the Miss Nebraska pageant, as well as after her victory, Jeanine often offered bland responses to questions. Most reporters seemed to have approved of such answers; only one noted his disapproval.<sup>70</sup> Like most pageant contestants, Jeanine believed she had to be inoffensive and, therefore, often hid her true feelings. Jeanine also had to appear in front of large audiences in her swimsuit—something that many contestants have said is an embarrassing experience.<sup>71</sup>

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**Contestant ribbon and Miss Nebraska 1972 ribbon from Miss Nebraska pageant in Kearney.**

Yet, at the same time, this young woman from a working-class Omaha background received three thousand dollars in awards for her victory in the Miss Nebraska pageant and for competing in the Miss America Pageant.<sup>72</sup> Most of the award money that contestants won was supposed to be used specifically for educational purposes. By becoming Miss Nebraska, Jeanine was also offered a platform to publicly express her views about the world, if she chose to do so. In these pageants, young women like Jeanine were asked about their educational and professional aims, their opinions about contemporary politics and events, and were given the spotlight in the media, even if only briefly

and for the wrong reason. And perhaps we should let Jeanine speak for herself on her experience as Miss Nebraska. When asked by a student reporter at Northwest High School in late September 1972 why she had entered beauty pageants, the young teacher responded: “The pageant provided an education. It helped me in my teaching by stressing working with other people, speaking in a public situation and by competing and still being able to be a good sport.”<sup>73</sup>

As Charles Flowerday noted in his 1982 article about former Miss Nebraska winners, Jeanine, along with the other women he interviewed, “spoke of the ensuing benefits of their brush with fame, both for personal and professional growth.”<sup>74</sup> Jeanine Giller did not win the title of Miss America 1973, but she went on to lead a full life—pursuing a teaching career as well as a family.<sup>75</sup> She was part of the generation of women who forged the double duty of homemaker with that of female professional, negotiating the confusing waters of ideal womanhood in a post-industrial society.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The authors would like to thank Heather Perez of the Atlantic City Free Public Library and Jeanine’s sister, Patty Giller, for research assistance. Aaron Purcell, Thomas Wintle, Michael R. Danforth II, Dave Turpie, and Melissa Turpie read and commented on the essay. Jeanine’s siblings, Suzanne Wintle, Patty Giller, Richard Giller, and Maureen Wysham, offered support and encouragement for this project. Co-author David Turpie is Jeanine’s only child. This article is dedicated to her grandchildren Owen and Maya.

<sup>2</sup> Charles Flowerday, “Miss Nebraskas rate pageant experience: Great!” *Lincoln Journal*, June 11, 1982.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Elwood Watson and Darcy Martin, “Introduction,” in Watson and Martin, eds., *“There She Is, Miss America”: The Politics of Sex, Beauty, and Race in America’s Most Famous Pageant* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 2. Other scholarly works include: K. Sue Jewell, *From Mammy to Miss America: Cultural Images and the Shaping of U.S. Social Policy* (New York: Routledge, 1993); Deborah Wolfe, “Beauty as a Vocation: Women and Beauty Contests in America” (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1994); Sarah Banet-Weiser, *The Most Beautiful Girl in the World: Beauty Pageants and National Identity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); Henry Pang, “Miss America: An American Idea, 1921-1969,” *Journal of Popular Culture* 2 (1969): 687-96; Angela J. Latham, “Packaging Woman: The Concurrent Rise of Beauty Pageants, Public Bathing, and Other Performances of ‘Nudity,’” *Journal of Popular Culture* 29, no. 3 (1995): 149-67; Stephen Gundle, “Feminine Beauty, National Identity, and Political Conflict in Postwar Italy, 1945-1954,” *Contemporary European History* 8, no. 3 (Nov.



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PMS JEANINE GILLER - MISS NEBRASKA

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YOUR FELLOW NEBRASKANS SEND ALONG THEIR BEST WISHES TO YOU IN  
THE MISS AMERICA COMPEITION. WE'RE SURE YOU WILL REPRESENT  
NEBRASKA IN NUMBER 1 FASHION

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SF-1201 (R5-69)

**Telegram from Governor James Exon to Jeanine Giller in Atlantic City.**

1999): 359-78; Elwood Watson and Darcy Martin, "The Miss America Pageant: Pluralism, Femininity and Cinderella All in One," *Journal of Popular Culture* 34, no. 1 (Summer 2000): 105-26. Popular histories of the Miss America Pageant include: Ann Marie Bivens, *Miss America: In Pursuit of the Crown* (New York: Mastermedia Ltd., 1991); Frank Deford, *There She Is: The Life and Times of Miss America* (New York: Viking Press, 1971); Susan Dworkin, *Miss America, 1945: Bess Myerson and the Year that Changed Our Lives* (New York: Newmark Press, 1987); Candace Savage, *Beauty Queens: A Playful History* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1998).

<sup>5</sup> On the early history of the pageant see Watson and Martin, "The Miss America Pageant: Pluralism, Femininity and Cinderella All in One," 106-10; Watson and Martin, "Introduction," in *There She Is, Miss America*, 2-7.

<sup>6</sup> Pang, "Miss America: An American Idea, 1921-1969," 691.

<sup>7</sup> On the effect of television on the pageant see Armando Riverol, *Live from Atlantic City: The Miss America Pageant Before, After and In Spite of TV* (Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1992).

<sup>8</sup> On the feminist protests of the Miss America Pageant in the late 1960s and early 1970s, see, for example, Alice Echols, *Daring to Be Bad: Radical Feminism in America, 1967-1975* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), 92-101.

<sup>9</sup> The first wave of feminism occurred in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Second-wave feminism

occurred in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. On second-wave feminism, see, for example, Sara M. Evans, *Born for Liberty: A History of Women in America* (New York: The Free Press, 1989), 243-314; Rosalyn Baxandall and Linda Gordon, *Dear Sisters: Dispatches from the Women's Liberation Movement* (Basic Books: New York, 2000). The modern feminist movement was by no means unified. There were moderate, radical, and lesbian sects.

<sup>10</sup> Robin Morgan, "No More Miss America," in *Sisterhood is Powerful: An Anthology of Writings from the Women's Liberation Movement*, ed. Robin Morgan (New York: Random House, 1970), 584-88.

<sup>11</sup> Watson and Martin, "The Miss America Pageant," 110-11. For NOW's founding document see, "NOW's Statement of Purpose, 1966," in Mary Beth Norton and Ruth M. Alexander, eds., *Major Problems in American Women's History* 2nd edition (Lexington, MA: D. C. Heath and Company, 1996), 447.

<sup>12</sup> Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1999; first edition, 1990), xv; Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory," in Carole R. McCann and Seung-Kyung Kim, eds., *Feminist Theory Reader: Local and Global Perspectives* (New York and London: Routledge, 2003), 415, 421, and 423.

<sup>13</sup> Tom Allan, "'Queen' Trades Apron for a Crown," *Omaha World-Herald*, June 27, 1972, 10.

<sup>14</sup> On the University of Nebraska-Omaha (UNO) pageants, see "Sue Nelson Chosen 'Miss UNO,'" *Gateway* (UNO), April 29, 1970, 4; "Cher Fangman: Miss Tomahawk 1971," *Gateway* (UNO), Dec. 18, 1970, 5; Alan Gendler, "Mary Jochim Crowned in Miss UNO Pageant," *Gateway* (UNO), Apr. 14, 1971, 1. There has been scant scholarly attention paid to college beauty pageants. For one example see Karen W. Tice, "Queens of Academe: Campus Pageantry and Student Life," *Feminist Studies* 31, no. 2 (Summer 2005): 250-83.

<sup>15</sup> On the Vietnam War resolutions defeated in the Student Senate, see Bonnie Sherman, "Senate Defeats Resolutions," *Gateway* (UNO), May 15, 1970, 1.

<sup>16</sup> Tom Allan, "Queen Trades Apron for a Crown," *Omaha World-Herald*, June 26, 1972, 10.

<sup>17</sup> Paul Vaughan, "Miss Giller Teaches," *Ram Tales* (Ralston High School), unknown date, in Jeanine Giller Miss America Scrapbook (hereafter cited as JGMAS), in the possession of the authors.

<sup>18</sup> Tim Kenny, "Jeanine Giller: 'Miss Nebraska,'" *Breakaway* (Spring 1972): 30, in JGMAS.

<sup>19</sup> On her previous pageant experience see *NEBRASKAland Magazine*, 49, no. 10 (Oct. 1971): 57.

<sup>20</sup> Tim Kenny, "Jeanine Giller: 'Miss Nebraska,'" *Breakaway* (Spring 1972): 30, in JGMAS. For a different account of the events see Doug Smith, "Miss Nebraska: A Peek Behind the Scenes," *West Omaha Sun*, Aug. 24, 1972, 11A.

<sup>21</sup> "Talent Rehearsals," *Kearney Daily Hub*, June 21, 1972, 7.

<sup>22</sup> *Kearney Daily Hub*, June 23, 1972; "Omaha, Kearney Coeds Early Pageant Winners," *McCook Gazette*, June 23, 1972, in Jeanine Giller Miss Nebraska Scrapbooks, in possession of the authors (hereafter JGMNS). Feminists have also debated whether or not flaunting one's sexuality, for example, in a swimsuit competition, is oppressive. Younger feminists have embraced physical beauty and ownership of sexuality, arguing that patriarchy does not determine how they will interpret and display their own bodies.

<sup>23</sup> "Jeanine Giller named Miss Nebraska Saturday," *Nebraska City News-Press*, June 26, 1972, in JGMNS; "Producer Confident of Winner," *Omaha World-Herald*, June 23, 1972, 8.

<sup>24</sup> Dean Terrill, "Moe's Miss Nebraska Choice Wins," *Lincoln Journal*, June 26 1972, 16.

<sup>25</sup> "On Selling State: Miss Nebraska Says People Best Product," *Omaha World-Herald*, June 26, 1972, 10.

<sup>26</sup> "Omaha, Kearney Coeds Early Pageant Winners," *McCook Gazette*, June 23, 1972, in JGMNS; Tom Allan, "Omahan Crowned as Miss Nebraska," *Omaha World-Herald*, June 25, 1972, 1 and 4.

<sup>27</sup> "Final Competition For 1972 Crown Is Saturday Night," *Kearney Daily Hub*, June 24, 1972.

<sup>28</sup> Dean Terrill, "Jeanine Giller Crowned Miss Nebraska," *Lincoln Star*, June 26, 1972, 6.

<sup>29</sup> "Jeanine Giller Named Miss Nebraska Saturday," *Nebraska City News-Press*, June 26, 1972; Tom Allan, "Queen Trades Apron," *Omaha World-Herald*, June 26, 1972, 10; Tom Allan, "Omahan Crowned as Miss Nebraska," *Omaha World-Herald*, June 25, 1972, 1; Peg Austin, "Miss Omaha Wins Miss

Nebraska," *Kearney Daily Hub*, June 26, 1972; Dean Terrill, "Moe's Miss Nebraska Choice Wins," *Lincoln Journal*, June 26, 1972, 16.

<sup>30</sup> Doug Smith, "Miss Nebraska: A Peek Behind the Scenes," *West Omaha Sun*, Aug. 24, 1972, 11A.

<sup>31</sup> Omaha Chamber of Commerce note, Sept. 1972, in JGMAS; Governor J. James Exon to Jeanine Giller, Sept. 1972, in JGMAS.

<sup>32</sup> Sue Maseman to Jeanine Giller, Sept. 2, 1972, in JGMAS.

<sup>33</sup> Nancy Baker to Jeanine Giller, Sept. 1972, in JGMAS.

<sup>34</sup> Feminist theorist Mary Daly has argued that female friendship is more threatening to men than infidelity. When two women become friends, they exist no longer for the male. Yet, female friendship does not exist to threaten male existence—it isn't even about men—and that's what they find so threatening. Mary Daly, *Gyn/Ecology: The Metaethics of Radical Feminism* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1978), 365-84.

<sup>35</sup> Eleanor Lillesand, "5 Beauties Arrive Today To Prepare for Pageant," *The Press* (Atlantic City, NJ), Sept. 1, 1972, 1; Eleanor Lillesand, "18 Beauties Register For Annual Pageant," *The Press* (Atlantic City, NJ), Sept. 3, 1972, A1.

<sup>36</sup> Doug Smith, "Miss Nebraska: A Peek Behind the Scenes," *West Omaha Sun*, Aug. 24, 1972, 11A; Larry Parrott, "New Teachers Feel Lucky to Have Their Jobs," *Omaha World-Herald*, unknown date, in JGMAS.

<sup>37</sup> Miss America Pageant 1972 program, 56.

<sup>38</sup> Eleanor Lillesand, "18 Beauties Register For Annual Pageant," *The Press* (Atlantic City, NJ), Sept. 3, 1972, A1.

<sup>39</sup> Eleanor Lillesand, "Miss America Hopefuls Registering in Resort," *The Press* (Atlantic City, NJ), Sept. 3, 1972, A2. For examples of pictures of Jeanine in newspapers outside of Nebraska or *The Press* of Atlantic City, see *Oakland* (CA) *Tribune*, Sept. 4, 1972, 14F; *Victoria* (TX) *Advocate*, Sept. 4, 1972, 12A.

<sup>40</sup> Thomas Baldwin, "Girls Smile Through It All," *The Press* (Atlantic City, NJ), Sept. 5, 1972, 1.

<sup>41</sup> "Welcome, beauties!" *The Press* (Atlantic City, NJ), Sept. 3, 1972, A6.

<sup>42</sup> "Pageant Taboos: This Year, It's Political Buttons," *The Press* (Atlantic City, NJ), Sept. 3, 1972, B6.

<sup>43</sup> Thomas Baldwin, "Pageant Girls Close-Mouthed: No Personal Answers," *The Press* (Atlantic City, NJ), Sept. 5, 1972, 8.

<sup>44</sup> Thomas Baldwin, "Pageant Contestants in Favor of Liberal Abortion Policies," *The Press* (Atlantic City, NJ), Sept. 6, 1972, 39; Eleanor Lillesand, "Contestants Rake Jane Fonda's Visit," *The Press* (Atlantic City, NJ), Sept. 4, 1972, 12.

<sup>45</sup> Eleanor Lillesand, "Miss Vermont: Liberal State Queen Arrives," *The Press* (Atlantic City, NJ), Sept. 4, 1972, 1 and 12; Ewart Rouse, "Miss Vermont: 'Not Typical,'" *The Press* (Atlantic City, NJ), Sept. 5, 1972, 1; Thomas Baldwin, "Outspoken Miss Vermont 'Freaking Out' Pageant," *The Press* (Atlantic City, NJ), Sept. 7, 1972, 9; Thomas Baldwin, "Pageant Promoted by Miss Vermont," *The Press* (Atlantic City, NJ), Sept. 11, 1972, 5.

<sup>46</sup> “Miss Nebraska Will Miss Some Classes,” *Omaha World-Herald*, unknown date, in JGMAS.

<sup>47</sup> Eleanor Lillesand, “18 Beauties Register For Annual Pageant,” *The Press* (Atlantic City, NJ), Sept. 3, 1972, A1; Thomas Baldwin, “Smiling Through,” *The Press* (Atlantic City, NJ), Sept. 5, 1972, 8.

<sup>48</sup> Thomas Baldwin, “Smiling Through,” *The Press* (Atlantic City, NJ), Sept. 5, 1972, 8.

<sup>49</sup> Eleanor Lillesand, “Spotlight on Resort As Pageant Opens,” *The Press* (Atlantic City, NJ), Sept. 5, 1972, 1.

<sup>50</sup> Thomas Baldwin and Eleanor Lillesand, “Parade Wows Eager Mob,” *The Press* (Atlantic City, NJ), Sept. 6, 1972, 1.

<sup>51</sup> Miss America Pageant 1972 program, 17.

<sup>52</sup> Eleanor Lillesand, “‘Keep America Beautiful’ Main Theme of Pageant,” *The Press* (Atlantic City, NJ), Sept. 8, 1972, 5.

<sup>53</sup> Eleanor Lillesand, “Delaware, Kansas Win Talent, Swimsuit,” *The Press* (Atlantic City, NJ), Sept. 7, 1972, 1.

<sup>54</sup> Eleanor Lillesand, “Misses Delaware, Kansas Win in Pageant’s Talent, Swimsuit Preliminaries,” *The Press* (Atlantic City, NJ), Sept. 7, 1972, 9.

<sup>55</sup> Eleanor Lillesand and Thomas Baldwin, “Wisconsin, Indiana Win Talent, Swimsuit,” *The Press* (Atlantic City, NJ), Sept. 8, 1972, 1 and 5.

<sup>56</sup> Eleanor Lillesand and Thomas Baldwin, “Miss Wisconsin Is Double Winner,” *The Press* (Atlantic City, NJ), Sept. 9, 1972, 12.

<sup>57</sup> Eleanor Lillesand, “‘Keep America Beautiful’ Main Theme of Pageant,” *The Press* (Atlantic City, NJ), Sept. 8, 1972, 5.

<sup>58</sup> Eleanor Lillesand and Thomas Baldwin, “Miss Wisconsin Wins Crown,” *The Press* (Atlantic City, NJ), Sept. 10, 1972, A1 and A2.

<sup>59</sup> Thomas Baldwin, “Terry Anne Worldly, Polished,” *The Press* (Atlantic City, NJ), Sept. 11, 1972, 5.

<sup>60</sup> 1972 Miss America Pageant schedule of events, in Local History Subject Files, Miss America Collection, Atlantic City Free Public Library, Atlantic City, N.J.

<sup>61</sup> Banet-Weiser, *The Most Beautiful Girl in the World*, 45.

<sup>62</sup> Eleanor Lillesand, “East Too Compact For Miss Colorado,” *The Press* (Atlantic City, NJ), Sept. 2, 1972, 18.

<sup>63</sup> 1972 Miss America Pageant Souvenir Book, 9.

<sup>64</sup> “Miss America Chides Press for Questions,” *Omaha World Herald*, Sept. 11, 1972, 1.

<sup>65</sup> 1972 Miss America Pageant Souvenir Book, 9. Emphasis added.

<sup>66</sup> Dean Terrill, “Moe’s Miss Nebraska Choice Wins,” *Lincoln Journal*, June 26, 1972, in JGMNS.

<sup>67</sup> Tom Allan, “‘Queen’ Trades Apron For a Crown,” *Omaha World-Herald*, June 26, 1972, 10. In this article, Allan briefly mentions the death of her father.

<sup>68</sup> Cathy Paul, “Protest to Miss America” (letter to the editor), *The Press* (Atlantic City, NJ), Sept. 10, 1972, A6. Jeanine saved a clipping of this letter to the editor in her

Miss America scrapbook, although her feelings about Paul’s ideas are unknown.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> The latter was Doug Smith of the *West Omaha Sun*. See above.

<sup>71</sup> See, for example, Thomas Baldwin, “‘Cheesecake’ Photos: Girls Smile Through It All,” *The Press* (Atlantic City, NJ), Sept. 5, 1972, 1 and 8. One unnamed contestant told Baldwin, “Oh, this is ridiculous. It’s so embarrassing.” On this topic, see also Banet-Weiser, *The Most Beautiful Girl in the World*, 58-86.

<sup>72</sup> An article in *The Press* of Atlantic City noted that “every contestant says it’s the scholarship money that she’s after.” See “‘We’re in It for Money,’ Pageant Contestants Say,” *The Press* (Atlantic City, NJ), Sept. 4, 1972, 12.

<sup>73</sup> “Miss America Candidate Heads List [of] New Teachers,” Northwest High School (Omaha) student newspaper, Sept. 22, 1972, in JGMAS.

<sup>74</sup> Charles Flowerday, “Miss Nebraskas rate pageant experience: Great!” *Lincoln Journal*, June 11, 1982.

<sup>75</sup> Unfortunately, Jeanine passed away in 2009. She was never interviewed by the authors for this project.