

Interviewee: Ann Marie Shea
Interviewer: Andrew Moccia
Video/Audio Recorder: Feldano Francois
Date: February 20, 2018
Place: Assumption College, Worcester, Massachusetts
Transcriber: Feldano Francois and Andrew Moccia



Overseen by Prof. Carl Robert Keyes, Assumption College

Abstract:

This transcript highlights the life experiences and insight of Ann Marie Shea, a Worcester native born in 1939. Growing up a Catholic Irish- American, Ann Marie is the daughter of two Irish immigrants. Ann Marie attended Worcester public schools and continued her education at Anna Maria College, where she majored in English. She then furthered her education at Catholic University of America in Washington D.C., where she received a small scholarship. Theater was her area of study at Catholic University. With passion and skill, Ann Marie has worked much of her life in this field. Several years after receiving her M.A in Drama, she earned her Ph.D. in Educational Theatre from New York University. Within her interview, Ann Marie discusses the positive and negative changes she has observed in Worcester. She also talks a bit about the city's history. Ann Marie speaks of her many jobs over the years, including publishing, writing and performing. She cherishes the simple things in life and finds happiness there.

AM: What is your full name including both maiden name and married name, if applicable?

AS: Ann Marie Shea.

AM: Okay, where, when were you born?

AS: Where was I born? Worcester.

AM: When were you born?

AS: In 1939.

AM: Have you ever married? If yes, what is the name of your husband?

AS: No.

AM: Do you have any children?

AS: No.

Worcester Women's Oral History Project
30 Elm Street – Worcester, MA 01609 – info@wohproject.org
www.wohproject.org

AM: What cultures/ethnicities do you identify with?

AS: Irish, Irish-American, I should say.

AM: Could you tell me a little bit about your parents?

AS: My parents were both immigrants. They came over separately in 1920. They met here. My mother was from Cork and my father was from Kerry. And as you probably know from your history studies, the top of the 20th century in Ireland was a pretty messy place. So, this is going a little off your question. But because of their history, I have a great sympathy for people who are fleeing places of trouble, and I really do believe that America is the land of opportunity.

AM: Where have you lived during your life? Did you grow up in Worcester? If so, what neighborhood?

AS: I grew up near Webster Square in the shadow of Our Lady of the Angels Church. I lived here until I was 21. I went to Worcester's public schools, which I think gave me a very good background. I'm very proud of my public school education. And I went on to Anna Maria College on a scholarship. And immediately after that, just through a fluke at the last minute, I found out I had this tiny scholarship at Catholic University in Washington D.C. So, with a flurry of student loans and all kinds of other things, I took them up on their offer of \$400 support. And I thought it was the voice of God indicating to me that I should go. So, I majored in theater at Catholic University, which was not available to me at my undergraduate education. I was an English major.

AM: You knocked off a few questions right there. [They both laugh.] What was the neighborhood you grew up in generally like?

AS: Oh, generally, single family homes, mixed culturally. We didn't have people of color in the neighborhood, but a number of different religions were represented, and European nationalities. I think of my Irish parents back in 1938, when they bought the house. I think they broke the neighborhood. They were the first Irish to live on the street, but we were soon joined by others.

AM: Where do you live in the city now? Have you lived in multiple areas?

AS: Now I live near Tatnuck Square, generally in the Tatnuck neighborhood. I lived in downtown Worcester in an apartment building, and I lived also for a while in Sturbridge.

AM: Now, do you have any other family members living nearby or in the same general area ?

AS: I have a brother in Shrewsbury. I think I responded to the previous question inaccurately. Did you mean where have I lived, period? Not where have I lived in Worcester?

AM: You said multiple areas within Worcester, but have you lived in multiple areas outside of Worcester?

AS: Washington D.C., of course, and the summer that I worked, of all places, Helena, Montana. I worked for a while in northeastern Pennsylvania, right outside Wilkes- Barre, where I taught at Misericordia College. And when I was starting at NYU [New York University], I lived in Brooklyn.

AM: What challenges do you think this city still faces? What would you change about this city?

AS: Well, it would be nice if we had streets that you could follow. I've lived here for so long I sort of have an instinct for getting around, but it's really difficult when you are inviting people from out of town. Try to verbalize getting around Worcester. I don't know how you could fix that because, you know, the hills determine it and things that people did in the 18th century determine it. What really I would like to see happen, is better commuter rail to Boston and any kind of transportation to New York City. Being a theater person, I would love to get down to New York City more often, but it's very inconvenient. The buses are unreliable. The only train service takes about six hours, with an inexplicable two or three hour layover in Springfield or some place. The tracks are there. I don't know why we can't have a train that you get on at Union Station and you end up getting off at, I don't know, Grand Central Station, I guess. I love riding the trains, and I wish there would be more focus on using them. When you look downtown and you see all of those apartments that are going up downtown, it looks like it's really going to be a vibrant place. And I think I'm assuming that a lot of those apartments will be filled by young professionals. And I think they might like to bust out of here on a weekend now and then. It would be so convenient to be able to hop on a train and get out. I would like to see...I'm so happy to see that Hanover [Hanover Theatre] is thriving. I would like to see more theatrical performing sites. My dream would be that we would have an equity, a union house, in Worcester, where maybe, a couple of times a year I could get a job. [They both laugh.]

AM: Well, I know you just mentioned a lot of the apartments being built, but what else have you seen change in Worcester in your time here?

AS: Well, we got rid of that dreadful downtown mall, didn't we? I mean it was so... I don't know if you remember. You're not from Worcester?

[Andrew nods no.]

AS: It really was so enclosing to go down Front Street, and suddenly be confronted with this building blocking the street. Now I remember when it disappeared. It was like taking a breath of fresh air that you had a street that made sense. It started here at point A and it went straight to point B, and that was so unusual for Worcester. So, I think that's a great thing that's happened, that we have restored some of the downtown streets. I think there has been an emphasis on,

especially with the tragedy of the Asian long-horned beetle blight. It's made us relook at the treasure of our urban forest. And if you go around Worcester, you see so many trees that are in their infancy. They've been planted in the last 10 years to replace the stock of hardwoods that was lost. I think that that's a wonderful thing that we are really paying attention, to keep the city as green as we can.

AM: What do you think are the distinct characteristics that make up Worcester, create the place that it is?

AS: Education, education, education. When you think of... I've lost track of how many colleges are in the consortium. Something like 12 or 13, with a number of different interests. Liberal Arts, of course, the medical school, the pharmacology and health school, engineering... There's a variety of interest throughout the city, and I think that's wonderful. I've taught for almost 40 years at Worcester State College. And as somebody whose parents never made it past the eighth grade in the country where they grew up, I have a Ph.D. Now all my advanced degrees are from private institutions, but I think some place like Worcester State serves a great purpose in the community. Many, many of my students were the first in their families to get degrees and that changes society. It gives great promise. We had wonderful graduates who didn't come from an elite background, where their parents were able to write out big checks to go to Ivy Leagues. Even their parents were not able to help them in the way that you'd like to think a parent could help a child getting through school, because even their high school studies were above the level of their parents' education. So, I'm a firm believer in education being the tool to change society.

AM: What do you think women's experiences in Worcester have been like generally?

AS: Pretty loud mouth... If you go back into history, back to 1850, at least, and I'm sure there was stuff going on before then. You've probably come across this in your class, that 1850 in Worcester was the scene of the first National Women's Conference. Of course, 1848 was Seneca Falls [Seneca Falls Convention], but that was not national. And if you read the contemporary account, you will find that it was a promiscuous gathering. Meaning, where your college age mind is going, rather than men and women were in the audience at the same time, sharing the aisles and sharing the rows. And in mid-19th century society there were men's gatherings, maybe there were women's gatherings but not mixed. Mixed to the point where people of color were invited, and people of color spoke because, of course, we still had slavery as a legal institution in the country at the time. And so, people like Abby Kelley Foster, whose house still stands out on Mower Street, beyond Tatnuck... She mouthed off about abolition, about women's right to vote, about women's right to equal pay, this is in 1850! She and her husband broke the law by hosting runaway slaves at their farm on Mower Street, Liberty Farm, appropriately named. So, we have a site of the underground railroad here in Worcester. Frances Perkins... I have a one-woman show depicting Frances Perkins. She was born in Boston, ironically, in a place at the South End called Worcester Square. She was a toddler when her family moved to Worcester. She went through Worcester public schools, graduated from Classical High, which is no longer in existence, unfortunately, and went on to study at Mount Holyoke College. She made a very brave break

from her family tradition by realizing and articulating that poverty is not always the result of bad morals, and addictions. She went on to change the nation by serving in the F.D.R [Franklin Delano Roosevelt] cabinet as the first woman cabinet member. She was Secretary of Labor. We can attribute to her the existence of social security, and the firm establishment of the power of labor unions, which is being attacked right now, as well as minimum wage, maximum hours, the elimination of child labor. She did an awful lot when she was serving in the Labor Department and different agencies in New York, the state of New York, to eliminate tenements that immigrants were just packed into cheek to jowl, very unsanitary conditions. So, there's another mouthy Worcester woman. Some people put their words to paper, such as Esther Forbes, who wrote prize winning books like *Paul Revere and The World He Lived In*, *Johnny Tremain*, and other historical novels. Elizabeth Bishop, one of the greatest poets of the 20th century, grew up in Worcester. In fact, the rectory at Our Lady of the Angels Church was the Bishops' residence, and way up the top of the hill in back of the church is a small street called Bishop Ave, all related to that family. So, there have been a number of women, I'm only scratching the surface, a number of women who either grew up in or are affiliated with Worcester and they are making a difference. Right now, who is the president of the Massachusetts senate? Harriette Chandler, my senator from my district, and one very articulate, very smart woman...

AM: Thank you, I know you already spoke about it a lot, but where did you attend school and what were the names of these schools?

AS: Started at Gates Lane, not the building that's there now but this red brick heap. They had to tear it down, because I'm sure it's just not up to code at all. [I attended] New Woodland Prep, which again does not exist, South High on Richard Street, which does not exist under that name. I'm a great one for closing schools. So South, and Anna Maria College for an English degree, the Catholic University for an M.A in Drama, and many years later New York University for a Ph.D. in Educational Theater

AM: What do you think were your biggest challenges in education?

AS: Trying to catch up, because although my parents were very intelligent, they just didn't have the formal education. So, to be able to discuss current novels over the dinner table, that just wasn't done. Another thing was, hate to pull out the old canard, but my sex. At Catholic University, which was very good educationally, they produced... the student productions were mainly classical Greek plays, or Shakespeare. Well, look at a Shakespeare cast list. There are 48 between the lead character and the spear carriers that have to be cast as male, and three or four token females. Well, there was a reason for that in Shakespeare's day. He didn't have access to female actors. It's very difficult where anybody who walks across the stage, as long as he's male, can be given some kind of a role. But you have to be really top of the class to be get one of the few female roles. Thank goodness they did do Greek every year, and I was usually the seventh woman of Corinth, or something in the Greek chorus, so I go on stage at least.

AM: Upon finishing your formal education, what did you see as your options?

AS: I didn't have the courage to declare a full-time commitment to professional acting, partly because I was given so little experience at the school where I paid tuition to be taught, but it all went to the guys. So, I certainly was not going to teach. That was not in the cards and I did this, and I did that, and I did whatever. Then I realized, some of this is pretty boring work. I could be in a classroom and be talking about things I really love, like dramatic literature and acting and so forth, and so I opted for teaching in college.

AM: Moving on to work, what was your first job?

AS: My very first job, aside from babysitting, I was a cashier at John Barsamian's supermarket, which again is closed. I'm really good at closing things. But it was on Main Street within walking distance of my house.

AM: What other jobs have you had in your life, and what do you do?

AS: I have a list somewhere where I try to put them down alphabetically. I started with A as assistant to the editor, B as babysitter, C as cashier, D as director, editorial assistant, that's dipping twice in the same job. It's hard to say what I haven't done, short of walking the streets. Most of it has had to do with words in some way, publishing, p.r. [public relations], writing, or performing. Yeah, I've just had a number of... What was your question again?

AM: It was, what other jobs have you had, and what do you do now?

AS: So anyway, I've had a variety of jobs, and now I'm retired, so I do get a pension, so I can afford to act. Just yesterday I was in Boston for an audition. Since I retired 13 years ago now, I've acquired two union cards, Actors Equity Association for live theater performance, and SAG-AFTRA, Screen Actors Guild - American Federation of Television and Radio Artists. That's the one I'm making money on. I had the honor to be cast as Martin Landau's wife in a film in 2015. You wouldn't remember the 1960's TV show, *Mission Impossible*, that Martin Landau---He won an Oscar in 1995 for playing Bela Lugosi in *Ed Wood*. And then there's the more recent TV show, *Entourage*, where he played a pushy Hollywood agent---that Martin Landau... Anyway, the 2015 film is called *Abe and Phil's Last Poker Game*. Alas, it never had a real theatrical release, but it's now available on iTunes and Google.com. It was a wonderful experience and here is this man, an icon of American theater, and I'm acting this far away from him. I just had to stop thinking, this is Martin Landau, and I had to really force myself into character and say, "No, this is my beloved husband, Abe." But that was a hoot working with him. Unfortunately, we lost him last July. What else do I do now? I do a lot of writing, playwriting, and I don't know how much time a day I put into submitting scripts to various opportunities. Sometimes I think there's more time being put in styling the submission, than actually doing the writing. I mean, you're in college. You know that one teacher wants you to do University of Chicago Style, another one says, "No, do the other style." If you're in psychology or the sciences, you do yet another style.

A lot of time goes into that. You thought you had your paper all done, and you say, “Oh no, I used the wrong style book.” I put an awful lot of time, unfortunately, into that. Wouldn’t it be wonderful to have a personal assistant or a staff and just say, “Here’s a fabulous text, do something with it, style it.” But we don’t have that luxury. In fact, when I go back home, I’m going to be struggling with a styling challenge because I can’t just send them the script. I have to go through their submission service, which I can’t figure out. For somebody who started off using a manual typewriter, and then though it was state of the art, to be gifted with this electric. I still have to learn how to handle that keyboard because it’s attached to a different electronic brain these days, not attached to my brain.

AM: What were or are your primary responsibilities in terms of housework or childcare?

AS: Taking care of me, which I would farm out easily, if I could afford a housekeeper, believe me. I could grow potatoes in the living room rug right now.

AM: Okay. How have you balanced different priorities, responsibilities, roles, and interests in your life?

AS: Well, being a single person, primarily as I just said, I am responsible for me, so it wasn’t that much of a balancing act. I can’t give you an answer to that.

AM: Alright, what do you think are the pros and cons to the path you have chosen?

AS: This is an interesting question, because I was just on the phone for about an hour today with a friend. We have lost, just within the past day, a mutual friend from many, many years ago. Her path was not our path, and we had sort of this discussion that some paths you choose, some paths you avoid, some paths are available to you. So, a combination of all of those options... The one good thing about getting old, is that you don’t *kvetch* about stuff. Oooh, is he going to call me for another date? Oooh, should I marry him because I don’t want to have children that look like him? And, so all of that stuff is not an option anymore and you just say, “Oh it’s Tuesday and it’s really grand and it smells like spring outside.” And that is not available to everybody. I don’t mean to put a damper on this, but this is what I’m living through and I just have to realize this is what the game is from here on out. You read the paper and hope you don’t find the name of a friend of yours.

AM: Okay, moving on. Do you consider yourself active politically?

AS: Yeah so I, I have to confess when I open my inbox, I automatically delete things that I know are catchy but just want three dollars, or five dollars, or one hundred dollars from me. I’m sorry Elizabeth Warren, I even delete your messages because there are just too damn many of them. But I do consider myself politically active, I’m a member of the League of Women Voters, that’s not a partisan group. Since the election, I joined the league but also ACLU [American Civil

Liberties Union], because I feel impotent. I mean somebody stole my country, and I want to see, is there some weapon I have to still hold onto the little bit of it I have left. I have done door to door campaigning for politicians. I will not man a phone bank, I find phone calls so intrusive. I would like to see the literature, I would like to see the study that says that, what is that automatic phone calling thing?

AM: A voicemail ? Is it a voicemail or a pre-recorded message?

AS: Yes that's it, a pre-recorded message. I would like to get some documentation of how useful that is in actually changing people's mind about voting. I mean I don't care that John Kerry, who didn't know how to answer an email from me properly, I sent him off an issue, why did you vote to invade, or please don't vote to invade another foreign country. And his office sent me back something about a farm bill. I am not impressed when he calls me up on a robocall and says, "Hi vote for this person," or, "Vote for me." I don't know what his message was, I hung up on it. So, absolutely not, nothing to do with phones, I won't do that. I will invest my shoe leather in walking around neighborhoods with a clipboard. And I respect candidates who do that. I have voted for more than one person running for city council, just because they gave up their Sunday afternoon and walked up to my house.

AS: Have you been involved in any volunteer or community work?

AS: Well, Worcester Women's Oral History Project... In past days, I would say a lot of my theater work was volunteer. Ah, a couple of decades ago, I poured my heart into Worcester's Children Theater, now also gone. Did I tell you I'm good at burying things? Entr'Actors Guild, which was one foot in the profession, one foot in volunteering... That was a very active, and I would say semi-professional theater group that I put a lot of energy into in days gone by. Where else do I volunteer? I don't know, it will come to me after I leave the room.

AM: Okay, what role has religion played in your life?

AS: Central. I was raised Catholic, right next door to the Our Lady of the Angels. In the old days, of course, you had all these ceremonies and all this incense was thrown all the time. So that was almost like aromas from my mother's kitchen. It was very intimate. And then I went to public school up through 12th grade. But I went to Anna Maria what was, of course, a very religious atmosphere. It's a flow, you know. You're here at Assumption, it's not a static thing. Your faith, and your commitment to your faith, it ebbs and flows. I have to believe that if we aren't going to look out for each other, we're not doing what God put us on the earth for. And it's great to think, "I'll have all the money in the world, and I'll have my suite down in Florida, my yacht ready to sail in the Mediterranean," but I don't know if that brings you happiness. Rather than... Once in a great while, before my hands and my feet gave out, I'd be down at Saint John's food pantry, down on Temple Street, and happiness was having a small child come through, and having it look like Christmas in his eyes when you offered him an extra bowl of fruit or

something. So, you do these things, but, you know, maybe you do them for selfish reasons because you want that little kick.

AM: Thank you! What are your experiences in accessing quality, affordable healthcare?

AS: Could you speak more clearly? I couldn't hear you.

AM: What are your experiences in accessing quality, affordable healthcare?

AS: What was the word before quality?

AM: Accessing.

AS: Oh accessing. What are my experiences? A year ago or so, I went through probably the largest medical issue of my life. And I get these statements, E.B.O., E.O.B, estimate of benefits, and it says this is not a bill. And you got a shot from a doctor on this date and an exam from that doctor on that date, and you had big things done on that date. Because they weren't bills, I stopped keeping track of them at \$60,000 that my Medicare and insurance were taking care of. Sixty thousand dollars for something that was discrete, it just lasted a couple of months and it's not threatening my life now. If I were presented a bill for \$60,000, you would find me down at Kelly Square with a tin cup and a sign. I mean I don't have those resources and I'm middle class. I've always had a job my whole life and I wouldn't be able to deal with a \$60,000 dollar. So yeah, I don't know where you can live in a world where you're not taking care of people who are in pain or people who are in danger of losing their lives. Why don't we just take the old and the injured, and if we had any ice floes left, just take them and send them off on an iceberg to fall off the universe. No, you know you have to take care of your people. And other countries do it. I don't know what our hang up in this country is about calling it socialized medicine. No, it's Frances Perkins. When she was working back in the 1930's to get Social Security passed, she had to compromise, as did Obama when he finally got his Affordable Care Act. She had to compromise to the point of not getting socialized insurance, because she knew she would have to wait till Social Security passed to tack that on. Obama had to back down from single payer because he knew he couldn't get Affordable Care Act passed. And as I read, Affordable Care Act, it was a gift to the insurance companies, because it meant everybody had to take out a policy or pay a penalty. So, I don't know what people were complaining about with that. To me it looks pretty good for the big corporations that are insurance companies. I guess that's moot, because the present regime, in wishing to undo everything that the previous administration did, and wants to wipe out ACA also. And talking about that, I would like to wipe out of our nation's vocabulary, the term, Obamacare. The name is Affordable Care Act. And by bringing in the name of that man, you're scratching a lot of old sores for people who just hated him for being who he was. And it's a nasty, rhetorical trick to call his Affordable Care Act by his name, and I think we all know what I'm talking about, right?

AM: Okay, so we are moving on to our conclusion here, the last few questions. And we are going to start with, how do you get through tough times? What kind of thoughts keep you going?

AS: Sometimes since I'm retired, I can afford to do this, sometimes I just crawl under the covers and sleep for as long as possible and say, "When I wake up, that won't be there anymore." Well, of course, that doesn't help. Sometimes you just have to get a little humble and say, "There are a lot of things going on in the universe, my little problem—that wonderful line from *Casablanca*, "In a world like this, the troubles of three little people don't amount to a hill of beans." So you know, in a world, in a universe like this, maybe my troubles aren't that big. I sat down once when I was feeling sorry for myself for something, and I wrote down things that have happened, and things that are happening to people right now. Nobody bombed my house, nobody intentionally tried to hit me with an automobile, nobody accidentally hit me with an automobile, nobody shot me. And I just went through all these things that really happen to people. You know, I've really got a really privileged life.

AM: Okay, how do you define success in your life, and how has this definition changed over time?

AS: Success would be passing this course, getting this degree, getting this role. And again, it's probably a factor of the gift of living this long. Being able to put my head on the pillow at night and go to sleep because I'm not beating myself up about things I should have done, or things I did that I shouldn't have done, or whatever. That sounds rather smug, but I just try to keep things simple. I don't know if I'm going to wake up in the morning, and I can't do anything about it. There are just so many things that I can't do anything about, so I will mind my P's and Q's as far as the things that I can control.

AM: Based on your life experience, what advice would you give to women today, and future generations?

AS: Well, I think wonderful things are happening in... Women are claiming their right to education, they are claiming a right to speak out during the educational process. My friend, that I was referring to on the phone earlier today, we were talking about being on a male dominated campus in the 1960's, early 1960's, before the 60's became the 60's that everyone's talking about. She's a talkative person and a person with strong opinions. She had a male professor take her aside one day and say, "You have to stop talking so much in class, there are men here." Now, any professor who said that to a young female student today would be called into the Dean's office. I think we've come ---made some progress that way. I was talking with a former student the other day. She's in her mid 30's, brilliant lady, multiple master's degrees, but she doesn't show that good judgement in her personal life, just a soap opera. And she was able to say, "I'm single now and I'm okay with that." And I think that's a wonderful thing, that first thing you talk about when you run into an old friend is not who are you dating, rather where are you working, what's your latest publication, what's your last trip? I love to travel and sometimes I couldn't find a person whose schedule was compatible with me, so I'd just go off and take the trip. People

would say, “You're going by yourself ?” And the alternative is, not take the trip? I think it's wonderful that women are realizing that women have a right to their space, they have a right to their voice. This changes everything if you are lucky enough to find a like spirit to share your life with. That's the wonderful part of relationships. If you don't find a like spirit to share your life with, run, do not walk to the nearest exit, because that will never be a relationship if somebody is calling all the shots, passively or actively, because this can happen by passive aggression too.

AM: Okay, now that we are working to tell a fuller story of the history of women than has been recorded in the past, what do you think we should be sure to include?

AS: Well I was surprised, I was going over some writings by Abby Kelley Foster. I think it was a speech that she gave at the 1851 convention in Worcester. There was the women's convention the following year as well. And I was surprised because we always think of her in terms of abolition, she always spoke against abolition going as far west as Ohio. And we have to remember, there were no jet planes, there were no paved highways. It was very dangerous, again, a women travelling alone. At the 1851 convention, she said something about women's work and how it must be valued as much as men's work and it must be paid as well. And I thought wow, I thought that was a 20th century complaint. But, of course, we were in the middle of, or at least at the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. Women were going out into the workplace to work for wages, and they were nowhere near the rate that men were getting paid for the same work. And, so, I thought that, that was an eye-opener to me, that Abby Kelley Foster was talking about equal wages. And this whole --- I'm sure your past it with your generation ---women's places are in the home, and all you need to do is marry a good wage earner and everything will be wonderful. Well, that doesn't work out because husbands die, husbands desert, husbands get addictions, and women have to raise the children. There is no such thing as it doesn't matter because she is woman, so she doesn't need to be paid as much. And I lost your question again, your question was?

AM: That was very good, but what do you think we should be sure to include?

AS: In history, I think it would be interesting to go back and look at documents again, look at whatever evidence we have again, and see what have really women's contributions been over the years. We think that up until the Industrial Revolution, she sat at home and kneaded bread and nursed babies or something. No, women were doing work. If she kneaded bread, she was probably also selling it in the marketplace. James David Moran from American Antiquarian Society wrote a play about the Worcester 1774 revolution. He included Mary Stearns as a character, who ran Stearn's Tavern, a meeting place for the rebels. I thought that was really good because Mary Stearns, she was a businesswoman running a tavern. She wasn't sitting at home knitting socks for her 14 children. I don't know if she had 14 children or whatever, but I thought that was great that James included a woman who had responsibility. She was right there in the thick of the conspirators of this Worcester revolution. I think we have to go back and look at our primary documents, our primary evidence over again with light to what she was really doing. She was doing more than nursing babies and peeling potatoes.

AM: Okay, moving on to our final question of the day, is there anyone else you suggest we talk to?

AS: Oh dear, you've covered so many of the good ones. Of course, the first one that comes to mind is Annette Rafferty, but I think she was covered years ago. I'll get in touch with you through Charlene and Maureen, if a name comes to mind. What about the woman who is the President at Worcester Polytechnic Institute?

AM: I'm not sure if she is already on the list.

AS: She is rather new to the community, so your project may not have covered her.

AM: Well I can ask my professor about that. Thank you.