

Interviewee: Kilbyanne Garabedian  
Interviewers: Bethany Bartolini and Kimberly Leighton  
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**Abstract:** This is the interview of Kilbyanne Garabedian who was born in 1944 in Boston, Massachusetts. She attended Assumption College, was a part of the Worcester Women's History Project, and now works for the General Council for UMass Memorial Hospital in Worcester. Kilbyanne talks in the interview about her parents' lives and her family's lineage dating back to the Mayflower coming to the New World. She discusses growing up in an all Protestant neighborhood and going to high school in the 1950s. Kilbyanne went to school for many different things including nursing, medicine, and law. She married young and was developing her career at the same time she was raising her children. In the interview, Kilbyanne talks about the struggles she faced as a woman trying to enter the medical field and giving credibility to her profession. She notes how she has seen women, including her daughters and granddaughters, become much more independent and expressive over the years and have more influential careers. Kilbyanne deliberates on the fact that although women have earned more power in today's society, neither money nor power can replace family and true traditionalist values.

**BB:** This is our interview with Ms. Garabedian on the 29th of October, 2010, with Bethany Bartolini and Kimberly Leighton. Alright let's start off. What is your full name?

**KG:** Kilbyanne Garabedian.

**BB:** Is that your maiden name or your married name?

**KG:** Married name.

**BB:** When and where were you born?

**KG:** I was born, when and where was I born, I have to think about this. I was born in Boston, Massachusetts on 11-5-44.

**BB:** Have you ever been married?

**KG:** Sure.

**BB:** What is your husband's name?

**KG:** Richard Garabedian.

**BB:** Is he your only husband? How many times have you been married if not?

**KG:** Just him.

**BB:** Just him, cool. Do you have any children?

**KG:** Yes.

**BB:** What are their names and ages?

**KG:** I have three children. Richard Garabedian is, Jr., is- how old is he? He is 44. Tamar Garabedian Davis is 42 and James Michael Garabedian is 40.

**BB:** Alright. How old were you when you had your children?

**KG:** I was 22 when I had my first.

**BB:** Do you have any grandchildren?

**KG:** Yes.

**BB:** How many? And what are their names?

**KG:** Eight. What are their names?

**BB:** Sure.

**KG:** Ok. There's Maya Anes Davis, Talia Gene Davis, Kayla Marie Garabedian, Alyssa Gene Garabedian. Taylor, I don't remember her middle name, Garabedian. Samuel Kobb Garabedian. Katherine Alexandra Garabedian and the newest one is Nathan, I don't remember his middle name, Garabedian.

**BB:** That's a lot! So what cultures or ethnicities do you identify yourself with?

**KG:** English.

**BB:** English, ok. Tell us about your parents.

**KG:** My parents -- my mother was an artist. She -- both my parents are descended from English, you know, like a long time ago, like they came over. We can follow our heritage back both on my mother's side and my father's side back before the Mayflower, so that's their cultural heritage. My mother was an artist my father was an engineer, an aeronautical engineer. And...I

don't know, they got -- they were married during the Second World War. My father was a soldier in the Second World War. He taught aeronautics and flying to pilots in the Second World War and was stationed in Alaska. They got married when he came home on leave. He had to sell his blood in order to get home, money to get home, which you can't do anymore, and they got married and then he came home a second time and I was conceived. And, let's see. We lived in New Jersey for a while, and we moved to Vermont, and I have a brother. And...

**BB:** Is he your younger brother?

**KG:** Younger, yes, three years younger. And they are both deceased. My father died when he was 72, from progressive super-nuclear palsy. And my mother died when she was 86 from complications of Parkinson's disease.

**BB:** You said you could date your history back from the Mayflower.

**KG:** Before the Mayflower.

**BB:** Before the Mayflower, do you remember when your family came over to America?

**KG:** In 1500s. You know both sides in the 1500s.

**BB:** Do you know if they came over through Nova Scotia or Ellis Island?

**KG:** No, they did not. They came right to, in fact, we have reason to believe that at least one branch actually came over on the Mayflower, there are very few records to the Mayflower, but we -- they -- the genealogists can trace the heritage back to England, and then there's a gap and then they show again in Jamestown. And so they think that they came over on the Mayflower. That just that one crowd, and then the rest of them, Daughters of the American Revolution, you know, that's as far back as the records go here on this, in the United States.

**BB:** Ok. So you said you didn't grow up in Worcester [Massachusetts]...

**KG:** No

**BB:** You grew up in, what was the town? I'm sorry.

**KG:** Well I was born in Boston, and lived in Boston until I was about three. And then my parents moved to New Jersey and I went to elementary school and high school in New Jersey. Then graduated from high school there and went to nursing school in New Hampshire. Then they moved back to Vermont and I went to nursing school in New Hampshire.

**BB:** Hold on I want to make sure this is still working. This just went black on me. Ok, it still on. Alright. So, do you live in Worcester now?

**KG:** No, I live in Princeton [Massachusetts].

**BB:** Princeton, ok. So what brought you into Worcester?

**KG:** My husband's job.

**BB:** Ok. What does he do for a living?

**KG:** He's a college professor right now. He teaches at Assumption [College].

**BB:** Really?

**KG:** Yes.

**BB:** What does he teach?

**KG:** He teaches exercise physiology, research methods, something like that. He teaches in the Continuing Ed. Department.

**BB:** Ok. That's why I never heard of him.

[All laugh]

**BB:** That's really cool.

**KG:** He, before he got his Ph.D, he was director of Phys. Ed. in athletics. So when, after we got married, we were in Connecticut. And then we moved to actually Millbury [Massachusetts].

**BB:** Mhmm

**KG:** And Millbury to Grafton [Massachusetts], Grafton to Princeton. And I've been working in Worcester since we moved here.

**BB:** Very cool. Have you witnessed any historical moments in Worcester's history?

**KG:** Historical moments in Worcester's history. I guess it depends on how you define them. The renovation of the train station was, you know that was...you know it depends. Certainly isn't like the sum of Goddard and the rocket! [laughs]. You know, I think that was pretty important. Just the renovation of the Hanover Theater. That was pretty important in terms of the history of Worcester. You know things like that.

**BB:** Yeah.

**KG:** You know, but nothing that I think would end up in textbooks.

**BB:** So you think, the changes you've witnessed in Worcester were -- have been for the benefit of the city?

**KG:** Oh yeah, sure.

**BB:** Have you witnessed anything that you think might not have been as beneficial?

**KG:** Well, the deterioration of Main Street. You know, that is very difficult. I mean a lot of that is economical. It's nothing that Worcester did or didn't do. I think Worcester has been trying to build up Main Street-the Main Street area. You know the projects over here are very important.

**BB:** Ok. So if you could change anything about Worcester, what would you choose to change?

**KG:** What would I change about Worcester? I would continue with that project. I can't remember the name of it now but you know what I'm talking about, the, so that the center of Worcester, the common, Main Street area was more accessible, more vibrant, would bring more business into Worcester. I think Worcester has an awful lot to offer. But for some reason we don't get the word out very well. You know there are 10 accredited colleges here. (\_\_\_\_\_???) The Worcester Art Museum, the Antiquarian Society, Higgins [Armory], you know you could go on and on. There are very interesting kinds of landmarks and a lot of people never heard of them.

**BB:** It is unfortunate. Alright so as a woman in Worcester, do you think women have had positive experiences in this city?

**KG:** Positive and negative, yeah.

**BB:** How would you say?

**KG:** Well, I'm a lawyer now, so I think that from the time I started practicing law -- I've been practicing law since '88 till now -- I have seen more acceptance of women as lawyers. I have seen more acceptance of women in the courthouse. There are more women on the bench, as judges. So, in that regard, I think Worcester more so than some of the other counties, has kind of embraced women and supported women. But you can also say the opposite, you know. When you look at some of the bigger companies and you look at their boards, at their executive teams, and look for females as representing a large portion of the population here, you don't see that. You know there's not that representation.

**BB:** Alright, now let's get to some fun questions for you! What was your childhood neighborhood like?

**KG:** My childhood neighborhood was very homogenous. By that I mean we were all the same race, we were all the same nationality, all the same religion. As a matter of fact, this is Protestant, mostly Protestant. We had a family that moved in when I was a little girl, Joy Kelley, and they were Catholic and everyone was aghast that we had a Catholic family living in our neighborhood. When you think about that now it just boggles your mind [laughs]. It's just unbelievable. But it was a very friendly neighborhood; all the parents knew each other. Halloween is coming up and I can remember as a child, I mean really trick or treating, you know you got- there was not the concerns about safety that are now, you know. Everybody got up in costumes and parents would go around, and the parents would go around with a glass then they would go, what you call trick or drinking. And they would take the kids, and you know they would go to the houses and have a drink and the kids would get candy then we would go to the next house. Everybody, you know, if one family had a party, everybody was there, that kind of thing. So, I think it was a very nice neighborhood. It was not diverse by any means.

**BB:** That's interesting. Sounds like a lot of fun.

**KG:** Yeah, it was a lot of fun.

**BB:** So, how old were you when you were allowed to date?

**KG:** Again, that depends on what your definition of dating is because back when I was young, just a bunch of friends getting together, there were both boys and girls, I mean; we used to call that dating. You know you'd all go out to have a hamburger, or you'd all go out to the movies or something like that. In terms of what you now kind of define dating as like one on one, you know doing something individual. I think I was probably about... I think I was a freshman in high school, so I was probably, what 14 or 15. And I remember Keith Blanchard. He had one green eye and one brown eye. And the reason he did was he had an injury as a kid. And Keith was originally from England. I mean like, he was born in England so he had a little English accent. And he invited me to a dance.

**BB:** That's cute.

**KG:** A high school dance.

**BB:** What was considered fashionable when you were young? So what like would you have worn to one of these dances?

**KG:** A poodle skirt. And that was felt, and it was a circle skirt. And the original ones actually had a poodle appliqué on it. Bobby socks and saddle shoes. Twin sets were in, with pearls. Pony tails, I always had curly hair and I hated it because I wanted straight hair, long straight hair that I could put in a pony tail. Jeans were not in, you know, at least in my crowd. Jeans were not in. Jeans were for the kids that were like Fonzie. You know those kinds of kids, they wore jeans. We were college prep kids. We didn't wear jeans, we wore poodle skirts. Then there were the jocks

and they just wore sweats all the time. [laughs].

**BB:** So what kind of music did you listen to? Did you have like a favorite band growing up?

**KG:** No it was more singers, you know. I remember a lot of the Doo-Wop bands. You know they, that, I was born in '44 so there was a little kind of trans-kind of little change there because Doo-Wop bands were more in '44, '45, '46, I was a little bit young then, they still kind of went into the '50s, but you know "Rock Around the Clock" was my favorite song. I can't even remember who did that.

**BB:** Bill Haley and the Comets.

**KG:** Yes! Bill Haley and the Comets. Thank you very much. So then as I got a little bit older, you know Elvis and all those guys. Yeah.

**BB:** I know all those guys. [laughs]

**KG:** I think a lot of the younger people now are liking some of the older music.

**BB:** It's a good thing.

**KB:** Yeah.

**BB:** So you said there were certain stereotypes like all Caucasian people in your school.

**KB:** Yeah, well in my elementary school. Yeah, in my elementary school.

**BB:** So how were girls or different types of girls treated in your upper education, in high school?

**KG:** Well high school was a completely different thing. High school was a regional school. So you had your little neighborhood schools that as I said were most part homogenous. Then, like what my neighborhood was like. That was, I'm just talking about my street. To talk about my whole town, when I was a child, it was homogenous; it was very interesting when I think back on it, because the basis of the town was for your religion, so your church, your temple. There was a Catholic church and Protestant church and a Jewish temple. We used to celebrate holidays at each of those and this was a long time ago, and I think it was fairly unique. Then you went to a regional high school and it was at a regional high school that you got some different, more diversity. African American, Hispanic American folks. So my high school was much more diverse, Mowor (sp) Junior Senior High School in the Northern part of New Jersey. And girls. How were girls treated? I mean there were the fast girls. There were the college prep, you know, kind of sweet girls I guess. There were some athletic girls, but athletics were not really in. It really wasn't acceptable for a girl to sweat. That wasn't a good thing, so it was pretty much you were the popular girls had a little of each in there, the not so popular girls had a little of each, and

then there were the nerds. I forgot about the nerd group.

**BB:** So what high school did you attend?

**KG:** Mowor (sp) Junior Senior High School.

**BB:** Ok. Did you do any extra-curricular activities?

**KG:** Yeah, I was part of the color guard squad. I was in the future nurses club. I didn't play any sports; I was involved with a lot of my church activities. And the towns had, you know there was a lot more town activity. So they had a recreation committee, so I would be involved with a lot of that kind of thing depending on the season.

**BB:** So you said how you went to the nurses club and you were very religiously active. Do you think there were certain roles that women had back when you were in high school that they had to like fulfill? Like in society, be certain people?

**KG:** Yeah, absolutely. When I was in high school I wanted to be a doctor, and that was something I was pretty much told a woman didn't do. That's why I was in the future nurses club. So, you know, at that time, guidance counselors really kind of steered girls into either nursing, teaching or secretarial work. And that was pretty much it. And you know people would talk to you about having a skill that you need to fall back on if your husband can't support you. [laughs]

**BB:** Did you ever feel suppressed by it or feel like you wanted to do something out of the box?

**KG:** Oh yeah, yeah. In my high school yearbook, you know how you have your picture and then they have all these little sayings underneath. And one of the sayings under my name was that I wanted to be the first female cardiac surgeon in the United States, because there weren't any female cardiac surgeons at that time. So, you know I really wanted to be a physician but the support wasn't there. Now I have to admit there were women and girls who did become physicians so if I had more motivation and a really burning desire I think I could have done it but there certainly wasn't the support.

**BB:** Gotcha. So, have you noticed any differences, obviously there are key differences, but from your perspective, like what you grew up with as opposed to what your kids grew up with at their schools and even your grandchildren?

**KB:** Oh yeah. There's so many things [laughs] I don't even know where to begin. I mean when I look at the way I grew up versus my children versus my grandchildren there is a huge difference. One of the differences is when I grew up; children in general knew their space and knew their place. They were- my grandmother used to say, "children are supposed to be seen and not heard." Now my parents didn't quite ascribe to that as strictly as my grandmother did, so we did things, we talked that kind of thing. But we were certainly brought up in very disciplined



manner. My children, I was not as strict with them. You know they did a lot of things I was not allowed to do when I was a child and now I see my grandchildren, oh my gosh, you know. Just for example I was not allowed to get my ears pierced until I was 16, all my granddaughters have had their ears pierced by the time they were nine or ten. And it's just a different way of looking at things. The other thing is I brought up knowing or thinking anyway that women had a particular place. By definition in the '70s I was part of all that consciousness raising, burning your bra, let's get the women going. My daughter, you know, she is independent thinking. Although she knows, she kind of lived through that. My granddaughters don't even know what it was like. I mean they have no thought that anything could be different for them than anybody else. They thought is that whatever they want to do that can do it as long as they work at it. So they have no clue about some of these kinds of things.

**BB:** So you were saying how you were part of the whole bra burning thing in the '70s. Do you remember like where you were during other points in history, like for example when, 1969 when Neil Armstrong landed on the moon, or when JFK was shot. Do you remember specific instances like that like where you were?

**KG:** Yeah. Well in '69, let's see '69 when he...well let's start- JFK was first. I was in nursing school then. And actually when JFK was shot I was delivering a baby. And when I was in nursing school I went to Keene, New Hampshire, at Keene Eliot Hospital School of Nursing (sp) and we were in affiliation with Providence, Rhode Island and Providence Women and Children's Hospital. And at that time the people who were teaching us, for OB/GYN [Obstetrics and Gynecology] felt that us from New Hampshire, those of us nurses from New Hampshire, were so back in the rural areas that we actually needed to learn how to deliver a baby. None of the other nurses were allowed to do that. I mean the other nurses, student nurses were taught to assist a physician in delivering a baby but those of us from New Hampshire, the doctors taught us how to deliver a baby. So I was actually delivering a baby as a student nurse. I was probably 17, maybe 18. And over the loud speaker the paging system came that JFK had been shot. So we went back to our dorm and we just watched the whole thing. All the nurses just sat around and watched and cried. And then with Neil Armstrong I was married. I had my first baby. Rick was born in, let's see I was married in '65, I think he was born in '66, so I can remember sitting there folding diapers watching Neil Armstrong

**BB:** We made it to the second page. [laughs and murmurs] So Kimberly, you going to take over?

**KL:** Alright, so we're going to move past your childhood and ask, did you attend college and graduate school?

**KG:** Yeah, I went to a nursing school, a diploma school for nursing, like a hospital school of nursing. And then I went to Assumption College and graduated with a B.S. [Bachelor of Science]. I actually did pre-med there. But then decided that I didn't want to go to medical school and then I went to law school.

**KL:** And did you face any challenges while you were in school?

**KG:** Yeah...as I said I wanted, when I was younger I wanted to be a physician and so I became a nurse and then at some point in my nursing career I decided I wanted to go back to school and I decided that I wanted to go to medical school. And Assumption College at that time had a very good acceptance rate into medical school. Now mind I was married and had kids by that time, so I couldn't go to school in the traditional manner and so actually the Continuing Education Department it was a Doctor Greene at the time and I can't remember his I think Greene...he sat down with me and we designed my curriculum so that I could do pre-med. What they allowed me to do was take certain number of courses through Continuing Ed. and then the same amount of courses through the day program. So physics, for example, I took with you kids, you know kids like you, and you know it was it was a little bit of a challenge because I was an older person, I had, you know, kids and what have you. I remember an exam that we had and I'd been sick and I was taking Sudafed, but I decided, ok I can I can handle this. And then of course my kids got sick, so I was up all night with them and then my husband got sick, so ok I can handle this. And I was sitting next to a young woman who was playing tennis and she was all upset because she had never seen, she was having a meet with somebody, and she had never seen her opponent, her opponent serve before, or something like that. And I just kind of looked at her and I thought, "Oh my God, I got three kids sick at home and I'm taking an exam and you're worried about a tennis guy serving? We are from different universes here." [laughs] But Assumption was very helpful. Then when I got to law school, it was the same type of thing because I had to work. I kind of created a program so that, went to Suffolk, you could go nights but then in order to get experience, the only experience that you could get, you had to go to the volunteer defender's or the volunteer prosecutor's office and that was a day thing. I couldn't do that, I was working full-time. So I kind of figured out a way to get in touch with who was General Council at Memorial Hospital at the time...

**KG:** So I got involved with the General Council at Memorial Hospital and we created an internship program for me. So I guess the point you asked "If there were any challenges?" The challenges at that time were that education was not set up for adults and part-time students. I think today it is much more flexible and people can go part-time, adults can go, they can work full-time, you can do a lot of different kinds of things that weren't acceptable then.

**KL:** Ok, so you went to law school, that was your last education?

**KG:** Yes.

**KL:** What did you do after you graduated from law school?

**KG:** From law school? I worked with two small law firms. One is no longer in existence and that was in Grafton, the other one was in Holden. I went to law school to become a hospital lawyer and so when I started working with the one in Holden, one of the senior partners is on the board

here at this hospital, UMASS [University of Massachusetts] Memorial. And I'd had a relationship, as I said, with the general council because he and I created this internship program when I was in school, so soon as a position opened, they asked me if I would like it and I said I absolutely and I've been here ever since.

**KL:** What challenges did you face going from childhood to adulthood? Obviously college is a big challenge.

**KG:** Yeah. Well I guess it, you know, it depends on what kinds of things you're talking about. You know one of the challenges that I had that my children had is that we are big people. I'm tall. Now compared now to young people today, probably not so much, but back then I was the tallest person in the class. I was taller than all the boys. I was faster than all the boys. The same thing with my daughter. And that was not a good thing then because athletics were not empathized, so it kind of created a self-esteem type of thing, you know, you kind of had a low self-esteem. And then the educational issues, you know, in terms of wanting to do what you would like to do as a woman, a girl, and then...I can't say that we never had any economic challenges. I think as I recall, it was my perception of my childhood. I never thought that I had to worry about food or a roof over my head or something like that. My parents are both college graduates, they had good jobs, so I had that security. So I did not have that as a challenge...as some people do.

**KL:** Ok. Why did you decide to do this for work?

**KG:** Oh yeah. Well as I said before, I had wanted to be a physician. I was always interested in science and biology. I did very well in science and biology, not so well in math, but very well in science and biology. So that kind of didn't pan out, so I went into nursing. I loved nursing. I was a critical care nurse and I loved it, but gradually I wanted a little bit more of a challenge. And I decided I wanted to go to medical school, you know that didn't work out really well. I could've pursued that in fact and in the end I was accepted at Case Western Reserve, but I had a family and I didn't want to uproot them and take them someplace else. My kids were in high school; my oldest was in high school. My husband had a job. So Mary Lou Anderson at Assumption College was one of my professors. She...I think it was creative writing that I was taking with her, either that or something like that, and I was writing these journals as part of the requirements. And one day she said to me that I wrote very descriptively and, "have you ever thought about going to law school?" And I said absolutely not, lawyers are all crooks. And I didn't know any lawyers then. Now ironically at the same time in my nursing career, there were some things happening in the law, you may have never heard of this, but the Karen Ann Quinlan case and the Nancy Cruzan case are cases of two young women who were very badly injured or suffered, one of was from alcohol toxicity, brain injury, and they were in vegetative state and there was a lot of law at the time about whether or not you could remove respiratory, end of life kinds of things, and I was very interested in that because I was in critical care and we were resuscitating people who had a right to die. I mean they were at the end of life and we were imposing treatment. So I was very interested in that, so those two things kind of worked together and I thought maybe I'll look into

this, see what this law is all about. And I (\_\_\_\_\_???) a couple of classes and I really enjoyed it. So I decided to go to law school. So I took the LSAT's, did well, and there I, here I am.

**KL:** What has this job meant to you?

**KG:** What has it meant to me? Oh gosh... Well I really like my job... I think, there's so many... one of the things unfortunately is sometimes as a nurse, depending, at least years ago, not so much now, but you don't have the credibility in patient care as it might be helpful if you were a physician, for example, so becoming a lawyer gave me that credibility. I can help patients by helping their care providers, by providing a legal framework for physicians and nurses, so that they can feel comfortable taking care of the patients. In terms of the law and in terms of being worried about being sued, they can take focus on those patients and take excellent care of those patients, and I feel very rewarded about that. And somebody else must too because I got an award this year from Lawyers Weekly about that, so somebody agrees with my analysis.

**KL:** How do you feel you have been able to balance the different priorities and responsibilities in your life as a mother, as a full-time worker?

**KG:** Yeah, I mean I think that's... you asked about challenges, but I didn't think about that, but that was that was a challenge particularly in law school. When I started law school, when I... let's see when I graduated from law school, my oldest son graduated from college and went on to graduate school, my youngest son from high school, and my daughter was in her second year of college, so that's kind of the age-frame they were in. So when I started law school, you know my oldest son was graduating from high school, they were all kind of in high school then, that age, and one of the things that I had to do, in terms of priority, is they had to step up to the plate and so did my husband. You know, they had, they got more involved with doing laundry, with making their own meals, you know cleaning up, helping around the house. So we've done it as a family, I don't know as I could've gone to law school if I didn't have a family to kind of balance all of that out. In terms of right now, I think it's difficult for a working person to prioritize, it really is. The economic situation has made it such that I don't think you can have... in a family, in a two adult family, you can't have just one working anymore; you know you can't even afford a house. So if you want to have two adults and you want to have children, trying to prioritize all of that is very difficult. I, my kids now are grown and gone, so I don't have to worry about it. They have to worry about it, but I don't. And it is difficult, you know, I have a problem right now just trying to get out of the office to go exercise, and I always end up staying here and doing work, instead of going and exercising. [laughs]

**KL:** So obviously you live with your husband, do you share the housework?

**KG:** Yes. Yes. He's semi-retired. So he teaches at Assumption and he also teaches at Lasell and he teaches either two or three days a week, so we share a lot. And actually, even when we were younger, there was a period of time, sort of during that 70s, mid 70s a little bit late 70s, he went back to school and so I worked full-time and supported the family and he went back to school

full-time. And then when he graduated, we switched around again, so we've done that kind of right along...sharing responsibilities.

**KL:** How does that interfere with work, all of the housework you have to do?

**KG:** That I have to do?

**KL:** Yeah.

**KG:** It doesn't anymore. I have a lady that comes and cleans my house [all laugh]. But it used to, I mean it was difficult cause my husband would help some, but then Saturdays, on my days off, I would just clean. I never had any time off, you know you always try to get the laundry clean, then go back to work.

**KL:** What are the benefits of having a job in your chosen path?

**KG:** [pauses] You mean as opposed to like a different...profession?

**BB:** Well I think it's more like choosing the path that you've chosen, what have been like negatives and positives? Like what have you suffered because of it? Like have you lost connection? Like do you wish you could have spent more time with your family? Or...

**KG:** Well I guess for me, just if I'm looking at me, I like the path I chose. I've had a...wonderful opportunity to have about four careers when you think about it because I've been a nurse, I teach at the medical school so I've been a nurse, a lawyer, a teacher, a mother all of those...you know they're all wonderful opportunities and I'm very happy that I've been able to do that. I think if you'd ask my children, they would say that when I went to law school, they felt disconnected with me. 'Cause when now we're all adults, we sit around and talk about that sometimes and they will say that they felt disconnected from me. And it was hard at the time from my side to continue doing what I wanted to do with them, I mean they were all very involved in sports at the time, playing football, playing field hockey; I wanted to go to all of their games. So you know that was all challenging. I don't think that I would have done anything differently. I've told my husband the only thing I would do differently is I would have married him sooner, but I was only 20 when I got married.

**KL:** So outside of work, do you have any hobbies that you like to do?

**KG:** Yeah, we, I mean we live in Princeton for a reason. We love to bike and the biking in Princeton is wonderful. We're skiers, so you know we ski Mount Wachusett. We like to hike Mount Wachusett. I love to read. I like to knit every one of my grandchildren's sweaters until they can't stand it anymore. [laughs] I like art, I think one of, when I get an opportunity to step back a little from this...position, I would like to take an, probably drawing and painting class at Worcester Art Museum. So...I like all of that stuff.

**KL:** Are you politically active?

**KG:** I wouldn't say so. That's one of the things we joke about; I hate politics. On the other hand, I vote all the time and I try to keep track of the parties and...you know the referendums and questions and I certainly will vote this election. I can't wait to have it over. I'm sick of listening to all of it. [laughs] But I wouldn't say, I don't go out and actively campaign for folks. I'm not...I'm a registered Independent, or Undeclared, but I am very interested in exercising my right to vote.

**KL:** Do you feel that the right to vote is very important to you as a woman?

**KG:** Yes. Yeah, I do. Just as a person, you know...I think that's one of the things in this country that is very important and I hope that young people feel that way too. I always have a feeling that young people are not as interested in voting.

**KL:** With your very busy life, have you been able to be involved in volunteer or community work?

**KG:** I was more involved with volunteer and community work before I became Deputy General Council. As I said, I was on the board of the Worcester Women's History Project. I was also on the board of the YWCA. For a very short period of time, I was on the board of Edward's Street School, which is a fairly unique elementary school here in Worcester. So I liked doing that kind of board work and, you know, I kind of had an ad hoc basis of getting involved with walks for cancer and walks for heart disease and things like that.

**KL:** What role has religion played in your life?

**KG:** Organized religion played more of a role in my life when my children were young. We, both my husband and I, were very active in our church. We were...you know we were, taught Sunday school, we were involved with the youth group, we led the youth group. Since my children have grown and gone, I would say that I'm not involved with organized religion. I'm more spiritual than religious. I have very strong personal beliefs, but I do not get involved with organized religion as much as I used to.

**KL:** How do you get through tough times and what keeps you going?

**KG:** Well, I guess...I'm a happy person and my family means a lot to me, my grandchildren, my husband. I just love life! I love where I'm living, you know I go home at night and I think, "Oh wow! Am I to live here in the mountains and you know you see the changes in the season and it's just absolutely gorgeous." And then I, I mean I have had some personal very difficult times with my health. I have had to have open heart surgery, I've had a partial hepatectomy, meaning part of my liver removed, I've had a small bowel resection. All of those things, you know I

didn't think I was going to live, so there were...you know there were a lot of spiritual kinds of things that I did, exercises and meditations and things like that, and that helps me get through things. And then sometimes I just yell and scream.

**KL:** Besides your medical issues, has anyone else in your family had any drastic health issues?

**KG:** Well the death of my parents was difficult. My father was 72 when he died and that...nowadays that's really young, so that was that was very difficult. My daughter had papillary carcinoma, which is cancer of the thyroid gland and that was diagnosed after her first child, my first grandchild, was born, so she had to have a total thyroidectomy which was very difficult. But other than that, I...and I wouldn't, and it's funny I...Dick and I say many times we're so lucky because we really have not had, I kind of forget that because I lived through my stuff, so I'm okay, but we really haven't had some of the devastation that other families have had to live through.

**KL:** That's a really good thing. What are your experiences with accessing quality health care?

**KG:** Accessing quality health care?

**KL:** Yup.

**KG:** Well mine have been very positive because I work right in the middle of it. As Deputy General Council here, you know I can access pretty much anything I need. Now for my own personal issues, the things I was just describing, I actually choose to get my care at Dana Farber and I had no trouble accessing that, but you know I was helped by my colleagues here, you know the physicians that I work with. "Oh, I'll get you so and so, and call them up on the phone." You know no problem. But on the other side of it because I work in the middle of health care, I know that many people have trouble accessing health care and that's one of the things that our system, UMASS Memorial, is trying so hard to deal with and to improve access to health care. And I think it's going to be a real challenge in the next couple of years with health care reform.

**KL:** Besides yourself, who else are you responsible for the health of? Just mainly your husband?

**KG:** Yeah, I would say so. I mean responsible yeah, my husband. Because I'm a nurse, my children call me all the time for everything, for all their stuff, my grandchildren and stuff, that kind of thing. But I'm not responsible for it.

**KL:** Do you feel that you have a legacy?

**KG:** What do you mean?

**KL:** Well, when you pass many, many years down the road...

**KG:** Thank you, “many, many years” [laughs]

**KL:** Do you feel that people will remember your name?

**KG:** I think people will for a while. You know I think it’s just like anything else, unless you do something that’s really note-worthy, you know generations later, the people that will remember you are the family members that tell the stories at the table, you know. And I think...there’s certainly-my grandchildren will tell stories and eventually as the generations expand, that kind of evaporates.

**KL:** Based on your life experiences, what advice would you give to the women in the future?

**KG:** [pauses] I think the thing that I...I try to explain this to my children too, and you don’t really realize this until too late in life and that is that the only thing that is really important are other people and you spend so much of your life trying to earn money, to provide either for a family, you know things. Get your house, get your-you know that kind of thing. The economics of life sometimes take over and take away from the idea that-you’re not going to take any of that with you. What makes the most importance, what’s most important is how you deal with other people, the people that you love and that love you. And that’s the thing you need to focus on. And it’s hard to do that when you’re young.

**KL:** Do you feel that you have any regrets from your life’s choices?

**KG:** Do I have any regrets? No, not really. I don’t. I’m-you know- I think there’s two little things that I...It’s so funny, my daughter -- my son-in-law is African American, so my granddaughters are biracial. When they got married -- they’re Holy Cross students and they got married in the Chapel at Holy Cross and I wish that when they came, after they were married, and they started walking down the aisle, I wish we had had them jump over a broom because that was an old African-American tradition. And we never thought of that, I mean I can’t call it a regret. And then we also forgot to give a corsage to somebody, I can’t remember who it was now. I think about that every once in a while. [laughs] Those are my -- they’re not really regrets.

**KL:** Have you felt successful in your life?

**KG:** Yeah I have. I have...yeah. [laughs] I mean I’m very proud of my children, I’m very proud of my grandchildren, my relationship with my husband is wonderful, and I loved being a nurse, I advanced through the nursing careers, and I like being a lawyer, and I’ve been successful I think. I wish I pushed myself a little bit more a little younger, but even that, if I had done that, I would have missed out on a few things then. So I can’t say that I regret that.

**KL:** Do you feel that the meaning of success has changed?

**KG:** Meaning of success...



**BB:** For you, I think, over time.

**KG:** Oh for me, yeah sure. I mean the meaning of success in general has always been power and money, and I think in general that's still the meaning of success and I think that's unfortunate because I do not think that is the meaning of success. Let's just explain that for me, being a-bringing up well-adjusted, happy children and seeing well-adjusted, happy grandchildren, having a good relationship with my husband, being respected by my peers, those are the things that I think mark success. But you know I have to admit, I'm in a job that is, you know I'm not rich, but I'm certainly well paid and I think it's hard for people who are not, perhaps in the same economic situation that I'm in... When you're struggling to put food on the table, or you're struggling to get health care, you don't know where you're going to live, you're homeless, I think it's very hard for those people to define success the way I've just defined it.

**KL:** 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 also include?

**KG:** [pauses] What should we include in the history of women? Well I think a lot of it is being included. I think the contributions of women -- that women have made to society over time but I think those... That's one of those that the Women's History Project, at least in Worcester, has tried to do. But I think that can be expanded even more. I think of the things that is kind of not really recognized is the leadership qualities of women. Women really make very good leaders in many aspects, not all of the time, but in many aspects they make better leaders than men. And I think one of the reasons they do is that they have a better idea of this idea of success and nurturing, you know that power, money that kind of thing is not quite as important to them. Now having said that, I do know women who are in very high leadership positions that are exactly [hits table] like that. You know the characterization that I'm doing of men that are scrupulous, that are cut-throat, that are you know all about power and money, so you know it doesn't ring true all of the time.

**BB:** Does that conclude our question list?

**KL:** It does.

**BB:** Alright, let's see. Hold on, I'm afraid this didn't work, but...

**KG:** What is this thing?

**BB:** This is an iPad.